

**A SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC STUDY OF THE TENSE
AND ASPCT
SYSTEM OF MODERN PERSIAN**

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ABSTRACT

A survey of previous scholarship has shown that there is no satisfactory description of the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian. This dissertation is the first attempt to study the syntax and semantics of Modern Persian verb forms in the light of recent discussions of tense and aspect.

This study falls into six chapters. Chapter 0 reviews the literature on the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian and shows that the former treatments of Modern Persian tense-aspect forms are inaccurate and incomprehensive. They are inaccurate in that the characterizations presented therein for some of the Persian verb forms are wrong, and are incomprehensive in that they do not investigate the semantics of all of the Persian verb forms.

Chapter 1 is the study of the syntax of Persian verb forms, with special reference to verb formation.

Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical assumptions and the methodology.

Chapter 3 is an attempt to establish the meanings of the morphological markers of tense, i.e. the past tense marker /-D/ and the non-past tense marker /-ø/, and to investigate the temporal values of Modern Persian verb forms. This chapter defines the meaning of the past tense marker /D/ as indicating that there is a time point subsequent to the time of the situation referred to which is the deictic centre of the context of the communication, and that of the non-past tense marker /ø/ as the absence of any time point subsequent to the time of the situation. The chapter also establishes that Modern Persian verb forms grammaticalize the semantic notions of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority. The other major outcomes are as follows: the major tense split in Modern Persian as in many other languages is between the past and the non-past. The Modern Persian perfect forms are tense rather than aspectual categories.

Chapter 4 attempts to assign a single invariant meaning to each of the Modern Persian aspect markers (i.e. *mi-*, *ø-*, and *be-*), and to investigate their interactions with other categories associated with the verb, i.e. with the categories of tense and Aktionsart. This chapter establishes that Modern Persian has three aspects: the

perfective, the imperfective, and the progressive, and that the perfective markers ϕ - and *be*- present the situation referred to as a single unanalysable whole, the imperfective marker *mi*- presents the situation referred to as continuous at a given time point, and finally the progressive auxiliary *dash.t.aen* 'have' presents the situation as in progress at a given time point. The chapter also illustrates that the imperfective and the progressive verb forms simply express the situation referred to as continuous and as in progress at a given time point, and as such are non-committal to the completion vs. the incompleteness of the situation in question.

Finally, chapter 5 summarizes the results of the research and presents some notes with regard to the opportunities for further research.

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SYMBOLS

The following is the list of symbols used in the present study to transliterate the Persian data. The list also represents the alphabetical order in which the Persian examples are arranged.

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Persian Ex.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Phonetic Description</u>
'	e'teraf	'confession'	glottal stop
æ	æbr	'cloud'	low, front vowel
a	ab	'water'	low, central vowel
b	botri	'bottle'	voiced, bilabial stop
ch	chæp	'left'	voiceless, palatal affricate
d	do	'two'	voiced, dental stop
e	em.ruz	'today'	mid, front vowel
f	fekr	'thought'	voiceless, labiodental fricative
g	gol	'flower'	voiced, velar stop
h	hazer	'present'	voiceless, glottal fricative
i	dir	'late'	high, front vowel
j	jaru	'broom'	voiced, palatal affricate
k	kahu	'lettuce'	voiceless, velar stop
l	lazem	'necessary'	voiced, alveolar lateral
m	madær	'mother'	voiced, bilabial nasal
n	nan	'bread'	voiced, dental nasal
o	ojræt	'wage'	mid, back vowel
p	por	'full'	voiceless, bilabial stop
q	qodrat	'power'	voiced uvular stop
r	rast	'right'	voiced alveolar trill
s	sade	'simple'	voiceless, alveolar fricative
sh	shirin	'sweet'	voiceless, palatal fricative
t	taze	'fresh'	voiceless, dental stop

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Persian Ex.</u>	<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Phonetic Description</u>
u	sud	'profit'	high, back vowel
v	vajeb	'necessary'	voiced, labiodental fricative
x	xali	'empty'	voiceless, velar fricative
y	yek	'one'	voiced palatal glide
z	ziba	'pretty'	voiced alveolar fricative

ABBREVIATIONS

The Following abbreviations are used in the present study.

c.	causative marker
D.C.	deictic centre
inf.	infinitive marker
ipfv.	imperfective marker
imp.	imperative
neg.	negative
n.p.r.	non-past root
o.m.	object marker
p.t.m.	past tense marker
p.t.r.	past tense root
perf.	perfect
pfv.	perfective marker
pl.	plural marker
pres.	present
prog.	progressive marker
pt.	past tense marker
ptp.	past participle marker
qu.p.	question particle
R.	reference point
sing.	singular
subj.	subjunctive
vb.	verb

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CHAPTER 0

Aim of the study and review of literature

0.0. Aim and the organization of the study

This study attempts to present a comprehensive and exhaustive description of the Modern Persian tense and aspect system. To achieve this objective the present dissertation has been organized in six chapters.

Chapter 0, i.e. the present chapter, reviews former treatments of tense and aspect in Modern Persian in order to reveal their inadequacies and illustrate the necessity of a comprehensive and systematic study of tense and aspect of Modern Persian in the light of recent discussions of tense and aspect by linguists such as Smith (1983), Comrie (1985), Bache (1985), Declerck (1986), etc.. The review will be carried out under two headings of traditional and non-traditional analysis of Modern Persian verb system.

Chapter 1 studies the morphological construction of Persian verb forms, which are generally classified into two groups: regular and irregular verbs. Regular verbs are those whose past and non-past forms derive from one base form, namely verbal root; and irregular verbs are those whose past and non-past forms derive from two separate base forms: the past and non-past verbal root, respectively. This chapter also illustrates that despite the fact that the irregular verbs have two verb roots, the notion of anteriority is always obligatorily signaled by the past tense marker '-d', '-t', or '-id'.

Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical and methodological preliminaries which the present work presupposes and illustrates that a distinction between meaning and implicature is crucial to the correct semantic analysis of Persian verb forms. This chapter also verifies that a distinction between Colloquial and non-Colloquial Persian is very fruitful and essential to a systematic and scientific study of tense and aspect in Modern Persian. The other issue discussed in chapter 2 is the strategy adopted for the semantic study of Modern Persian verb forms, which is essentially monosemantic in

that an attempt will be made to isolate a single context-independent meaning for each of Modern Persian verb forms.

Chapter 3 studies the tense subsystem of Modern Persian. The chapter begins with the survey of the general linguistic theories of tense presented by scholars such as Reichenbach, Comrie, Declerck, etc.. After the survey of the most influential theories of tense, the chapter studies the semantics of Modern Persian tense markers /D/ and /ø/. The study of the semantics of the tense markers of Modern Persian is followed by the investigation of the temporal values of each of Modern Persian verb forms. The investigation shows that Modern Persian finite verb forms can be used with both absolute and relative time reference and in this they differ from the English finite verb forms which can generally be used only with the absolute time reference. The chapter takes this characteristic feature of the Persian finite verb forms, and Prior's observation that the zero point of speech is like any other point of reference (the only difference being that the zero point of speech is the primary point of reference) as its points of departure and argues that the Persian verb forms each have one single invariant meaning. Even the non-past tense¹ which apparently has at least two separate meanings: expression of the present and future time reference, will be shown to have only one single context-independent meaning, namely the grammaticalization of the semantic notion of simultaneity. That is, it will be argued that the so called distinct meanings of the non-past tense; in particular the present and future time reference are at best contextual meanings deriving from the semantic interplay between the invariant meaning of the verb form and other linguistic items present in the sentence, e.g. the time adverbial, the subject, the object, etc.. The study of the temporal values of Modern Persian verb forms indicates that Comrie's theory of tense with a number of significant modifications can be used to describe and capture the semantic complexity of Modern Persian tense subsystem.

¹Hereafter the term 'non-past tense' is used instead of the traditional term 'simple present tense' to underline the linguistic fact that in Modern Persian the major tense split is between past and non-past, the non-past subsuming the verb forms which lack the past tense marker /D/.

Chapter 3 also studies the semantics of the perfect forms of Modern Persian. Interestingly enough as far as the perfect forms are concerned the Persian language is rather unique in that formally speaking Persian has five different perfect forms: the non-past perfect, the past perfect, the progressive perfect, the perfect imperfective, and the double perfect² (which may also be called the non-past past perfect; since it consists of the past participle of the lexical verb, and the past participle and non-past tense of the copula verb *bu.d.aen* 'be'). The study of perfect forms of Persian will show that of the different theories which have been offered for the semantic analysis of the perfect forms of English, namely the current relevance theory, the indefinite past theory, the embedded past theory, and finally the extended now theory, only the modified version of the current relevance theory presented by Comrie has the potentiality to capture the semantics of Modern Persian perfect forms (the term 'potentiality' is here intended to imply that even Comrie's theory of perfect needs some degree of modification before it can be applied to Persian perfect forms).

Chapter 4 analyses the aspect subsystem of Modern Persian. In this chapter the same line of thought followed in chapter 3 will be pursued, and it will be argued that the aspectual markers in Persian each have only one single invariant meaning which is present in any linguistic context in which they occur, and their so-called secondary or peripheral meanings should be explained in terms of the semantic contribution of other linguistic items present in the context of communication. In other words, chapter 4 substantiates further the main theory of the present study which claims that in the analysis of the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian two levels of meanings should be posited: a) the sentential level of meaning, and b) the elemental level of meaning, where the sentential meaning can be arrived at by adding up together the core meanings of the linguistic elements which form the sentence under consideration.

Finally, chapter 5 summarizes the results of the foregoing chapters and makes some notes with respect to opportunities for further research. These notes are

²The progressive perfect, the perfect imperfective and the double perfect are in general confined to the second person singular and plural.

essentially seen as the expansion of the scope of the present research project which is basically limited, in order to keep the project within manageable proportions, to Tehrani dialect, i.e. to the dialect of Modern Persian which is spoken in Tehran, the capital of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

0.1. Review of literature

The scholars who have studied the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian can be classified into two broad groups: (a) traditional grammarians, (b) modern linguists. The following subsections will survey the influential work of a number of scholars representing the former and of a number of scholars representing the latter group.

0.1.1. *Traditional grammarians*

Traditional works reviewed belong to Qarib et al, Mashkour, Shahbazi, Khanlari, and Lambton.

0.1.1.1 *Qarib, Abd ol-Azim, Maleck ol-sho'ara Bahar, Badi' ol-Zaman Foruzanfar, Jalal Homa'i, and Rashid Yasami*

Qarib et al's (1950) *Dastur.e zaban.e faris* 'Grammar of Persian' was once widely used in high schools in Iran. In spite of that their account of Modern Persian tense and aspect is the least adequate of all traditional accounts. Their description is not imperfect because they do not make a distinction between tense and aspect (as some modern linguists such as Marashi (1979) believe to be the case), but rather because their analysis is prescriptive and suffers from the following shortcomings.

1) Qarib et al do not integrate all verb forms of Modern Persian in their description of verb system of this language. I.e. they ignore some verb forms such as the perfect imperfective formed from the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* and the non-past perfect, and the double perfect (*mazi.e ab?ad* 'remotest past'), constructed from the past participle of the main verb plus the past participle and the non-past tense of the copula *bu.d.aen* 'be'. Their apparent reason for discarding

these forms could be that they are confined to literary register; however, according to Windfuhr (1987: 537), these forms are not by any means confined to literary style, and "are as frequent in the colloquial language" (ibid.) as in the literary language, or that they are restricted to third person singular and plural. Nevertheless, whatever their reason might be these forms must be accounted for, since they occur in speech as well as in writing.

In fact, the above-mentioned forms are not the only ones ignored in Qarib et al's description; the progressives composed by means of the auxiliary *dash.t.aen* 'have' which unlike the perfect imperfective and the double perfect are restricted to colloquial register are also discarded. Thus, Qarib et al do not leave out the above mentioned verb forms by virtue of the fact that they are confined to one register than to the other, but rather because their grammatical framework is prescriptive in nature, and inevitably in such a framework a number of forms are considered as vulgar and as such unworthy of description.

2) They do not list all the uses of a tense form. For instance, they describe the simple past tense as follows: "mazi.e motlaq (absolute past) is the form which refers to past time" (1950: 29) (translation is from the present writer), and fail to realize that in Modern Persian the simple past can also refer to a non-past event as in:

0.1. væqti ras.id.id lændæn foræn be ma telephon kon.id.
 when arrive. pt.you London immediately to us telephone do. you
 When you arrive in London call us immediately.

3) Qarib et al do not pay any attention, in their discussion of tense and aspect, to the typology of verbs in terms of the kinds of the situation they designate, and as a consequence postulate that the present (more accurately the non-past) perfect has two separate meanings as follows:

"*mazi.e naqli* 'past narrative' (i.e. non-past perfect) when it has stative meaning it implies an action which is not completely past, e.g. *sohrab ista.d.e æst* 'Sohrab has stood' (is standing), *usof neshæs.t.e æst* 'Usof has sat up' (is sitting), and if it has occurrence meaning it implies an action which is completely past like *nokær amæ.d.e æst* 'servant

has come', *næmaz xan.d.e æm* 'I have said my prayers'" (translation is from the present writer).

Their characterization of Persian non-past perfect is reminiscent of Jespersen's definition of the English present perfect. Jespersen's definition is as follows:

"The perfect, which is composed by means of the present of an auxiliary, is itself a kind of present tense, and serves to connect the present time with the past. This is done in two ways: first the perfect is a *retrospective present*, which looks upon the present state as a result of what has happened in the past; and second the perfect is an *inclusive present*, which speaks of a state that is continued from the past into the present time" (1931: 47).

(1a) is an example of retrospective present and (1b) is an example of inclusive present.

(1a) Bernie has arrived.

(1b) Bernie has lived there since 1963.

It is absolutely clear that the distinction made between retrospective present and inclusive present by Jespersen, on the one hand, and between stative perfect and dynamic (occurrence) perfect by Qarib et al on the other, is not linguistically warranted. As a matter of fact the two senses assigned to the present (non-past) perfect by these linguists should be seen as the consequence of the collocation of a dynamic verb in examples like (1a) and of a stative verb in examples like (1b) with the present (non-past) perfect marker, and the perfect should just be characterized as having one single meaning of connecting a present state to a past situation (state, event, or process). This core meaning of the present perfect will be elaborated in the full discussion of Modern Persian non-past perfect in Chapter 3.

4) The definitions Qarib et al offer for a number of tense³ forms are simply incorrect and unsatisfactory. For instance, they maintain that the basic meaning of the past perfect is remoteness (i.e. reference to a past event which is conceptualized as far from the present time) (e.g. *u ra sal.e gozæsh.t.e di.d.e bu.d* 'he had seen him last year', *mæsood di.ruz bazar ræf.t.e bu.d* 'Masood had gone to the bazaar

³Following Declerck in the present study the term 'tense' will be used in the sense of verb form rather than in the sense of a verb form which refers to a particular chunk of time line e.g. the past tense verb form.

yesterday'), and since the past perfect sometimes refers to an event which precedes another event in the past, can also be called anterior past. Apparently, what has led them to this incorrect description of the past perfect is their failure to realize that the past perfect always locates the state of having performed an action at a past time reference point which may be established either by the time adverbial present in the sentence, by another past time verb form, or by the extra linguistic context, and that the remoteness is at best an implicature derived from the existence of two time points (the time of the situation and the time point at which the state of having performed an action is located) rather than the basic meaning of the past perfect.

5) Finally, Qarib et al's account of Persian verb forms is imperfect due to the fact that in their grammatical framework, the verb forms are studied not as members of a system of tense and aspect which are both syntactically and semantically interrelated, but rather as independent linguistic items. As a consequence of that, Qarib et al fail to recognize certain linguistic facts about the Persian verb system. For instance, they do not note that the Persian verb forms should be subclassified into two groups of 'anterior' and 'nonanterior', and that the periphrastic verb form *xas.t.aen* 'want, wish' plus the short infinitive⁴ of the main verb is at best a modal construction (cf. Windfuhr: 1987).

However, in spite of these shortcomings, it is important to note that Qarib et al do differentiate between tense and time on the one hand, and tense and aspect on the other; since they call the imperfective non-past (constructed from the imperfective marker *mi-*, the non-past root of the main verb and the appropriate personal ending) *mozare* 'similar', due to the fact that it may refer either to the present or future time, and also note that the imperfective marker *mi-* indicates either habituality or continuity when affixed to a verb form. Thus, the present author rejects Marashi's claim that "the traditional grammarians of Persian assume the category of tense to be identical with time which they divide into 'past', 'present' and 'future'...[and do not] note that there

⁴Short infinitive' refers to a verb form derived from the omission of the infinitive marker - *aen* from the end of the relevant infinitive.

is no one-to-one correspondence between time and tense in Persian" (1979:40).

0.1.1.2 *Mashkour*

Mashkour's (1971) account of tense and aspect system of Modern Persian is incomprehensive and incomplete more or less in the same way as that of Qarib et al. Thus, there is no sense in listing its defects, i.e. in repeating shortcomings of Qarib et al's approach.

0.1.1.3 *Shabazi*

Shabazi's analysis of Modern Persian tense and aspect is also subject to a number of criticisms. However, his analysis is an improvement on those of Mashkour and Qarib et al; since it admits, even though in a footnote, the existence of the progressive forms composed by means of the auxiliary *dash.t.aen*. In spite of this single merit, Shabazi's description of Persian verb forms is also to a very large extent incomplete. The characterizations he offers for most of the tense forms are almost identical to those offered by Mashkour and Qarib et al. A look at his characterizations of past verb forms quickly reveals some of the defects of his analysis.

a) Absolute (simple) past is the tense which indicates the occurrence of an event or the existence of a state at a past time (translation is from the present writer).

b) Narrative or recent past (non-past perfect) is the tense form which narrates the past events in the form of narration and can be used in two senses to refer either to an event which has occurred in the recent past (e.g. *pedær.aem xab.id.e æst* 'my father has slept' (is asleep), or to an event which is completely past (trans. is from the present writer).

c) Remote past (past perfect) is the tense form time of which is far from the present (the trans. is from the present writer).

These definitions have two obvious flaws: firstly, they do not specify on what basis the tense forms in question are to be differentiated; secondly, they postulate that the degree of remoteness is a part of the meaning of Modern Persian past tense verb forms: an assumption which is due to lack of distinction between meaning and

implicature and is consequently absolutely wrong. It will be seen later that the degree of remoteness (of the time of the event from the reference point) is by no means the differentiating feature of Persian past time verb forms.

0.1.1.4 *Khanlari*

Khanlari's (1976) approach to Persian tense and aspect system is in some respects better than those already surveyed. For instance, his characterization of past and non-past perfect, as the following quotations illustrate, is more accurate.

[present perfect] refers to an event which has occurred in the past, but its effects or results continues up to the present time (ibid.: 34) (trans. is from the present writer).

[the past perfect] refers to an event which has occurred in the past before another past event (ibid. 35) (trans. is from the present writer).

In spite of this improvement, Khanlari's analysis of tense and aspect of Persian is by no means exhaustive and flawless. One of ^{the} major defects of his approach is that it fails to reveal the syntactic and semantic relationships existing among the different verb forms of Modern Persian. Thus, Khanlari fails to realize that since the Persian irregular verbs have two verbal roots⁵ (a past and a non-past) and the regular verbs have a root and a past stem (past stem further analysable into the verb root and the past tense marker /D/), the periphrastic construction *xas.t.aen* plus short infinitive is by no means a tense construction, but rather a modal one. The second shortcoming is that Khanlari's account is based on the use of tense forms in simple sentences as opposed to complex and compound sentences, and as such fails to notice that Persian finite verb forms can be used with either absolute or relative time reference. The third imperfection of Khanlari's analysis, which also holds true for almost all of traditional scholarship, derives from the lack of a clear cut distinction between the colloquial and non-colloquial style. As a consequence of lack of this distinction, Khanlari fails to discuss this significant point that the Persian language has two periphrastic

⁵The terms 'root' and 'stem' are here used in Matthews' sense (cf. Matthews 1975) to denote respectively an inflectional base form which consists of one single morpheme and one which may consist of one or more than one morpheme. Some linguists use the term 'bare stem' instead of 'root' in contradistinction to the term 'stem'.

constructions for the expression of progressivity, one restricted to formal speech and writing, the other to the colloquial register⁶. As a matter of fact, Khanlari like most of the traditional grammarians, does not consider progressive constructions at all.

0.1.1.5 *Lambton*

Lambton's (1960) account of Modern Persian tense and aspect is in a sense one of the best of all the traditional accounts, in that it remedies most of the defects extant in the accounts already reviewed. Her analysis has the following merits: a) it studies the Persian verb forms in compound and complex sentences as well as in simple ones, b) it lists some of the uses of the verb forms which the other traditional grammarians have failed to allow for, c) it admits that the progressive constructions formed from the auxiliary *dash.t.aen* 'have' and the imperfective form of the main verb are members of the Modern Persian tense and aspect system.

These virtues, however, should not be taken to mean that Lambton's description of Modern Persian verb forms has no weaknesses. In fact, her account also has some serious shortcomings as follows: firstly, it does not say anything about the so called 'passé composé' or 'remotest past' which has been labeled in the present study, after Windfuhr, 'double perfect'; secondly, it calls the verb form constructed from the past participle of the main verb and the non-past subjunctive of *bu.d.aen* 'be' as in *bay.aed ræf.t.e bash.aed* 'he must have gone', the 'subjunctive past' and as a consequence characterizes it inaccurately. (It will be seen later that this verb form is practically a perfect construction, and as such its syntactic and semantic features should be studied in relation to the other perfect constructions like the past perfect, non-past perfect, double perfect, and the perfect imperfective); thirdly, it only lists the different uses of each verb form without making it clear whether they should be considered as different meanings of the same verb form or as a basic meaning with different uses in different contexts; fourthly, it defines the subjunctive non-past as a verb form which can be used in subordinate clauses to express a state or action about which there is an element

⁶These constructions will be discussed in detail in the chapter 4.

of doubt or wish, or to refer to future with doubt, whereas it will be illustrated later that this verb form which occurs only in subordinate clauses is in effect in complementary distribution with the non-past tense, and simply locates a situation in the future relative to the deictic centre of the context; and any modal implicature derives from the modal elements present in the main clause⁷. Finally, it gives an inventory of Persian verb forms but fails to study them as terms or members of a system i.e. of Modern Persian tense and aspect system. The following are the labels Lambton (1960) uses for Modern Persian verb forms:

The Preterite	as in: <i>æli ræf.t.∅</i> . 'Ali went'.
The Imperfect	as in: <i>æli name mi.nevesh.t.∅</i> . 'Ali was writing a letter'.
The Perfect	as in: <i>æli ræf.t.e æst</i> . 'Ali has gone' (lit. is gone).
The Pluperfect	as in: <i>æli ræf.t.e bu.d.∅</i> 'Ali had gone' (lit. was gone).
The Present (ipfv. Pres.)	as in: <i>æli mi.ræv.æd</i> . 'Ali is going'.
The General Present ⁸	as in: <i>ræv.æm</i> 'I go'.
The Subjunctive Present	as in: <i>æli be.ræv.æd</i> 'Ali may go'.
The Subjunctive Past	as in: <i>bay.æd ræf.t.e bash.æd</i> 'He must be gone'.
The Future ⁹	as in: <i>æli færda xah.æd ræf.t</i> 'Ali will go tomorrow'.
The Imperative	as in: <i>bo.ro</i> 'go'.

0.1.2. *Modern linguists*

Linguistically influenced works surveyed in the following subsections belong to Marashi, Madani, and Windfuhr.

0.1.2.1 *Marashi*

Marashi's (1970) analysis of Modern Persian tense and aspect is far

⁷Rubenchik (1971: 92), like almost all of traditional grammarians, makes the same misjudgment and unjustifiably describes the subjunctive non-past as a tense which "is used to express an action of supposition, possibility, necessity or wish..." (ibid).

⁸Windfuhr (1979: 84) notes that in Modern Persian the general present (more accurately the perfective present) is normally replaced by the present (more accurately the imperfective present), and for that matter the general present (which is used in Classical Persian) should not be listed as a member of the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian.

⁹It will be shown in chapter 3 that the Persian sequence *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish' plus the apocopated infinitive is at best a modal construction restricted to formal speech and writing.

more comprehensive than that of many traditional grammarians. One of its merits is that it makes a clear distinction between tense as a grammatical category and time as a semantic notion, and notices that a given tense form irrespective of its formal structure may refer to a past time in one context and to a non-past time in another. E.g. "the form known as 'past' may denote a past or a non-past event depending on the context" (1970: 40). The other positive point about his analysis is that Marashi is aware of the fact that the grammatical category of aspect plays as a significant role in Modern Persian verb system as the grammatical category of tense, and consequently makes an attempt to characterize the aspect system of Modern Persian. The third virtue is that Marashi makes allowance for the progressive constructions formed by means of the auxiliary verb *dash.t.aen..* However, in spite of these positive points, Marashi's account of Persian aspect has some weaknesses. First, Marashi fails to distinguish between 'perfect' and 'perfective'; thus, he refers to perfect constructions as 'perfective aspect' and claims that "[Modern] Persian has three aspects: progressive, perfective (i.e. perfect) and durative" (ibid. : 43)¹⁰. Second, Marashi ignores the question of whether the different uses of a given tense form should be considered as its different meanings or as the constellation of a basic meaning and the different uses of the same form in different contexts. Third, Marashi like most of traditional grammarians leaves some of the verb forms unaccounted for, e.g. the double perfect, perfect imperfective, etc.. Thus, Marashi's account of Modern Persian in spite of being linguistically influenced is by no means comprehensive enough to account for all the semantic complexities underlying Modern Persian verb system.

0.1.2.2 *Madani*

Madani's (1984) description of Modern Persian tense and aspect, despite his claim that his grammar of Persian language is based on modern linguistics, is by no means exhaustive. His account is, in fact, only in one respect better than former scholarship on Persian tense and aspect, and that is the listing of a couple of

¹⁰Marashi adopts the term 'durative' as a replacement for the more widely used term: imperfective.

verb forms such as the perfect imperfective, the progressive constructions formed by means of the auxiliary verb *dash.t.aen*, etc. which have been left out in former accounts. Otherwise, his characterizations of Persian tense forms are almost identical to those offered by other grammarians, and as such incomplete and inaccurate.

0.1.2.3 *Windfuhr*

Windfuhr's (1979, 1987) linguistically influenced analysis of Modern Persian verb system is, by virtue of the following merits, in many ways superior to the former analyses. First, all viable verb forms of both Colloquial and non-Colloquial Persian are described. Second, each verb form is treated as a term in a tense-aspect system which is in opposition with other terms of the system, rather than as an individual linguistic item which is not necessarily semantically and morpho-syntactically related to other verb forms. Third, for the first time tense and aspect are explicitly distinguished from one another and are analysed both independently and in relation to one another. Finally, in the description due attention is paid to the syntactico-semantic differences between colloquial and non-colloquial style, and as a consequence, it is quite correctly stated that the so-called future tense of Persian is very infrequent in colloquial register and "is not a tense but at best a modality" (Windfuhr; 1987: 536).

However, even Windfuhr's account of Modern Persian tense-and-aspect system is not, despite the above mentioned merits, perfect in every respect. The followings are the deficiencies of his account of Modern Persian verb system:

a) Windfuhr also fails to enumerate all uses of Persian verb forms. For instance, he does not note that the non-past perfect in Persian can have both absolute and relative time reference, as it is evident in the following Persian examples.

0.2. mæn nahar.æm ra xor.d.e.æm.

I lunch my o.m. eat ptp. am

I have eaten my lunch.

- 0.3. ta to bær.gærd.i mæn nahar.æm ra xor.d.e.æm
 by the time you back. come. you I lunch my o.m. eat pt. ptp. am
 By the time you come back I will have eaten my lunch.

In example (0.2.) the non-past perfect verb form *xor.d.e.æm* relates a past event to a state holding at the moment of speech (hence the absolute time reference), but in example (b) it relates the event of the speaker's eating lunch to a state holding at a time point which is located in the future relative to the moment of speech (hence the relative time reference).

b) Windfuhr does not address the question of whether the different uses of a given verb form should be considered as the separate meanings of that verb form or as the sum total of its basic invariant meaning and its contextual uses.

c) Windfuhr does not note that the 'perfect' and 'perfective' are two separate categories which should not be identified with one another. Consequently, in his tentative chart of Contemporary Persian verb system he subsumes the perfect tenses and the perfective past under the same heading of 'perfective', whereas in Persian (as is clear from sentences like *u tæmam.e omr.æsh in.ja zendegi kær.d.e æst* 'he has lived here all his life') the (non-past) perfect is often, but not always, perfective.

d) Windfuhr seems to be quite uncertain about the aspectual status of the non-past subjunctive made from the prefix *be-*, the (non-past) verbal root, and the appropriate personal ending. In one place he appears to agree with Mckinnon (1975) and Barr (1939: 431-33), that the so-called subjunctive/imperative marker *be-* of Modern Persian was in early Persian a perfective marker; and in another place (more accurately in his chart of verb system of Contemporary Persian) assumes that the prefix *be-* is an imperfective marker, and calls the non-past subjunctive 'imperfective', practically without offering any explanation for such a drastic diachronic change in the aspectual meaning of *be-*.

Windfuhr's justification for such an unwarranted postulation about the verbal prefix *be-* derives partly from his desire to explain why Modern Persian has only two

subjunctive verb forms: (non-past subjunctive e.g. *be.xær.æm* 'I buy', and subjunctive perfect *xær.id.e bash.æm* 'I have bought') and partly from his belief that in Persian "the major [aspectual] distinction is between imperfective and perfective aspect in indicative and non-indicative [i.e. subjunctive]" (1979: 91). As a consequence of these, Windfuhr hypothesizes that the morpheme *be-*, the Old/Middle Persian perfective marker, indicates imperfectivity in Modern Persian; i.e., it is an imperfective marker, and the two sets of Modern Persian subjunctives construct a formal opposition of perfectivity versus imperfectivity. However, in the present study, it will be shown that his assumptions about the Persian subjunctives are generally inaccurate and the two sets of subjunctives enter a formal opposition of perfect versus non-perfect, where the non-perfect counterpart expresses the semantic notion of perfectivity rather than imperfectivity.

e) In his attempt to account for the complex verb forms such as *mi.ræf.t.e æst* 'he has been going' (which combines the imperfective marker *mi* - with the non-past perfect) and *ræf.t.e bu.d.e æst* 'he had gone' (i.e. the double perfect in his own terminology), Windfuhr postulates that what these verb forms express is the semantic category of inference or second hand knowledge, and in this they are joined by the perfect form *ræf.t.e æst* 'he has gone'. Windfuhr gives the following example to verify his above-mentioned assumption.

0.4. *zaher.æn, nevis.ænde væqt.i an name ra mi.nevesh.t.e* (æst)
 apparently, writer when that letter o.m. ipfv. write.pt. ptp. (is)
 xod.æsh ra ba in ampul.i ke ruz.e qæbl
 self.his o.m. with this injection that day. of before
 xær.id.e bu.d.e (æst), *kosh.t.e* (æst).
 buy. pt. ptp. be. pt. ptp. (is), kill.pt. ptp. (is)
 Apparently, the writer killed (*kosh.t.e æst* (non-past perfect))
 himself with this injection, which he had bought (*xær.id.e bu.d. æst*
 (double perfect)) while he was writing (*mi.nevesh.t.e æst*

(perfect imperfective))

(Windfuhr; 1987: 537).

Interestingly enough, it is easy to understand from the above example (and similarly from its English translation) that 'inference' is here at best an implicature deriving from the adverb *zaher.aen* and from the extra linguistic knowledge that the sentence is uttered either by a prosecutor in a court-room or by a reporter which can be cancelled; rather than from the verb forms. That is, the sentence under consideration, can easily be uttered by a person who has actually observed the incident reported, especially if the adverb *zaher.aen* 'apparently' is omitted from the beginning of the sentence. This possibility leaves the question of the semantics of the double perfect unsolved. The question of the semantics of the 'double perfect' will be picked up later, and it will be illustrated that the meaning of this verb form like that of the non-past perfect is associated with the function of connecting a present state with a past event, with this difference that in the case of the double perfect a present state is related via a past state to an even earlier situation.

f) ^{the} The final shortcoming of Windfuhr's treatment of Modern Persian tense and aspect system, which is equally applicable to all traditional and non-traditional treatments that the present writer knows of, derives from his failure to capture the selectional restrictions which constrain the co-occurrence of specific verb forms with certain types of temporal adverbials such as the time adverbials referring to specific time points. As a consequence of this, Windfuhr (and others) fails to realize that the Persian non-past perfect unlike its English counterpart may also sometimes (but not always) collocate with time adverbials referring to specific time points in the past ; as the following example from Tehran daily newspaper 'Keyhan' illustrates:

0.5. u dær sal.e 1340 æz mædrese.ye nezam fareq.o. tæhsil
 he in year.of 1340 from school.of military free of education
 sho.d.e æst. (Keyhan; no. 13009: p. 18).
 become.pt.ptp. is

*He has educated from the military school in 1340 (1961).

The above mentioned defects extant in Windfuhr's analysis of Modern Persian verb system verify the fact that his analysis like those of other scholars reviewed in the present chapter, is by no means a comprehensive and exhaustive description of the verb system of Modern Persian.

0.2. Conclusion

The present chapter has reviewed the most influential treatments of Modern Persian tense and aspect system. The survey explicitly exhibited that none of these accounts, traditional or linguistically influenced, is comprehensive and exhaustive enough to capture the semantic complexity underlying the verb system of Modern Persian. Given this and the fact that a comprehensive and exhaustive analysis of Modern Persian tense and aspect is not only essential for a systematic study of Modern Persian but also may shed new lights on the question of the universality of the tense and aspect and their syntactic and semantic studies as general grammatical categories, the present writer has set himself the task of analysing the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian in the light of the most recent general linguistic theories and discoveries.

CHAPTER 1

Syntactic analysis of the Modern Persian verb

1.0. Introduction

This chapter will present a general description of the formation of verb phrases in Persian, and provides some critical comments on the previous accounts of Persian verb morphology. For this it will be necessary to use the notions of 'verb stem' and 'verb root'¹. Thus, section 1.1. discusses these two notions and it will be shown that:

a) The interchangeable use of these two terms both by the traditional and non-traditional grammarians of Persian leads to a certain number of confusions in the literature.

b) In Modern Persian, regular verbs each have one single root for the past and the non-past tenses, whereas irregular verbs have two roots: a past and a non-past root.

c) The past root of the great majority of irregular verbs can be derived from the non-past root by implementing a series of phonological rules.

d) The addition of the past tense marker "D" (which is realizable as /t/, /d/, or /id/ depending on the phonological form of the (past) verb root) and the appropriate affixes to the past root (to the verb root in the case of regular verbs) results in the past tense forms of the verb in question.

Having established the denotata of the notions of 'root' and 'stem', the rest of the chapter characterizes the morphological structure of Persian verb.

1.1. Basic features of verb morphology

Most traditional grammarians of Persian postulate that each Persian verb, regular or irregular, has two stems²: a past and a non-past stem. The past stem

¹The terms 'root' and 'stem' will be used in the present study in the sense defined by Matthews (1974).

²Traditional grammarians use the term 'stem' to designate either a form which consists of only one morpheme or a form which consists of two or more morphemes.

is used to form the infinitive, past participle, simple past tense, present and past perfect, etc., and the non-past stem is used to form present participle, active participle, simple present tense³, etc. Thus, the past and non-past stems of some typical Persian verbs are as follows:

1.1.	<u>infinitive</u>	<u>past stem</u>	<u>non-past stem</u>	<u>gloss</u>
a)	shekaf.t.æn	shekaf.t	shekaf	to unsew
b)	xan.d.æn	xan.d	xan	to read
c)	xænd.id.æn	xænd.id	xænd	to smile
d)	ræf.t.æn	ræf.t	ræv	to go
e)	amæ.d.æn	amæ.d	a	to come
f)	di.d.æn	di.d	bin	to see

The above verbs exemplify a continuum of morpho-phonological relationships between the past and non-past stems (in the traditional grammarians' terminology) of Persian verbs. The past and the non-past stem of (a), (b) and (c) are exactly identical except for the past tense morpheme (which is realized as /t/ in the case of (a), /d/ in the case of (b) and /id/ in the case of (c)). These verbs are traditionally called regular verbs. The past and non-past stem of (d) to (f), on the other hand, are not identical even when the past tense morpheme is deleted from the end of the past stem. Indeed, as one moves downward in the cline from (d) to (f), the phonological similarity between the past stem (after the deletion of the past tense morpheme, p.t.m. hereafter) and the non-past stem decreases. Thus, while there is still some formal similarity between the two stems in (d) and (e), there is no phonological affinity between the past and the non-past stem of (f). Verbs like (d) to (f) are generally called irregular verbs.

1.2. Formation of the past stem of the Persian verb

In the previous section, Persian verbs were classified as regular and

³The terms used in this section to designate Persian tense forms are traditional terms. In the following sections, they will be replaced by more appropriate terms.

irregular, regular verbs being those whose verbal root⁴ and past stem were identical except for the p.t.m. (/t/, /d/, or /id/), and irregular verbs being those whose non-past root and past stem are not exactly or by no means identical even when the p.t.m. is left out. Therefore, while it can be said that the regular verbs in Persian derive their past stems by affixing the past tense archisegment /D/ to their verbal roots, as schematically illustrated by rule no. 1.2.,

$$1.2. \quad \begin{array}{l} \underline{\text{xan}} \\ \text{Verb root.} \end{array} + D \quad \longrightarrow \quad \begin{array}{l} \underline{\text{xan.d}} \\ \text{Past Stem} \end{array}$$

the same thing cannot be predicted for the irregular verbs. First, the derivation of the past stem of irregular verbs from the non-past root requires not only the attachment of the p.t.m., but also the implementation of one or more phonological changes; second, in the case of some irregular verbs like *di.d.æn* 'to see' (the non-past root, henceforth n.p.r., *bin*) the derivation is actually impossible and in the case of some others like *peyvæs.t.æn* 'to join' (the n.p.r. *peyvænd*) it is very difficult. For the very same reasons, and in order to have a general rule for both regular and irregular verbs, most traditional grammarians (e.g. Qarib et al., Khanlari, Lambton, Phillott, etc.) and a number of linguistically influenced scholars (e.g. Farrokhpay, Birjandi, Aghbar, etc.) consider the past tense morpheme and the (past)⁵ root as one single whole, and postulate that each Persian verb irrespective of being regular or irregular has two basic forms or stems: a past and a non-past stem, and obtain the different forms of all Persian verbs from these two base forms, without attempting to derive one from the other. The following quotation from Khanlari (1976: 27) may serve to illustrate this traditional approach.

In Persian each verb has two stems: a past and a non-past stem. All the forms which refer to past time are constructed from the past stem, and the form which refers to the present or future time is derived from the non-past stem (trans. is from the present writer)

⁴Hereafter in the present study the term 'verb root' refers exclusively to a form of a verb which consists of only one morpheme and the term 'past stem' denotes a form of a verb which consists of a verb root (past or non-past root) and one of the allomorphs of the past tense archisegment /D/.

⁵Parentheses are here meant to indicate that with the regular verbs which have only one root for the past and non-past tense, the attribute 'past' is optional.

1.3. Non-past or past stem as the basic form

Against the traditional grammarians, a number of non-traditional grammarians such as Cowan and Yarmohammadi (1978), Henderson (1978), Jazayeri and Paper (1961), and Ellwell-Sutton (1963) argue that each Persian verb, regular or irregular, except a few verbs like *amæ.d.æn* 'to come' and *di.d.æn* 'to see' which derive their two stems from different sources, has one basic form, and that all forms of each verb can be derived from its basic form.

This group of grammarians can be divided into two sub-groups, depending on whether they take the (non-past root) of the verb as the underlying form and derive various forms of the given verb including the past stem from it or vice versa. Nevertheless, both subgroups share this idea that what the traditional grammarians refer to as the past stem is in fact a complex form which can be analyzed into two morphemes: past stem and past tense morpheme. That is, both these groups use the term 'past stem' to designate a simple form consisting of one morpheme to which the p.t.m. is yet to be added. To avoid any possible confusion that might be created by the two different uses of the term 'stem' in the present study the term 'past root' is used to refer to what the non-traditional grammarians call 'past stem', i.e. the basic form to which the p.t.m. is yet to be affixed, and the term 'past stem' is used to refer to the combination of the (past) root and the p.t.m. The other thing that these two groups of scholars have in common is that they both utilize the format of generative transformational grammar --where the phonological rules operate on abstract underlying forms-- to generate the various forms of the Persian verb. For that matter the review of the work of one of the representatives of one of these two groups suffices to illustrate how ^{the} one-base-form approach to Persian verb morphology works. Thus, the rest of the present section surveys only the work of Cowan and Yarmohammadi (1978).

Cowan and Yarmohammadi (C&Y, hereafter), base their analysis of the morphological structure of Modern Persian verb phrases on the assumption that "the phonological form in the lexicon for all the simple verbs is the present tense stem

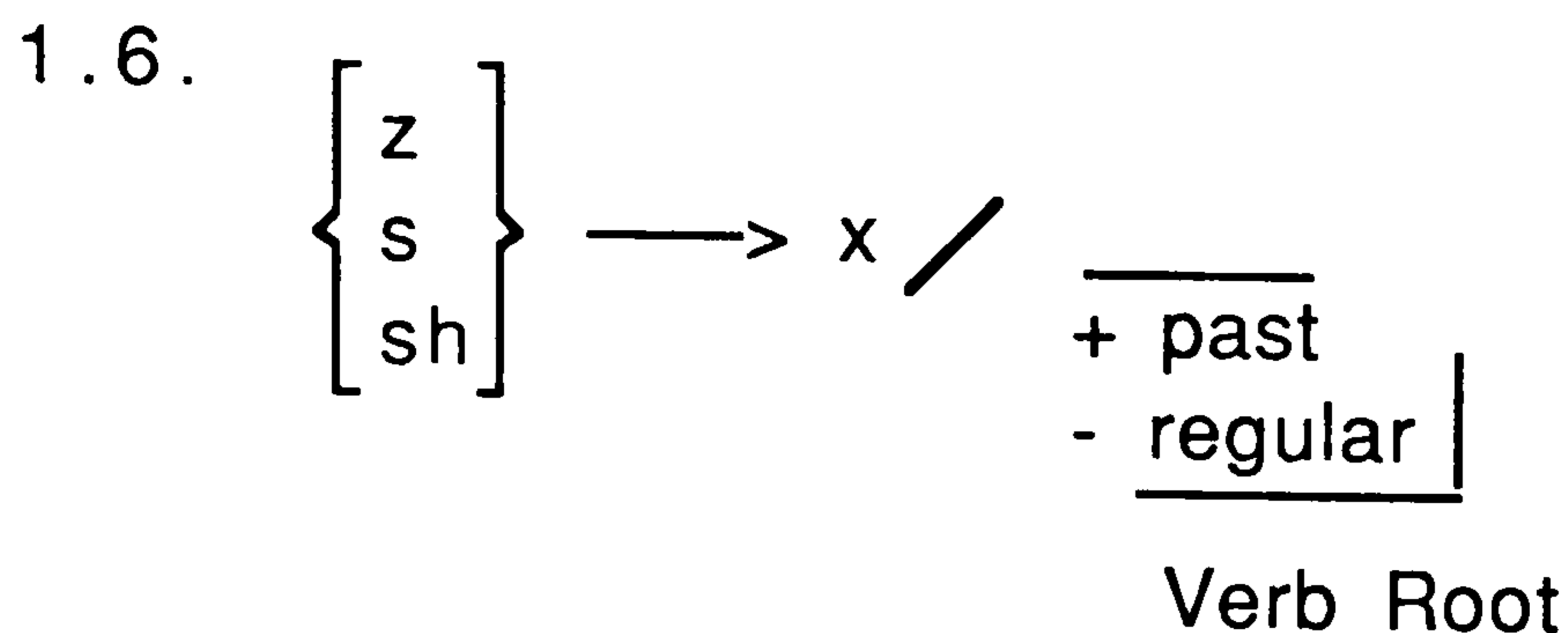
[(non-past) root]" (1978: 47), and use, as already noted, the framework of generative transformational grammar to derive the different forms of each verb from its basic form i.e. non-past root. Therefore, they maintain that the following three rules will generate the past stem of regular and irregular verbs of Persian.

$$\begin{array}{l}
 1.3. \quad \emptyset \longrightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} - \text{continuant} \\ - \text{nasal} \\ + \text{anterior} \\ + \text{coronal} \end{array} \right] \quad / \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} (+ \text{past}) \\ \text{Verb Root} \end{array} \right] \text{ ---} \\
 1.4. \quad \emptyset \longrightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} + \text{vocalic} \\ + \text{high} \\ - \text{back} \end{array} \right] \quad / \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} + \text{past} \\ + \text{regular} \end{array} \right] \text{ ---} \\
 \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \qquad \text{Verb Stem} \\
 1.5. \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} - \text{continuant} \\ - \text{nasal} \\ + \text{anterior} \\ + \text{coronal} \end{array} \right] \longrightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \partial \\ \text{Voice} \end{array} \right] \quad / \quad \left[\begin{array}{l} \partial \\ \text{Voice} \end{array} \right] \text{ ---}
 \end{array}$$

Rule 1.3. suffixes a past tense marker which C&Y represent as the archisegment /D/, consisting of the features [-continuant, -nasal, +anterior, +coronal] to the (past)root of the verb. Rule 1.4. inserts an epenthetic high vowel between the root of all regular verbs with the exception of a very few like *kosh.t.aen* 'to kill', *xan.d.aen* 'to read', *xor.d.aen* 'to eat' (these verbs should be marked [-rule 1.4.]) and the past tense marker. Finally rule 1.5. realizes the archisegment "D" as a voiced dental stop /d/ if the preceding segment is voiced, but as its voiceless counterpart /t/ if the preceding segment is voiceless.

Rule 1.3. to 1.5. derive the past stems of all Persian regular verbs from their roots. Rule 1.3. and 1.5. are also necessary for the derivation of the past stem of the irregular verbs from their non-past roots; but not sufficient, in that they should be

supplemented and preceded by the phonological rule(s) such as rule 1.6.⁶ below, which are specifically responsible for the derivation of the past root of irregular verbs from their non-past roots.



Even though the evaluation of C&Y's analysis of Persian verb morphology and of similar analyses presented by scholars who like C&Y maintain that the past stem of irregular verbs of Persian can be derived from their non-past roots (i.e. their underlying forms) through the application of a number of phonological rules, is not the major concern of the present study, consideration of the following setbacks of C&Y is however in good order.

a) The great majority of the twenty four rules C&Y postulate to account for the phonological alternation between the past and non-past root of the irregular verbs are exceptional, and as such should be prevented from applying to certain verbs, even where the phonological conditions of their application are met, by means of marking the verbs in question in the lexicon. Thus, according to C&Y's analysis, the Persian regular verbs *kosh.t.aen* (n.p.r. *kosh*) 'to kill', *xan.d.aen* (n.p.r. *xan*) 'to read', and *xor.d.aen* (n.p.r. *xor*) 'to eat' should be marked [-rule 2] (rule 1.4. in the present work), *bor.d.aen* (n.p.r. *bær*), *feshor.d.aen* (n.p.r. *feshar*) 'to squeeze', and *avær.d.aen* 'to bring' should be marked [-rule 13], and *xas.t.aen* (n.p.r. *xiz*) 'to get up' should be marked [-rule 9] in the lexicon to prevent incorrect formations.

b) In C&Y's framework, the phonological process of the derivation of the past root of some of the irregular verbs from their non-past root is extremely complicated. Therefore, the following four rules are needed in addition to rules 1.3. and 1.5. above

⁶Rule 1.6. according to C&Y accounts for the final consonant alternation characteristic of the largest group of irregular verbs: *æfraz* 'raise', *æfruz* 'kindle', *aviz* 'hang', *amuz* 'learn', *ændaz* 'drop, throw', *ænduz* 'store', *amiz* 'mix', *ængiz* 'stir up', etc." (1978: 50)

for the derivation of the past stems of irregular verbs *bæs.t.æn* 'to close', *peyvæs.t.æn* 'to join', and *gæsh.t.æn* 'to revolve, move' from their non-past roots *bænd*, *peyvænd*, and *gærd* respectively.

$$1.7. \quad d \longrightarrow \emptyset / \left\{ \begin{array}{c} n \\ r \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{---} \\ + \text{ past} \\ - \text{ regular} \end{array} \\ \text{Verb Root}$$

$$1.8. \quad n \longrightarrow \emptyset / \left\{ \begin{array}{c} i \\ \text{æ} \\ a \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{---} \\ + \text{ past} \\ - \text{ regular} \end{array} \\ \text{Verb Root}$$

$$1.9. \quad r \longrightarrow sh \begin{array}{l} \text{---} \\ + \text{ past} \\ - \text{ regular} \end{array} \\ \text{Verb Root}$$

$$1.10. \quad \emptyset \longrightarrow s \left[\begin{array}{l} + V \\ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} + \text{ high} \\ + \text{ low} \end{array} \right\} \end{array} \right] \begin{array}{l} \text{---} \\ + \text{ past} \\ - \text{ regular} \end{array} \\ \text{Verb Root}$$

Rule 1.7. deletes the last segment /d/ of the non-past root of the above verbs to produce the intermediate forms *bæn*, *peyvæn* and *gær*. Rule 1.8. applies to *bæn* and *peyvæn* and generates the intermediate forms *bæ* and *peyvæ*. Rule 1.9. applies to *gær* and produces *gæsh*.. Rule 1.10. applies to the output of rule 1.8. to yield the forms *bæs* and *peyvæs*. Finally rules 1.3. and 1.5. apply to the output of the other four rules to generate the ultimate forms *bæs.t*, *peyvæs.t*, and *gæsh.t*..

c) C&Y's analysis leaves the phonological alternations between the past and non-past root of some other irregular verbs like *gosæs.t.æn* (n.p.r. *gosæl*) 'to

disconnect', *neshæs.t.æn* (n.p.r. *neshin*) 'to sit', *di.d.æn* 'to see', etc. unaccounted for.

d) The phonological rules postulated by C&Y, with the exception of a very few which as they show are to certain degree independently motivated in Tehrani Dialect, are not well motivated rules. This is evident first from the fact that some other linguists (e.g. Henderson; 1978) take the past root, instead of the non-past root, as the underlying form and with the help of a series of similar arbitrary phonological rules derive the non-past root from it; and second from the fact that while some grammarians of Persian like Platt (1911: 198) and Ellwell-Sutton (1963: 66) maintain that the morphophonemic alternations between the non-past and the past roots of irregular verbs are motivated by the assimilation of the final consonant of the non-past root to the dental past tense marker {t/d} in the past stem, C&Y account for the alternation between the past tense morphemes /t/ and /d/ in terms of the assimilation of the archisegment /D/ to its preceding segment (C&Y; 1978: 47) in the past stem.

e) Finally, C&Y's account of the phonological irregularities within Persian irregular verbs is restricted to Tehrani Dialect (that of Henderson is restricted to Kaboli Dialect), and as such can not be applied to any other dialect of the Persian language.

The above shortcomings of C&Y's analysis is a clear indication of the fact that non-traditional approach to the Persian verb based on the idea of one underlying form for each verb is not an absolutely tenable approach. This however does not mean that the traditional approach to the Persian verb which hypothesizes that each verb has two basic forms: a past and a non-past stem, is the satisfactory approach. In fact, the traditional analysis at least has the following two defects.

a) It is uneconomical; because it postulates that Persian verbs including regular verbs derive their various forms from two basic forms, and as a consequence requires the listing of two basic forms: a past and a non-past stem even for regular verbs in the lexicon.

b) It is misleading in that it considers the past tense marker /D/ as an integrating part of the past stem, and as a result gives rise to the inaccurate implication that the temporal notions of anteriority and non-anteriority are expressed in Persian by two different basic forms of the verb: the past and the non-past stem, rather than by the presence and absence of the past tense morpheme /D/. Thus, some scholars like Tabaian (1974) and Marashi (1970) fall in this pitfall and claim that:

"With the exception of a few suppletive forms, the tense in Persian is signalled by the morphologically related past and present tense. That is, in Persian the verb stems are not only the carrier of the basic meaning of the verbs, but they also express the tense of the verb as well" (Tabaian; 1974: 148).

"In Persian the dichotomy of 'past' : 'non-past' is reflected in the verb stems. That is all verb stems fall into two categories: past and non-past, . . ." (Marashi; 1970: 90).

The inaccuracy of Tabaian and Marashi's postulations can be illustrated by the juxtaposition of the root and past stem of a number of Persian regular verbs which obviously construct an open list in the lexicon of the Persian language, and by the fact that the past stems of all Persian verbs, regular or irregular, end in either /t/ or /d/ (cf. Qarib et al; 1950).

1.11.	<u>root</u>	<u>past stem</u>	<u>gloss</u>
a)	kosh	kosh.t.	kill
b)	shekaf	shekaf.t.	unsew
c)	kæn.	kæn.d.	dig
d)	ran. ⁷	ran.d.	drive
e)	fæhm.	fæhm.id.	understand
f)	ræqs.	ræqs.id.	dance

⁷The causative verb *ran.d.æn* 'to drive' is derived from the affixation of the causative marker *-an* to the non-past root of the intransitive verb *ræf.t.æn* 'to go' (non-past root *ræv*) and the loss of the sequence *-æv-*. Causative verbs constructed from the attachment of the causative marker *-an* to the non-past root of intransitive verbs are all regular verbs, and as such form their past stems by suffixing the past tense marker /D/ to their causative stems ending in *-an*. Thus, the past stems of the causative counterparts of the intransitive verbs *geris.t.æn* 'to cry', and *sekæs.t.æn* 'to break' are *geryan.d* and *shekan.d* respectively.

g)	jæng.	jæng.id.	fight ⁸
h)	ræs	ræs.id.	arrive

The above verbs clearly indicate that the temporal distinction anteriority vs. non-anteriority is expressed by the presence and absence of the past tense marker /D/ realizable as /t/, /d/, or /id/⁹ depending on whether the preceding phoneme is voiceless, voiced, or its collocation with /d/ is difficult to pronounce.

The above discussion of the traditional and non-traditional approach to Persian verb morphology clearly demonstrates that none of these analyses is completely satisfactory. Thus, in the present study, in order to avoid the complexity of C&Y's analysis and the shortcomings of the traditional grammarians, without necessarily denying the linguistic fact that the past roots of at least some of the irregular verbs of Persian are derivable from their non-past roots, it will be assumed that whereas each Persian irregular verb has two roots: a past and a non-past root, the regular verbs have just one single root for both the past and non-past tense, and the term 'past stem' will be employed to refer to the combination of (past) root and the past tense archisegment /D/. In other words, it will be assumed that while there are two lexical entries in the lexicon for the irregular verbs: the non-past root and the infinitive from which the past root is recoverable, there is only one lexical entry for the regular verbs: the infinitive

⁸Verbs (e) to (f) represent a semi-productive zero verb formation rule of Persian which derives denominal verbs from nouns by suffixing the verbal marker $-\emptyset$ to the nouns in question. Verbs formed from nouns through the application of this rule are all regular and the past tense allomorph for these verbs is always /id/. For this reason the great majority of regular verbs whose past stem ends in /id/ are denominal verbs. Other examples of this class of verbs are: *chærx.id.æn* 'to rotate' from *chærx* 'wheel', *torsh.id.æn* 'to go sour' from *torsh* 'sour', etc.

⁹Barjaste (1983) claims that the insertion of an epenthetic vowel -i- between the past tense morpheme /D/ and the verbal root of the majority of regular verbs is a lexical operation and calls rule 1.3. above a lexical rule. His reason for this claim runs as follows:

"... although the insertion of an epenthetic vowel [between the p.t.m. /d/ and the verbal root] is obligatory for many ...[regular] verbs, there are a few regular verbs which are unsystematic exceptions to such phonological principle, e.g. *kosh.t.æn* 'to kill', *xor.d.æn* 'to eat', and *xan.d.æn* 'to read' [whose past stems are *kosh.t*, *xor.d*, and *xan.d* rather than **kosh.id*, **xor.id*, **xan.id*]. considering the fact that the lexicon is in general the repository of unpredictable properties of lexical items, and there is no systematic constraint to explain the blocking of the vowel insertion rule above, criterion 5 forces me to analyze it as a lexical process" (1983: 41-2).

The present writer, however, disagrees with Barjaste and contends that rule 1.3. is a phonological rule, since it inserts a high vowel between the p.t.m. and the verbal root where the affixation of the p.t.m. /D/ to the verb root yields a sequence whose pronunciation is either difficult or impossible, as in the regular verbs, **ræs.d*, **fæhm.d*, **xæn.d*, etc..

from which the verbal root is recoverable.

Now that the denotata of the terms 'verbal root', 'past stem', and 'past root' are established, the present section may begin with the description of the forms constructed from the past and non-past root of the irregular verbs or from the verbal root of the regular verbs.

1.4. Inflectional affixes representing Person and Number

Prior to the description of the morphological structure of the Persian verb, the present section needs to study the inflectional affixes of Person and Number. The personal endings of Persian verbs express three persons and two numbers and are as follows:

A.	<u>Suffixes added to the (non-past) root</u>		
	<u>sing.</u>		<u>plur.</u>
1st per	-æm		-im
2nd per	-i		-id
3rd per	-æd		-ænd
B.	<u>Suffixes added to the past stem</u>		
	<u>sing.</u>		<u>plur.</u>
1st per	-æm		-im
2nd per	-i		-id
3rd per	-∅		-ænd

The above diagram explicitly indicates that the verb endings of Persian except for the third person singular endings are identical in the past and non-past tense. The third person singular suffix is *-æd* in the non-past but *-∅* in the past tense. I.e. in the past tense, absence of a personal ending signifies the third person singular. However, in colloquial style of conversation, the third person singular pronominal suffix *-æ/-esh* 'her/his' is more often than not substituted for the zero morpheme to fill the gap in paradigm of the verb endings of the past tense, as in *amæ.d.esh* 'came he'. This, as

already pointed out, is a characteristic of colloquial speech, and does not occur in formal speech and writing.

1.5. Copula verb *bu.d.æn* 'be'

The Persian copula verb *bu.d.æn* is a suppletive verb; i.e. its past root can not be derived from its non-past root and has to be learned by native speakers as suppletive roots¹⁰. It has one past root *bu*, but two non-past roots: *hæst*, and *bash*. Its first person singular conjugation of the past and non-past (present) tense are as follows:

pref.	pt. root	n. pt. root	p.t.m.	vb ending	vb form	gloss
—	bu-		-d	-æm	bu.d.æm	'I was'
—		hæst-	—	=	hæst.æm	'I am'
mi-		bash-	—	=	mi.bash.æm	=
—		=	—	=	bash.æm	'I be'

1.12. 1st per. sing. conjugation of the verb *bu.d.æn* in the past and non-past tense

bu.d.æn also has a complete set of enclitic forms in the non-past (i.e. present)

¹⁰It might be argued that the past root *bu* can be derived from the non-past root *bash* with the help of a vowel raising rule:

$$a \rightarrow u \text{ / } + \text{ past root}$$

and an obstruent deletion rule:

$$sh \rightarrow \emptyset \text{ / } + \text{ past root}$$

which both according to C&Y are general rules of modern spoken Persian. This argument is even consistent with the tradition of considering *hæst.æn* a verb distinctive from *bu.d.æn* (cf. Khanlari; 1976, Madani; 1984). The problem with this tradition is three fold: firstly, some modern linguists such as Windfuhr do not agree with it ("From the earliest grammars, a fictitious infinitive has been cited: *hæst.æn*, called the existential verb. There never was such an infinitive . . ." (1978: 97)), secondly, *hæst.æn* is a defective verb and has no past tense forms, thirdly, the non-past forms of *bu.d.æn*, i.e. *mi.bash.æm* 'I am', *mi.bash.i* 'you are', etc. only occur in formal discourse, and in both colloquial and formal discourse the non-past forms *hæst.æm* 'I am', *hæst.i* 'you are', etc. are generally more common. Therefore, the most appropriate analysis would be to consider the three roots *bu*, *hæst*, and *bash* the suppletive roots of the same verb (cf. Henderson 1978), especially that *bash* is in Modern Persian primarily the root used for the non-past subjunctive of *bu.d.æn*: *bash.æm* 'I be', *bash.i* 'you be', etc.

tense (-*æm*, -*i*, (-)*æst*, -*im*, -*id*, -*ænd*)¹¹ which are encliticized to nouns or adjectives to generate nominal or adjectival predicates, e.g. *mæn xoshhal.æm* 'I am happy', *to daneshju.i* 'you are a student'. They also combine with the past participle to produce the non-past perfect tense. In other words, *bu.d.æn* in the non-past has three sets of forms, an enclitic set and two non-enclitic sets.

The Persian copula verb *bu.d.æn* has two further peculiarities, which are particularly relevant to the subject matter of the present study. Firstly, even though its second non-past root *bash* may collocate with the imperfective marker *mi-*, its past root *bu* almost never co-occurs with the imperfective marker *mi-* in Modern Persian. Secondly, the past perfect form of *bu.d.æn*, i.e. *bu.d.e bu.d.æm* 'I had been', *bu.d.e bu.d.i* 'you had been', etc. are now obsolete in some dialects of Modern Persian as Tehrani dialect (cf. Qarib; 1950: 57). These peculiarities will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter of the present study.

1.6. Forms constructed from (non-past) root

Verb phrases constructed from the (non-past) root will be investigated in subsections 1.6.1. to 1.6.6.

1.6.1. *Perfective non-past (present)*

Perfective non-past is a controversial issue in the treatment of Persian verb system. Windfuhr, for instance, criticizes Boyle (1966: 36) for citing this category e.g. *pors.æm* 'I ask' as opposed to imperfective non-past ('continuous present' in Boyle's terminology) *mi.pors.æm* 'I am asking/ask' and failing to mention right away that "the latter 'normally' replaces the former in the modern language" (Windfuhr; 1979: 84). However, it should be noticed that, even in Modern Persian, the perfective and imperfective non-past forms of some verbs are both in use and either do not interchange without changing the aspectual view point of the linguistic context or cannot replace one another. *bu.d.æn* 'be' is one of them. In the past tense,

¹¹The enclitic forms correspond to the verb endings indicating the categories of Person and number, except for the third person singular (cf. § 1.4.).

as already pointed out, this verb has only a perfective form; but in the non-past, it has both perfective, e.g. *hæst.æm* 'I am' (*bash.æm* 'I be' the second perfective form is restricted to the subordinate clauses) and imperfective forms (e.g. *mi.bash.æm* 'I am/will be'); the latter being the stylistic version of the former, only occurs in formal speech and literary texts. *dash.t.æn* 'to have' is the second verb which has perfective non-past forms, e.g. *dar.æm* 'I have', *dar.i* 'you have', etc.. In its noncausative sense, this verb only has a perfective form (for causative use of *dash.t.æn* see § 1.8.) (in the past as well as in the non-past), e.g. *dash.t.æm* 'I had', *dar.æm* 'I have', etc., but not **mi.dash.t.æm*, **mi.dar.æm*, etc.

The third member of this group of verbs is *xas.t.æn* 'to wish, want' which has both modal and non-modal uses (cf. chapter 3). In the non-past tense, when used non-modally, as in (*mæn*) *yek livan.e ab mi.xah.æm* 'I want a glass of water', it only has imperfective forms; but when used modally, it has perfective as well as imperfective forms, as in *mæn mi.xah.æm be.ræv.æm* 'I want to go', *mæn xah.æm ræf.t* (short infinitive)¹² 'I will go'. The difference between, the imperfective non-past of *xas.t.æn* plus the non-past subjunctive of a main verb and its perfective non-past plus the short infinitive of the main verb may tentatively be assumed to be that the former locates the situation of wanting, wishing at the moment of speech, but the latter locates the situation of wanting, rather than the situation designated by the main verb, in the future. This assumption is verifiable by the fact that the perfective is generally incompatible with the present time reference, and as such normally refers to events posterior to the time of speech (cf. Bache; 1982) (The combination of the perfective of *xas.t.æn* and the short infinitive of a main verb is traditionally called the 'future tense'. The status of the 'future tense' in Persian will be discussed in detail in

¹²The term 'short infinitive' designates the infinitive form of the verb from which the infinitive marker *-æn* is deleted. Consequently, the short infinitive of a given verb like its infinitive does not express the categories of tense, number, and person, but rather only the lexical meaning of the verb in question. The short infinitive is normally used after the impersonal modal verbs *tævanes.t.æn* 'to be able to', *bayes.t.æn* 'to be necessary', *shayes.t.æn* 'to be fitting' and the modal verb *xas.t.æn* 'to want, wish'.

chapter 3.)

The defective verbs *bayes.t.æn* and *shayes.t.æn* are two further verbs that can be said to have preserved their perfective non-past forms. The impersonal modals *bay.æd* 'must' and *shay.æd*¹³ 'perhaps, maybe' are formally speaking, the perfective non-past of these verbs for the third person singular which are used in Modern Persian to indicate obligation and probability, as in *(mæn) bay.æd be.ræv..æm* 'I must go', *(mæn) shay.æd be.ræv.æm* 'I may go', or as in impersonal constructions like *bay.æd ræf.t* '(one) must go'.

The above-mentioned verbs are not the only verbs whose perfective non-past forms are in use in Modern Persian. As a matter of fact, the use of the perfective non-past forms of Persian verbs, as the following sentences demonstrate, in gnomic expressions, proverbs, and cliché expressions --which are equally used in colloquial and non-colloquial style-- is very common¹⁴ .

1.13. *dozd cho ba cheraq ay.æd (pfv.), gozide tær bær.æd (pfv.) kala.*
 thief as with lamp comes. he selected more takes goods
 A thief with light in his hand, is able to steal more valuable goods.

1.14. *qætre qætre jæm' gær.d.æd (pfv.) vangæhi dærya shæv.æd (pfv.)*
 drop drop collected becomes. it until sea becomes. it
 drop by drop it becomes a sea.

1.15. *gir.æm (pfv.) ke to dorost mi.gu.i, xob ke chi?*
 take I that you right ipfv. say. you good that what?
 Let me assume that you are right, so what?

The above discussion explicitly indicates that in Modern Persian the perfective non-past forms of at least a few verbs are still in use, and as such their replacement

¹³The other commonly used forms of *bayes.t.æn* are *bayes.t.∅* (pfv. past) and *mi.bay.est.∅* (ipfv. past) which can be used to indicate a past obligation, e.g. *anha bayes.t mi.ræf.t.ænd* 'they had to go' (these forms and *bay.æd* are in modern spoken Persian free variants of one another), and those of *shayes.t.æn* are *shayes.t.e* (ptp) 'worthy' and *shay.an* (pres. p.) 'worthy' which are almost always used as adjectives.

¹⁴In the gnomics, proverbs and cliché expressions, if the perfective form of the verb is replaced with its imperfective counterpart, the construction is not a proverb, a gnomic or a cliché expression anymore.

by their imperfective counterpart is not allowed or changes the meaning of the sentence. Therefore it seems that Windfuhr's statement about the normal substitution of the imperfective non-past for the perfective non-past is too strong and should be rephrased to read: the imperfective non-past form of the majority of Persian verbs normally replaces the perfective non-past counterpart. Nevertheless, since the perfective non-past forms of the vast majority of Persian verbs are very rarely used in conversation and informal speech, nothing more will be said about this category in the present study, and it will be assumed that the perfective non-past of a verb (if it is ever used) is formed from the combination of the (non-past) root of the lexical verb and the appropriate personal ending. Thus, the first person singular perfective non-past of *bu.d.æn* and *xas.t.æn* can be schematized as follows:

1.16.	<u>infinitive</u>	<u>non-past root</u>	<u>perfective form</u>
a)	bu.d.æn	hæst. & bash.	hæst.æm & bash.æm
b)	xas.t.æn	xah.	xah.æm

1.6.2. *Imperfective non-past*

The imperfective non-past is constructed by affixing the imperfective prefix *mi* - and one of the personal suffixes (cf. § 1.4.) to the non-past root (or to the verb root in the case of regular verbs), e.g. *mi.ræv.æm* 'I go/am going', *mi.xænd.æm* 'I smile/am smiling'. To put it in another way, the imperfective non-past is constructed from prefixing the imperfective marker *mi* - to the perfective non-past. The derivational process of the imperfective non-past can be represented diagrammatically as follows:

1.17. mi- (ipfv. m.) + (non-past) root + personal ending

1.6.3. *Non-past progressive*

The grammatical category of progressive constitutes another controversial issue in Persian grammar. The grammarians of Persian may be divided into three groups on the basis of their treatments of progressive aspect in this language. Group 1 mostly comprises traditional grammarians such as Qarib et al

(1950), Khanlari (1976), and Mashkour (1971) who maintain that Persian does not possess a progressive aspect in addition to the imperfective aspect, and thus completely ignore the occurrence of verb forms constructed from the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* 'to have' and the imperfective of a main verb in daily speech. As it was pointed out in the previous chapter, these scholars do not discuss the periphrastic progressive constructions of Persian simply because their approaches to Persian verb system are prescriptive, and as such discard constructions which are restricted to informal and colloquial speech. Group 2 consists of scholars like Farrokhpay (1979) who refer to the periphrastic construction formed from the combination of the auxiliary verb *dash.t.æn* 'to have' and the imperfective form of the main verb in their analysis of the Persian system, but also claim that in sentences like 1.18. below, "the progressive marker . . . is the prefix *mi* - as identified in the word *mi.nevesh.t.ø* 'he was writing', [and that] the verb *dash.t.æn* is used redundantly" (Farrokhpay;1979: 23).

- 1.18. væqti amæ.d.æm dash.t.ø mi.nevesh.t.ø.
 when come. pt. I have. pt. he ipfv. write. pt. he
 When I came away, he was still writing.

The third group consists of linguists like Dehqan (1972), Keshavarz (1962), Purkhosrow (1980), and Madani (1984) who not only consider the verb forms formed with the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* as independent categories of Modern Persian, but also examine their different senses in detail. Purkhosrow, for example calls these verb forms 'progressive' and considers them independent of the imperfective verb forms which he subsumes under the term 'durative aspect'.

The most acceptable of these three approaches seems, however, to be the second one. The reason for this is that even though the verb constructions formed with the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* and the imperfective form of the main verb "has now been used in Standard Modern Persian for quite some time" (Dehqan;1972: 198)¹⁵

¹⁵The forms with the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* appear to have first been recorded by Zukovskij (1888).

these verb forms due to the following reasons can not be considered as independent categories of Persian.

a) The imperfective aspect of Persian does not exclude the progressive meaning. Thus, Farrokhpay (1979) is quite right to claim that in sentences like *u (hala) dar.æd qæza mi.xor.æd* 'he is eating food (now)', "the verb *dash.t.æn* is used redundantly" (ibid. 23).

b) "Negation is blocked, thus no such form exists as **næ.dar.-æm kar mi.kon.æm* 'I am not working'" (Windfuhr; 1978: 102).

c) "Progressive forms [with *dash.t.æn*] are formed only in the indicative" (Dehqan; 1972: 200).

The above facts do not, however, justify the complete exclusion of the semantic and syntactic description of the progressive constructions formed from the combination of *dash.t.æn* and the imperfective of the main verb, from the grammar books on Persian, particularly because "today [these verb forms] have been accepted in Standard Colloquial Persian as well as in works of fiction" (Windfuhr; 1979: 102). Thus, the present study unlike the traditional grammars examines both the semantic and syntactic features of the constructions consisted of one of the tenses of the auxiliary verb *dash.t.æn* 'to have' and the imperfective of the main verb. This position is especially justifiable by the fact that the imperfective is in Modern Persian primarily associated with the semantic notion of continuity rather than progressive-ness, and by the fact that there are other languages besides Persian which possess a periphrastic progressive construction despite the fact that their imperfective aspects do not exclude progressive meaning either, e.g. French and Spanish (cf. Comrie; 1976).

The non-past progressive is formed from the perfective non-past of the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* (non-past root *dar* + personal ending) and the imperfective non-past of the main verb. In other words, in this periphrastic construction, the operator and the main verb are both marked for person and number, as the schematic representation of the

first person singular non-past progressive of the verb *ræf.t.æn* 'to go', i.e. *dar.æm mi.ræv.æm* 'I am going' demonstrates.

1.19. [dar + -æm] + [mi- + ræv. + -æm]
 n.p.r. vb ending ipfv. m. n.p.r. vb ending

1.6.4. *Non-past subjunctive*

Non-past subjunctive is constructed by attaching the subjunctive prefix *be* - and the appropriate personal suffix to the (non-past) root of the lexical verb. The full paradigm of the non-past subjunctive (with the verb *ræf.t.æn* 'to go') is as follows:

1.20.	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1st per.	be.ræv.æm	be.ræv.im
2nd per.	be.ræv.i	be.ræv.id
3rd per.	be.ræv.æd	be.ræv.ænd
	('I go', 'you go', etc.)	

1.6.5. *Imperative*

The imperative is also a problematic category in Persian. The questions associated with this category are as follows:

a) How many persons are there in the imperative paradigm?

b) Why are the imperative forms of a given verb, except for the second person singular which takes no ending, formally identical with its non-past subjunctive forms?¹⁶ (cf. § 1.6.4.)

While the traditional grammarians such as Suten (1963), Boyle (1966), etc. believe that there exists a complete paradigm of imperatives in the structure of the Persian language, a number of modern linguistically influenced scholars like Birjandi (1978) and Barjaste (1983) maintain that "Persian has two forms of imperative, one in which the underlying NP subject is *to* 'you' (sing.), the other in which the underlying subject is *shoma* 'you' (pl.)" (Barjaste; 1983: 53). These linguists

¹⁶The present writer is probably the first scholar who addresses the question of the formal identity between the imperative and non-past subjunctive forms of the Persian verbs.

generally base their arguments for only two term imperative paradigms in Persian on this assumption that it is not practically possible to request someone who is not present at the place and time of speech to do something. This latter group of linguists, however, fail to notice that it is possible to request or order someone who is not present indirectly, i.e. through the addressee(s), to perform an action or carry out an obligation. In other words, the Persian imperative sentences such as *be.ræv.æm* 'let me go', *be.ræv.æd* 'let him go', *be.ræv.im* 'let us go', and *be.ræv.ænd* 'let them go', traditionally called 'jussive', should be considered as dependent clauses subordinate to higher verbs or clauses in compound sentences like

1.21.

- a) *be mæn dæstur be.deh* (ke) *be.ræv.æm*.
to I order imp/subj (that) imp/subj. go I
Let/order me to go/(that) I go.
- b) *be u dæstur be.deh* (ke) *be.ræv.æd*
to he order imp/subj give (that) imp/subj. go he
Order him to go/(that) he go.
- c) *be ma dæstur/ejaze be.deh* (ke) *be.ræv.im*.
to us order/permission give (that) go we.
Let/order us to go/(that) we go.
- d) *be anha dæstur be.deh* (ke) *be.ræv.ænd*
to they order give (that) go
Order them to go/ (that) they go.

In the same way, their second person singular and plural counterparts *bo.ro*¹⁷ 'Go' (sing.) and *be.ræv.id* 'Go' (pl.) following Austin (1962) and Ross (1970) should be analyzed as implicit performative sentences which are underlyingly dependent and derivable from explicit performative sentences such as (1.22a) and

¹⁷When the non-past root ends in . . . *æv*, this becomes . . . *ou* in the imperative second person singular, and the imperative prefix *be-* assimilates to the following syllable, e.g. the 2nd per. sing. imperative of *ræf.t.æn* 'to go' is *bo.ro*, and that of *dævi.d.æn* 'to run' is *bo.do*.

(1.22b) below.

1.22.

- a) mæn be to dæstur mi.dæh.æm (ke) be.ræv.i¹⁸.
 I to you order ipfv. give I (that) go you
 I order you to go/(that) you go.
- b) mæn be shoma dæstur mi.dæh.æm (ke) be.ræv.id
 I to you (pl.) order ipfv. give. I (that) go you

The above hypothesis (i.e. the hypothesis that the superficially independent imperative sentences are in the deep structure dependent performative clauses) is further supported by the fact that it can also be used as the linguistic explanation for the existence of only one single set of forms for the imperative and non-past subjunctive in the Persian language. In other words, Persian has one form for both the non-past subjunctive and the imperative by virtue of the fact that the non-past subjunctive is only used in subordinate clauses (see, for instance, Boyle (1966), Ellwell-Sutton (1963), etc., and the imperatives are underlyingly or originally dependent verbs in subordinate clauses.

An apparent counterexample to the subordinate clause status of the imperative sentences postulated above, derives from Windfuhr's claim that the non-past subjunctive has imperfective aspect¹⁹, i.e. represents the situation referred to as extended in time. The problem this claim gives rise to is that the same verb form, i.e.

¹⁸As it is distinguishable from the above examples the second person singular imperative is the only verb form in the paradigm which loses its personal ending in the surface structure. The reason for this could be that the 2nd per. sing. imperative is semantically the least marked member of the paradigm, and this unmarked nature renders the marking of the categories of person and number redundant, and causes the deletion of the personal suffix in the surface structure.

¹⁹Windfuhr makes this claim about the non-past subjunctive, because he maintains that the perfective /imperfective opposition is the distinctive factor in Persian language, and for that matter, one of the two subjunctive categories of Persian should be perfective and the other imperfective. The perfect subjunctive, i.e. past participle plus the non-past subjunctive form of copula *bu.d.æn* (*bash.æm*, *bash.i* etc.) cannot be the imperfective term of the opposition since it is often perfective; thus, he concludes that the non-past subjunctive is the imperfective term and the perfect subjunctive the perfective one. However, he is not only wrong about the imperfective aspect of the non-past subjunctive, as this category definitely has perfective aspect, but also about the perfect subjunctive. Since, as Mourelatos (1981: 195) correctly notes the perfective ASPECT should not be confused with the perfect tenses (present perfect, pluperfect), since, the simple perfect is often but not always perfective" (ibid.). Thus, while in Persian *u ræs.id.e æst* 'he has arrived' is perfective, *u tæmam.e omr.æsh inja zendegi kær.d.e æst* 'he has lived here all his life' is imperfective.

the verb form constructed from the prefix *be*, the (non-past) root and the personal ending, has perfective aspect in the imperative sentences (Allen (1966: 207) notes that ". . . when one person asks another person to do something, he asks the other person to do all that he wants him to do, not just part of it. Thus . . . non-inclusive (imperfective) reference does not seem to occur in imperative sentences".), but imperfective aspect in the subordinate clauses containing the non-past subjunctive. Thus, the imperative sentences can not be subordinate clauses in the deep structure, since according to Windfuhr's suggestion verb forms with the prefix *be-* in the subordinate clauses has imperfective aspect whereas the imperative verb phrases have perfective aspect. Nevertheless, a brief reflection reveals that Windfuhr's suggestion as to the imperfective reference of the non-past subjunctive is completely unwarranted. First, according to Barr (Andreas 1939: 431-33, footnote) and MacKinnon (1975), since Middle Persian the function of the prefix *be-* was to mark perfectivity, and there is no sound reason to support the claim that the function of this prefix has drastically shifted from the expression of perfectivity in Old and Middle Persian to that of imperfectivity in Modern Persian. Second, according to Smith (1983) in the temporal clauses beginning with the connectives *before* and *after*, Persian *qæbl æz inke* and *bæ'd æz inke*, non-stative verbs must have perfective aspect, since "these connectives locate situations successively relative to each other, [and] as Heinamaki (1974) points out, a minimal semantic requirement for successiveness between situations is that an endpoint of one situation must follow the endpoint of the other" (Smith; 1983: 485). Thus, in the following Persian sentence the verb form *be.yay.æd* 'come he' has perfective rather than imperfective reference.

- 1.23. qæbl æz in.ke be.yay.æd, mæn mi.ræv.æm
 before from this. that subj/imp. come .he I ipfv. go. I
 I will go before he comes.

One of the interesting results of the clarification of this point that the non-past subjunctive like the imperative has perfective rather than imperfective reference, is

that it proves that the function of the prefix *be-* in Modern Persian is, as it was in Middle Persian, to mark the semantic notion of perfectivity and *not* the categories of imperative and subjunctive. That is, in Persian the imperative and the non-past subjunctive have no morphological marker, and as a consequence, the prefix *be-* should not be called, as it has been called by a number of linguists such as Marashi (1970), the subjunctive/imperative marker, but rather the perfective marker. The evidence for this is that in other Indo-European languages such as English the so-called subjunctive and the imperative do not seem to be marked formally but rather are designated by the simple form of the verb which has perfective reference, and the Persian prefix *be-* originally had the function of marking perfectivity.

To recapitulate this rather lengthy section, (a) the Persian prefix *be-* is a perfective marker restricted in modern language to the non-past subjunctive and the imperative verb forms (thus, henceforth the prefix *be-* will be called perfective marker rather than subjunctive/imperative marker), (b) the imperative sentences as implicit performatives are in the deep structure the subordinate clauses of explicit performative sentences, and for the same reason there exists in Persian only one verb form for both the imperative and the non-past subjunctive which is always used in the subordinate clauses, and finally (c) the imperative paradigm of each verb in Persian comprises six rather than two persons. All the persons in the imperative paradigm, except for the second person singular which takes no personal ending, are derived from the affixation of the perfective marker *be/o-* and the appropriate personal ending to the (non-past) root of the verb. The full paradigm of the imperative, as already noticed, with the exception of the second person singular which is slightly different from its subjunctive counterpart in that it takes no personal ending, is completely identical with that of the non-past subjunctive, and as such need not be given here. The formation of the second person singular imperative is as follows:

1.24. *be* + (non-past) root

1.6.6. "Definite future"

The so-called definite future tense is constructed from the perfective non-past of the modal verb *xas.t.æn* (n.p.r. *xah*) (i.e. *xah* + personal ending) and the short infinitive of the main verb, e.g. *mæn xah.æm ræf.t* 'I will go'. In chapter 3 it will be illustrated that this construction is at best a modal construction (see also Windfuhr; 1987: 537) and Marashi (1970: 42)

1.7. Forms constructed from the past stem

Verb forms constructed from the past stem (i.e. from the combination of the (past) root²⁰ and the past tense marker /D/) and the appropriate affixes are as follows:

1.7.1. *Perfective past (absolute or simple past in traditional terminology)*

The perfective past is derived from the sequential attachment of the past tense marker /D/ and the appropriate personal suffix to the (past) root of the lexical verb, e.g. *ræf.t.æm* 'went I', *di.d.i* 'saw you', *xær.id.ø* 'bought he'. The derivational process of the perfective past can be formulated as follows:

1.25. (past) root + { -t, -d, or -id } + personal ending

1.7.2. *Imperfective past (Imperfect or progressive past in traditional terminology)*

The imperfective past is formed by affixing the imperfective prefix *mi* - to the perfective past (cf. § 1.7.1. above); i.e. by affixing the prefix *mi*- , the past tense marker /D/ and the proper personal ending to the (past) root of the given verb, e.g. *mi.xan.d.æm* 'I was reading/used to read'. The necessary derivational process may be captured by the following schema.

1.26. mi + (past) root + { -t, -d, or -id } + personal ending

²⁰As already noticed, whereas the irregular verbs have two roots a past root for the past tense, and a non-past root for the non-past, the regular verbs have one single root for the past and non-past tense. Thus, the parentheses are to imply that the use of the term 'past' in reference to the base forms of the irregular verbs in the past verb forms is obligatory, in reference to base forms of the regular is redundant or optional.

1.7.3. *Past progressive*

The past progressive is constructed from the perfective past of the auxiliary verb *dash.t.æ̃n* 'to have' plus the imperfective past of the main verb. As the following examples also illustrate, in the past progressive as in the non-past progressive the operator and the main verb both are marked for the grammatical categories of person/number.

1.27. *dash.t.æ̃m mi.ræ̃f.t.æ̃m.*

have pt. I ipfv. go I

I was going.

1.28. *dash.t.ø mi.xan.d.ø.*

have pt. he ipfv. read pt. he

He was reading.

1.7.4. *Past participle*

Past participle is constructed by affixing the past tense marker /D/ and the participle suffix *-e* to the (past) root of the verb. Thus, the generation of the past participles of the Persian verbs *pæsæ̃nd.id.æ̃n* 'to select' and *pox.t.æ̃n* 'to cook', a regular and an irregular verb respectively, may be demonstrated as follows:

1.29.

a) $\frac{\text{pæsæ̃nd|}}{\text{vb root}} + D + e \rightarrow \text{pæsæ̃nd.id.e}$ 'selected'

b) $\frac{\text{pox|}}{\text{pt. root}} + D + e \rightarrow \text{pox.t.e}$ 'cooked'

The past participle is in turn used for the construction of the following verb phrases.

1.7.4.1. *Non-past (present) perfect*

Non-past perfect is constructed by the addition of the non-past enclitic forms of the auxiliary *bu.d.æ̃n* 'to be', i.e. *-æ̃m*, *-i*, *æ̃st*²¹, *-im*, *-id*, and *-æ̃nd* to the past participle. The full paradigm of the non-past perfect (with the verb *ræ̃f.t.æ̃n*

²¹The copula *bu.d.æ̃n* in the non-past tense for all persons except the third person singular has enclitic form. Thus, for the 3rd per. sing. the non-clitic form is used in the non-past perfect.

'to go') is as follows:

1.30.	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1st	ræf.t.e.æm	ræf.t.e.im
2nd	ræf.t.e.i	ræf.t.id
3rd	ræf.t.e æst	ræf.t.e.ænd

1.7.4.2. *Perfect imperfective*

Windfuhr (1979) and Madani (1984) are almost the only contemporary scholars who cite this verb form in their analysis of Modern Persian verb. This is perhaps due to the fact that this category exhibits a peculiar restriction: it may only occur with the third person singular or plural. The present writer, however, maintains that, since this verb form usually occurs in daily speech (e.g. *u sal.ha dær in shæhr zendegi mi.kær.d.e (æst)*²² 'he has been living in this city for many years') as well as in works of fiction and newspapers, its syntactic and semantic properties should be discussed in the description of the Persian verb system. Thus, the present section outlines the syntactic construction of this verb form, and its semantic characterization will be dealt with in chapter 3.

The perfect imperfective is constructed by affixing the imperfective prefix *mi-* to the non-past perfect of the third person singular or plural, as in *væqti vared mi.shæv.æd, anha qæza mi.xor.d.e.ænd* (perf. ipfv.) 'when he enters (historical present), they have been eating (food)'.²²

1.7.4.3. *Progressive imperfective perfect*

Madani (1984) whose analysis of the Persian verb system seems to be corpus based, is the only linguist who cites this complex verb form. The examples that he mentions are as follows:

1.31.	yæzdgerd	dash.t.e	televizion	ra	tæ'mir	mi.kær.d.e
	Yazdgerd	prog.	television	o.m.	repair	ipfv. do. pt. ptp.

²²In colloquial speech, when the subject is the third person singular, the auxiliary of the perfect and the perfect imperfective is usually omitted. Thus *xær.id.e* and *mi.xær.id.e* may be substituted respectively for *xær.id.e æst* and *mi.xær.id.e æst*.

ke bærq u ra geref.t.e æst.

that electricity he o.m. get. pt. ptp. is

Yazdgerd received (lit.has received) an electric shock when he was repairing (lit. has been repairing) the television set.

1.32. bæche.ha dash.t.e. ænd bazi mi.kær.d.e. ænd . . .

child. pl. prog. are play ipfv. do. pt.ptp. are

Children have been playing . . .

Madani calls this form 'narrative past progressive' (apparently because it is used to express a reported or logically inferred past event), and notes that it is --like the perfect imperfective-- restricted to the third person, particularly to the third person singular; but strangely enough he does not specify how it is formed. However, its construction can be inferred from the above examples as follows:

1.33. perfect of the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* (i.e. ptp *dash.t.e* + enclitic of

bu.d.æn 'be') + perfect imperfective of the main

verb (i.e. *mi-* + ptp of the main verb + enclitic of *bu.d.æn*)

The important point that should be noticed with regard to the progressive imperfective perfect is that this form does occur in daily discourse (as a matter of fact the present writer has recently noticed its occurrence in his own speech), and as a consequence its syntactic and semantic behaviour should be recorded in any grammatical description of Persian.

1.7.4.4. *Perfect subjunctive*

The perfect subjunctive is formed by combining the past participle of the main verb and the non-past subjunctive of verb *bu.d.æn* . It may be recalled that the auxiliary *bu.d.æn* 'be' has two non-past roots: *hæst* and *bash*²³, and the non-past subjunctive of this verb is constructed from the combination of the second non-past

²³As a matter of fact, the copula verb *bu.d.æn* has a third non-past root (*bov* .) which is used in Classical Persian and poetry. It might be said that the non-past root *bov* ., as in *tævan.a bov.æd hæst ke dan.a bov.æd* 'whoever who is knowledgeable is powerful', is derived from the past root *bu* . by a vowel raising rule as follows:

u --> o / + past root

root and the appropriate personal ending. The full paradigm of the perfect subjunctive is as follows (verb *ræf.t.æn* 'to go').

1.34.	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1st	ræf.t.e bash.æm	ræf.t.e bash.im
2nd	ræf.t.e bash.i	ræf.t.e bash.id
3rd	ræf.t.e bash.æd	ræf.t.e bash.ænd

(‘I be gone’, ‘you be gone’, etc.)

The problem associated with this verb form is one of terminology. While some scholars like Lambton (1960) and Rubenchik (1971) call this category the ‘subjunctive past’, other scholars such as Boyle (1966), Ellwell-Sutton (1963) and Windfuhr (1979) quite correctly call it the ‘perfect subjunctive’. The difference is not however simply one of nomenclature. Those linguists who name the verb form under investigation ‘perfect subjunctive’ have noticed that this verb form precisely like other perfect categories of Persian consists of a past participle and a form of the copula *bu.d.æn* ‘be’: “The perfect tenses are formed by combining the Past Participle with the appropriate tenses of *bu.d.æn*” (Ellwell-Sutton; 1963: 88). Nevertheless, even those grammarians who call this verb form ‘perfect subjunctive’ fail to notice that the perfect subjunctive and the non-past perfect have the same meaning, and that while the former is “mainly confined to subordinate clauses” (Ellwell-Sutton; 1963: 69) the latter almost always occurs in the main clauses. That is, they, with the exception of Ellwell-Sutton also consider the perfect subjunctive mainly a modal category and define it as a verb form which “is used in reference to a past event or condition about which there is some doubt. Ex. : *mi.tærs.æm u ræf.t.e bash.æd* ‘I fear that he has gone’” (Boyle; 1966: 69), and fail to realize that the modal notions such as doubt, uncertainty, etc. are usually implied by modal expressions like *mi.tærs.æm* ‘I fear’ present in the linguistic structure rather than by the perfect subjunctive.

1.7.4.5. *Infinitive*

The infinitive is constructed from the sequential addition of the past tense marker /D/ and the infinitive marker *-æn* to the (past) root of the verb. The following are the notational representations of the derivation of the infinitive of the verbs *xan* 'to read' and *mor* 'to die'.

- 1.35. a) $\frac{xan|}{vb\ root} + D + \frac{-æn|}{inf.\ m.} \longrightarrow \frac{xan.d.æn|}{infinitive}$ 'to read'
- b) $\frac{mor|}{pt\ root} + D + \frac{-æn|}{inf.\ m.} \longrightarrow \frac{mor.d.æn|}{infinitive}$ (n.p.r. mir) 'to die'

1.7.4.6. *The double perfect*

"Double perfect" is a term used by Windfuhr (1987) to denote a verbal form constructed from sequencing the past participle of the main verb, and the past participle and the enclitic form of the auxiliary verb *bu.d.æn* 'to be', e.g. *xær.id.e bu.d.e æst* from *xær.id.æn* 'to buy'.

Windfuhr contends that this verb form may not properly be translated into English and states that for instance for *xær.id.e bu.d.e æst* "no proper translation comes to mind" (1979: 85). In a sense he is right. Since this verb form is a perfect construction and as such, as it will be discussed in more detail, it serves to relate a present state via an anterior state to an even earlier event, and to the best knowledge of the present writer English does not possess a verb form which could accomplish this semantic function. Nonetheless, due to the fact that in Modern Persian this verb form like the perfect imperfective and the progressive imperfective perfect is generally restricted to the third person, and the past perfect more often than not supersedes it in speech and writing, the English past perfect seems to be an apt translation equivalent. Thus, the following Persian sentence *anha molla hæm dæ'væt kær.d.e bu.d.e.ænd* can be translated into English as, 'they had also invited (a) clergyman', without inflicting any semantic loss.

1.8. "Compound verbs"

A great number of Iranian and Iranist scholars (such as Lambton, Ellwell-Sutton, Mashkour, Windfuhr, Marashi, Farrokhpay, etc.) call the combination of one of a series of simple verbs such as *kær.dæn* 'to do, make', *sho.dæn* 'to become', *dash.tæn* 'to have', *da.dæn* 'to give', *geref.tæn* 'to get', *xor.dæn* 'to eat, collide', etc. and a noun, an adjective, an adverb, a preposition, or a prepositional phrase 'compound verb', and argue that combinations of this kind form single semantic units. Therefore, according to these scholars the following are compound verbs rather than simply an ordinary verb and object collocation.

1.36.	<u>Infinitive</u>	<u>literal translation</u>	<u>gloss</u>
a)	hes <i>kær.dæn</i>	feeling make	to feel
b)	sorx <i>kær.dæn</i>	fried make	to fry
c)	hes <i>sho.dæn</i>	feeling become	to be felt
d)	sorx <i>sho.dæn</i>	fried become	to become fried
e)	æz <i>dæst da.dæn</i>	from hand give	to lose
f)	ersal <i>dash.tæn</i>	sent have	to send
g)	negah <i>dash.tæn</i>	hold have	to stop
h)	<i>zæn geref.tæn</i>	woman get	to marry
i)	<i>atæsh geref.tæn</i>	fire get	to catch fire
k)	<i>atæsh zæ.dæn</i>	fire strike	to set fire to
l)	<i>zæmin xor.dæn</i> ²⁴	ground collide	to fall down
o)	<i>qæsæm xor.dæn</i>	oath eat	to take an oath

Compound verb analysis of verbal constructions like above, in particular of those whose verbal elements are either *kær.dæn* 'do, make', *sho.dæn* 'become', or *geref.tæn* 'take', has some consequences for the present research. In the first place,

²⁴A great many grammarians of Persian, especially non-Iranian grammarians, fail to realize that the Persian verb *xor.dæn* is a polysemous verb with the two different meanings of 'to eat' and 'to collide with', and give the incorrect literal translation 'eat ground' for the so-called compound verb *zæmin xor.dæn* instead of 'ground collide'.

if verb phrases like *sorx kær.d.æn* 'fry' (lit. make fried), *sorx sho.d.æn* 'become fried' (of a fish), and *atæsh geref.t.æn* 'catch fire' are regarded as compound verbs "in which the elements have completely fused into an idiomatic expression"²⁵ (Moyne; 1970: 414), it would then be wrong to suggest that in these verbal constructions the verbal element acts as an aspectual verb²⁶ which refers to one or another of the segments of the event designated in its complement. However, the present study takes the view that the verbal element of "compound verbs" such as *sorx kær.d.æn* 'fry', *sorx sho.d.æn* 'become fried' and *atæsh geref.t.æn* 'catch fire', act as aspectual verbs. In the second place, the claim that the components of verb phrases like *zæn geref.t.æn* 'marry' (lit. take a wife) form a semantic unit gives rise to the question of whether the elements of these verb phrases also act as syntactic units, or may be separated in the appropriate syntactic contexts by other elements, in particular by inflectional materials such as the imperfective prefix *mi-*, perfective prefix *be-*, the negative marker *næ/e-*, etc. Given these consequences, the present work needs to establish whether the distinction between simple and compound verbs in Persian is warranted and necessary or not.

Verbal phrases in Persian are traditionally categorized as simple and compound verb. Any verbal phrase which consists of only one verbal root is a simple verb. The verbal phrases which contain either a prefix plus a verbal root or a nominal plus a verbal root are compound verbs. Tabaian (1979) heavily criticises the analysis of verbal constructions such as *qæsæm xor.d.æn* 'take an oath', *rænj bor.d.æn* 'suffer' (lit. pain carry), etc. as compound verbs. He notes: "the motivation for

²⁵Huddleston (1984: 22) notes: "it must not be thought that when we speak of compounding, . . . , we are talking of mental operations performed by a speaker in using words: we are simply concerned with the linguistic analysis of the morphological structure of words . . . ". He also points out that "[in English] compounding . . . is vastly less frequent in verbs than in nouns and indeed it is highly questionable whether the relatively few stems that look like compounds are in fact to be so analysed" (ibid. : 127). Huddleston's reason for not regarding the English "pseudo-compounds" like *house-keep* and *lip-read* is that "the semantic role of the nominal element is analogous to that of a syntactic object (cf. *They kept house for us*)" (ibid.).

²⁶Aspectual verbs are those which refer to the beginning, middle, or end of the event which is named in their complements. The Persian aspectual verbs, and those Persian verbs (e.g. *geref.t.æn* 'get', *sho.d.æn* 'become', and *kær.d.æn* 'do, make') which sometimes act as aspectual verbs, will be studied in more detail in Chapter 4, § 4.17.

regarding these verb phrases as compound verbs seems to result from the failure of the grammarians (a) to distinguish the homonymous simple verbs that occur in these structures, and (b) to determine the exact relationship between the nominal and its verb" (ibid. : 198). For the sake of illustration, he examines the following verb phrases.

- 1.37. *qæza xor.d.æn* *zæmin xor.d.æn*
 food eat. pt. inf. 'to eat' ground collide. pt. inf. 'to fall down'

He points out that most grammars on Persian regard *qæza xor.d.æn* as an ordinary complement plus verb construction, but *zæmin xor.d.æn* as a compound verb. These grammars offer a number of reasons for analysing *zæmin xor.d.æn* as a compound verb as follows.

(a) In *zæmin xor.d.æn* the morpheme *xor.d.æn* does not have its literal meaning. Tabaian, however, notes that "this generalization overlooks the fact that the simple verb *xor.d.æn*, among its nine recorded dictionary meanings (Haim 1963), also means 'to collide with'. This latter meaning is well preserved in expressions such as *bær-xord* 'collision', and *zæd-o-xord* 'fight'" (1979: 199).

(b) The second reason for viewing *qæza xor.d.æn* as a verb phrase and *zæmin xor.d.æn* as a compound verb is that the nominal in the former can take the object marker *ra* while in the latter it cannot.

- 1.38. (u) *qæza ra xor.d.∅*
 (he) food o.m. eat. pt. he
 He ate the food.

- 1.39. *(u) *zæmin ra xor.d.∅*.
 (he) ground o.m. collide. pt. he

Tabaian quite correctly argues that the reason for the above-mentioned difference is that while *qæza* 'food' in ex. 1.38. is a specific direct object, *zæmin* 'ground' in 1.39. is an indirect object of the verb, "hence it cannot occur with *ra*" (ibid.).

However, the morpheme *zæmin* can optionally be accompanied by its own proper preposition *be-*.

- 1.40. (u) (be) *zæmin xor.d.∅*.
 (he) (with) ground collide. pt. he
 He fell down.

The last argument presented by the advocates of the compound verb analysis for differentiating between *qæza xor.d.æn* and *zæmin xor.d.æn* is that in the former a modifier may occur before or after the nominal, whereas in the latter the modifier must precede the nominal. Tabaian notes that this difference can again be accounted for on independent grounds. "The difference in this and similar instances arises from the simple fact that in Persian a modifier may either precede or follow the direct object . . . but it normally precedes the indirect object" (1979: 200).

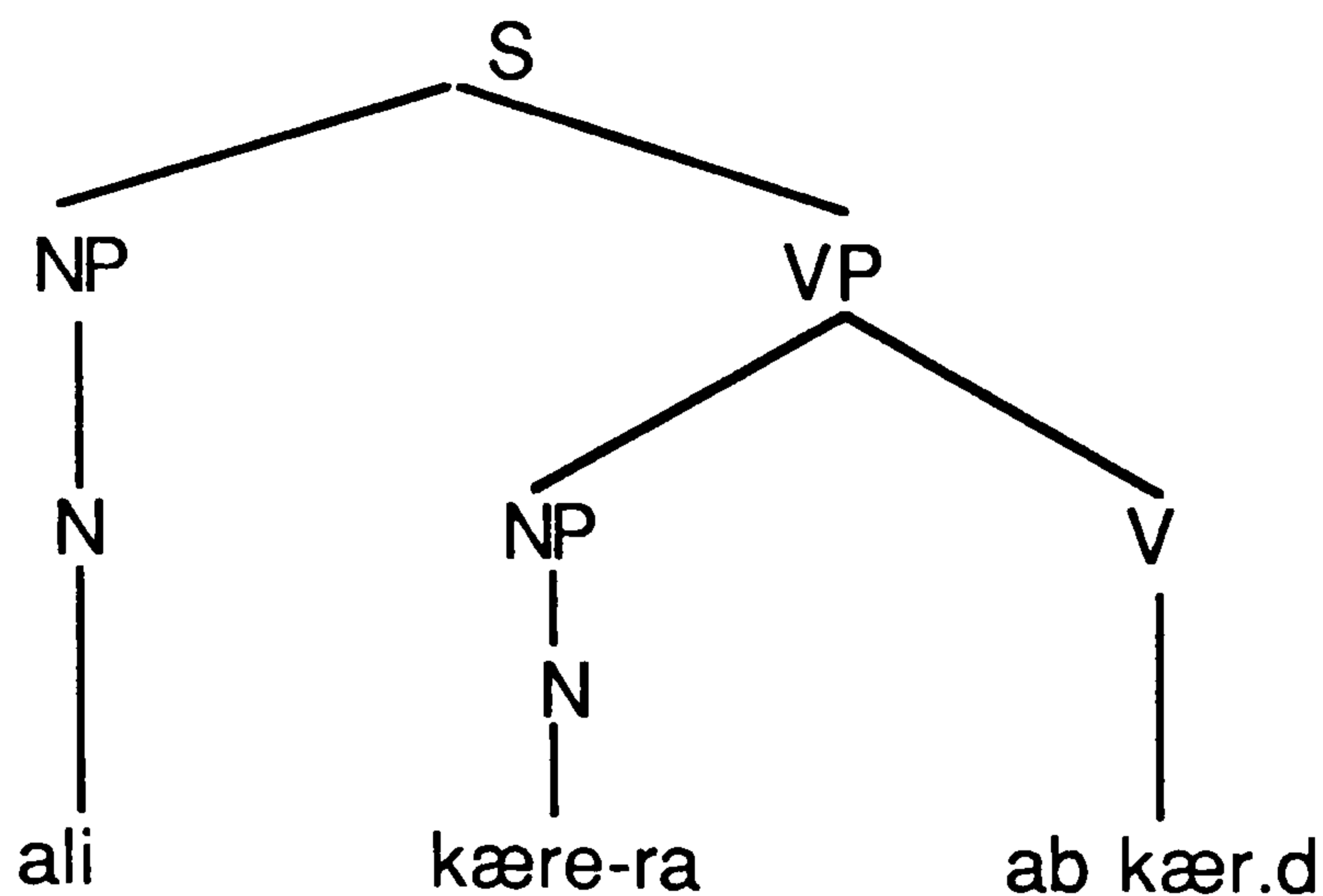
Another verbal construction traditionally treated as a compound verb is *ab kær.d.æn* 'melt' (of butter). The compound verb analysis of this verbal construction does not stand up to careful scrutiny either. In other words, the verbal and non-verbal element of this verb phrase like those of *zæmin xor.d.æn* do not form a semantic unit as such, and the total meaning of the verb phrase is based on the simple sum of the meanings of its components rather than quite different from them. The evidence for this is that in Persian which is a highly metaphorical language, *ab* 'water' is the symbol of liquids, and as such can co-occur, as a state adjective meaning 'melted, liquidated' with the verb *kær.d.æn* 'do, make' in its causative sense to denote any process of liquidization caused by an agent. For that matter, in sentences like the following sentence, the two lexical elements *ab* and *kær.d.æn* should not be considered as a semantic unit that can be subsumed under the node 'V' (as illustrated in tree diagram 1.42. proposed by Moyne (1970) for "compound verbs" like *ab kær.d.æn*), but rather as independent units which can be subsumed respectively under the nodes 'ADJ' and 'V' (as shown in tree diagram no. 1.43.).

1.41. æli kære ra ab kær.d.ø.

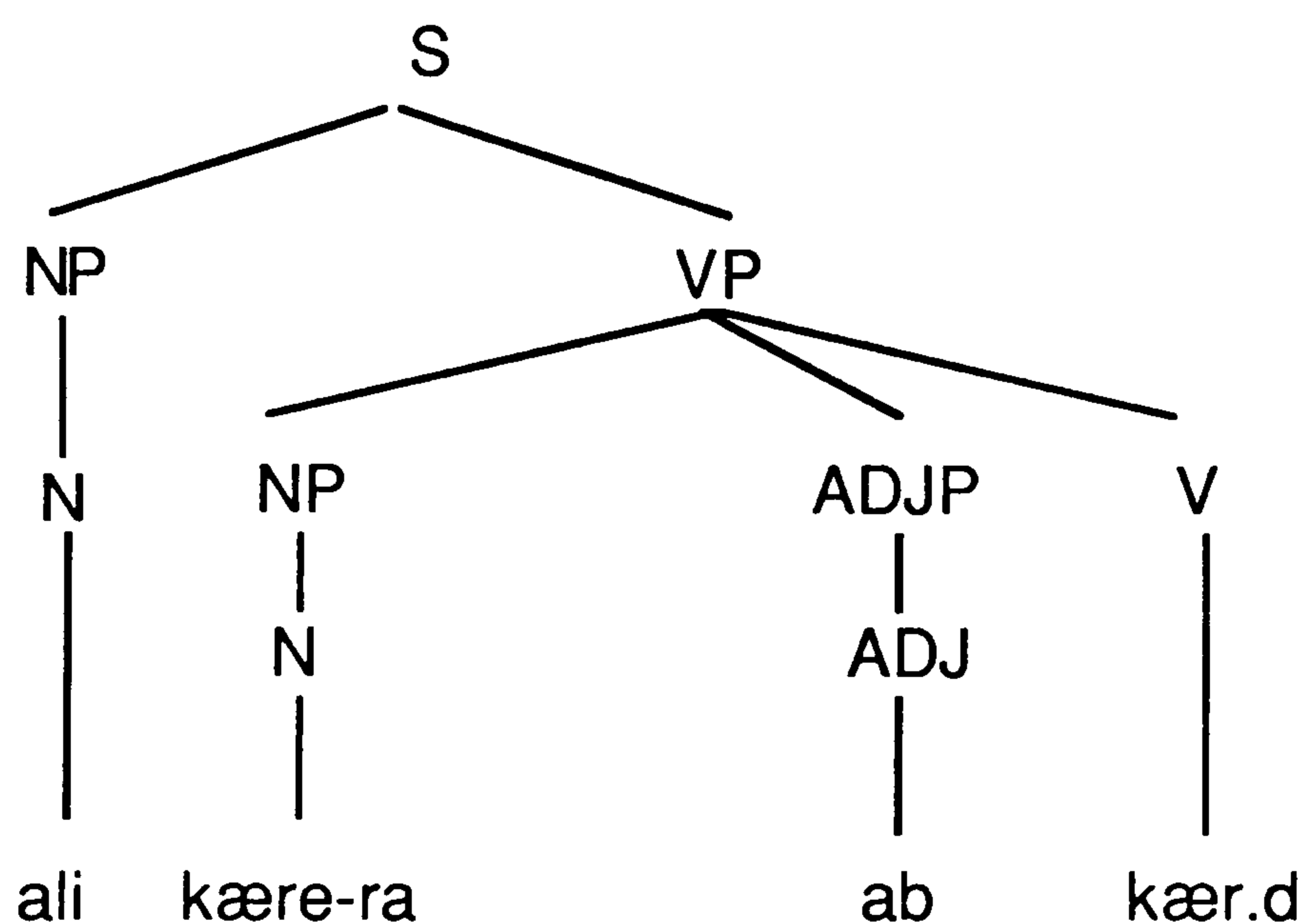
Ali butter o.m. water do. pt. he

Ali melted the butter

1.42.



1.43.



Having illustrated that the components of the typical examples of the Persian "compound verbs" do not actually fuse into one single semantic unit²⁷, it is time to find out whether these verbal phrases act as single syntactic units, or other elements may intervene between their constituents. The answer is in the negative. In fact, as the

²⁷Ironically, Sheik (1979) who is himself one of the supporters of the compound verb analysis and defines "a compound verb as a semantic element that consists of a simple verb and a noun, an adverb, a preposition, or a prepositional phrase" (ibid. : 333). has the following to say as regards the semantic fusion of the meaning of the constituents of the so-called compound verbs:

"Some compounds appear to have highly idiomatized meanings, as in *del.æm geref.t.ø* 'I became sad' (lit. 'my heart seized'). Others have more or less their literal meanings: *ab da.d.æn* 'to water'. Even with the idiomatized structures, the literal meaning is present in the mind of the speaker and may in fact, form a basis for . . . understanding the meaning of the compound by the speaker or often an explanation for the semantic relationship between compounds using the same verb element" (ibid. : 333).

following examples show, the components of all Persian compound verbs, without exception, may be separated by the aspectual markers *mi-*, *be-* and the negative marker *næ-*.

1.44. æli dar.æd xane ra xærab mi.kon.æd.

Ali prog. house o.m. destroy ipfv. do. he

Ali is destroying the house.

1.45. æli mi.xah.æd xane ra atæsh be.zæn.æd.

Ali ipfv. want. he house o.m. fire pfv. strike. he

Ali wants to set fire to the house.

1.46. xane ra xærab næ.kon.

house o.m. destroy neg. do.

Do not destroy the house.

The inflectional materials are not actually the only elements which may be intruded between the components of a given "compound verb". In fact, adjectives modifying the nominal element and modals may also come between the elements of a compound verb. To mention just one example, the constituents of the verbal phrase *zæn geref.t.æn* 'marry' which Moyne (1970) lists as an example of "true compounds"²⁸ can be separated by either an adjectival phrase modifying the nominal element, or by a modal verb.

1.47. æli zæn.e xeili xub.i geref.t.e æst.

Ali wife. of very good. a get. pt. ptp. is

Ali has married (lit. has got) a very good wife.

1.48. æli zæn xah.æd geref.t.

Ali wife will. he get. pt.

Ali will marry.

²⁸Moyne (1970) divides the verbal constructions considered in most grammars on Persian as examples of compound verbs into three categories of "true compounds", "pseudo-compounds", and "verb phrases". This further indicates the distinction between simple and compound verb in Persian is both unwarranted and unnecessary.

The above examples clearly indicate that contrary to what Jazayery and Paper (1961: 190) claim, the number of elements that can occur between a preverb and its verb (in a compound verb) is not limited at all to object pronominal suffixes which may be used in place of the full pronoun. (The object pronominal suffixes, *-æm* 'me', *-æt* 'you' (sing.), *-æsh* 'him/her', etc., unlike the grammatical markers of aspect, which are inflected on the verb, are attached to the non-verbal element of the "compound verb": *u ra gom.æsh kær.d.im* 'we last him').

The syntactic and semantic analysis of the typical examples of the so-called compound verbs of Modern Persian suffice to show that the compound verb analysis of verb phrases like *ab kær.d.æn* 'melt', *zæn geref.t.æn* 'marry', *zæmin xor.d.æn* 'fall down', etc. is not linguistically justifiable. However, mention of certain linguistic facts of the semantic structure of Persian verbs which are obscured by compound verb analysis is in good order.

a) The Persian verb *sho.d.æn* 'to become' in Modern Persian is an inchoative verb, and as such can be used in collocation with state adjectives to denote processes resulting in the inception of new states²⁹. Thus, in *særd sho.d.æn* 'to get/become cold', *æsæbani sho.d.æn* 'to get angry', *tarik sho.d.æn* 'to get dark', etc. (generally considered as compound verbs), the verb *sho.d.æn* designates the inception of the states: coldness, darkness, anger, etc.

b) The Persian verb *geref.t.æn* 'to get, take' in addition to its main sense, it can also be used (like its English equivalent) as an inchoative verb to signify the beginning of an action or a state, as in the so-called compound verbs *atæsh geref.t.æn* 'to catch

²⁹It would be worth while to note here that even in the so-called passive predicates consisting of the past participle of the lexical verb and various forms of *sho.d.æn*, the verb *sho.d.æn* is not so much a passive auxiliary as it is an inchoative verb representing an action-process situation as a process. In other words, it can be claimed that in Persian there is no passivization process as such, but rather a grammatical process which can be used to invert an active sentence like *æli hæssæn ra kosh.t.ø* 'Ali killed Hassan' which explicitly implies the existence of an agent (Ali), to a process sentence *hæssæn kosh.t.e sho.d.ø* 'Hassan was killed' which implies that the event has taken place without the involvement of any agent; and perhaps that is why in Persian unlike in English the co-occurrence of the agentive by-phrase, i.e. *tævæssot.e* or *be væsile.ye* 'by means of' with the so-called passive constructions as in *hæssæn tævæssot.e æli kosh.t.e sho.d.ø* seems very awkward and artificial (for a detailed argument for inchoative analysis of the so-called passive constructions of Persian see Moyne; 1974: pp 249-267)

fire', and *xæshm geref.t.æn* 'to get angry'.

c) The Persian verb *dash.t.æn* 'to have' has two basic functions in addition to its auxiliary function of expressing progressive aspect. As a main verb, it can either be used to denote the notion of possession or ownership, as in *æli yek ketab dar.æd* 'Ali has a book', and as such as a state verb does not occur in progressive form, or it may be used, like its English translation equivalent, as a causative³⁰ verb to indicate that a state is brought about by an initiator, as in *æli name ra ersal dash.t.ø* 'Ali had the letter posted' (lit. Ali the letter sent had). However, it should be noted that, Persian sentences like *æli mashin ra negæh dash.t.ø* 'Ali had the car stopped' are ambiguous between two readings. Thus, in this example Ali could be both the initiator and the doer of the act of stopping the car, or he could be only the initiator who has caused a third person to carry out the act of stopping the car. The first meaning is possible when Ali is driving the car, and the second meaning is possible when someone else is driving the car. Nevertheless, this duality of meaning does not invalidate the claim that the Persian verb *dash.t.æn* can also have a causative sense, particularly that *dash.t.æn* in sentences like above^{the} may occur in progressive form, hence the acceptability of sentences like *æli dash.t.ø mashin ra negæh mi.dash.t.ø* 'Ali was having the car stopped/ was stopping the car'.

d) The Persian verb *kær.d.æn* 'to do, make' also has two senses. In its ordinary sense, it is equivalent of the English verb 'do', and in its causative sense, in co-occurrence with an adjective it indicates that the agent (subject of the sentence) causes the patient (object of the sentence) to undergo a process and enter a new state, as in *æli mahi ra sorx kær.d.ø* 'Ali fried the fish' (lit. Ali the fish fried made)³¹.

³⁰It is worth while to note that the present writer is the first scholar who has realized that the Persian verb *dash.t.æn* 'to have' has causative sense in sentences like *æli mashin ra negæh dash.t.ø* 'Ali stopped the car' (lit. Ali the car stopped had), in the sense that in these sentences the causative *dash.t.æn* indicates that the grammatical subject causes the patient i.e. the grammatical object to enter a new state.

³¹ As a matter of fact, the present writer maintains that all the verbal constructions of Persian consisting of a simple verb and a non-verbal element traditionally called 'compound verbs' fall into two categories of action-process and process verbs. Thus, the verbal expression *xateme da.d.æn* 'to finish' is an action-process verb and means that an agent, usually an animate one brings about, the end of a situation, event, etc., and the related verbal expression *xateme yaf.t.æn* 'to finish' (intrans.)

(e) Finally, the compound verb analysis makes the classification of the Persian verbs into verb types unnecessarily complicated, since this analysis treats all verbal expressions consisting of one of the simple verbs such as *kær.d.æn*, 'to make', *sho.d.æn* 'to become', *da.d.æn* 'to give', *geref.t.æn* 'to get', etc. and a non-verbal element as separate verb units, and as a consequence increases the number of the Persian verbs. It goes without saying that such an increase in the number of the Persian verbs practically complicates the process of verb classification.

In spite of the fact that "the distinction between simple and compound verb in Persian is unnecessary and can not be justified on the semantic and syntactic grounds" (Tabaian; 1979: 196), for practical purposes in the present research Persian verb phrases which are translated into English by simple verbs, e.g. *hes kær.d.æn* 'feel', *rah ræf.t.æn* 'walk', etc. will be considered as compound verbs. However, verbal phrases like *sorx kær.d.æn* 'fry', even though their English translational equivalents are simple verbs, will be treated as simple verb-object collocations; as the analysis of these verbal phrases will obscure certain linguistic facts of the type mentioned in (a) to (e) above.

1.9. Tense, aspect, mood: independent categories in Modern Persian system

Windfuhr (1979: 85) notes that one of the shortcomings of the former analyses of the Persian verbs is their failure to distinguish clearly between tense, mood and aspect. Thus, the major objective of the present section is to draw a clear distinction between the Persian categories of tense, aspect and mood.

Tense, aspect and mood are practically distinguishable in a large number of the languages of the world as independent categories. One type of evidence is that in

indicates that a situation or an event reaches its final stage, and as such is non-committal to the existence of an external force which brings about the end of the situation. And perhaps, that is why most traditional grammarians like Lambton, Phillott, Ellwell-Sutton, etc. consider verbal expressions like *gul xor.d.æn* 'to be deceived', *be hæm xor.d.æn* 'to be broken up', *shekæs.t xor.d.æn* 'to be defeated', and *ænjam yaf.t.æn* 'to be accomplished' as the passive counterparts of the active verbal expressions, *gul zæ.d.æn* 'to deceive', *be hæm zæ.d.æn* 'to disturb, break up', *shekæs.t da.d.æn* 'to defeat', and *ænjam da.d.æn* 'to accomplish' respectively, whereas the former group of verbal expressions should be considered as the process counterparts of the latter group.

modern linguistics, these three categories are often discussed separately. Therefore, Comrie (1976) studies the category of aspect, Comrie (1985) the category of tense, and Palmer (1986) studies the category of mood. The second piece of evidence is that although mood is "formally associated, along with tense, aspect, and voice, with the verbal system of the language . . . the modal system of most familiar languages does not relate semantically to the verb alone or primarily, but to the whole sentence" (Palmer, 1986: 2).

The last type of evidence is that the general linguistic studies of the grammatical categories of tense, aspect, and mood shows that tense is the grammatical category related to time, aspect is the grammatical category related to the speaker's view of a given action in the real world, and finally mood is the grammatical category related to "the speaker's commitment with respect to the factual status of what he is saying (his emphatic certainty, his certainty or doubt, etc.)" (Lyons; 1968: 307).

The Persian category of mood is also distinguishable from the categories of tense and aspect on syntactic grounds. Thus, while tense and aspect are realized in Modern Persian by inflecting the verb, mood is realized by modifying it by means of modal verbs such as *asbayes.t.aen* 'must', *shayes.t.aen* 'it is apt, worthy', *tævanes.t.aen* 'can', and *xas.t.aen* 'want, wish'. The issue of the realization of the category of mood in Modern Persian should be discussed in more detail.

Traditional grammarians generally hold that "In Modern Persian there are three moods: indicative, subjunctive and imperative" (Rubenchik; 1971: 89). There is, however, telling evidence that Modern Persian is like English in that it has a system of modal verbs, rather than "Latin [which] has its system of mood: indicative, subjunctive and imperative.

Firstly, "Morphologically the indicative mood is not characterized in any special way. All tense forms . . . are at the same time forms of indicative mood" (Rubenchik; 1971: 89).

Secondly, as already pointed out, the complete paradigm of imperatives in the structure of the Persian language with the exception of the second person is identical with the complete paradigm of the so-called non-past subjunctives. That is, the imperatives like the non-past subjunctives are formed from the (non-past) root of the verb, the prefix *be-*, and the appropriate personal ending; in the second person singular imperative the personal ending is not added.

Thirdly, the choice of the indicative or subjunctive does not depend on the degree of commitment by the speaker to the truth of what is being said. As a matter of fact, the subjunctive verb forms (i.e. the non-past subjunctive and the perfect subjunctive), and the indicative verb forms (i.e. the imperfective non-past and the perfect non-past) are in complementary distribution: the subjunctives, as Ellwell-Sutton (1963: 91) quite correctly points out, are "mainly confined to subordinate clauses", whereas non-subjunctives are mainly confined to main clauses. This is a very different matter from the contrast between assertion and non-assertion, as is shown by the fact that Persian does not use the subjunctive in direct questions, though they are obviously non-assertive.

Fourthly, as has been explained, every Persian imperative verb form is derivable from a complex sentence whose matrix verb is an explicit performative and its embedding verb is a subjunctive. The support for this is two-fold: first, the imperative verb forms are identical with the non-past subjunctives, second, the non-past subjunctive verb forms like the perfect subjunctive verb forms are mainly confined to the subordinate clause.

Fifthly, a verb form in *-ad* (3rd person singular) which has a precative sense "is the sole surviving form of the Old Optative" (Lambton; 1960: 154). Rubenchik (1971: f.n. 19, p 89) quite rightly points out the optative mood occurs only in the Classical Persian in the third person singular. He also notes that "In the modern language, the only form that has been preserved is the optative mood from the verb *bu.d.aen* 'be' --

bad 'let there be' which occurs mainly as a part of the predicate in slogans *zende bad* . . . 'long live' . . . , *nabud bad* . . . 'down with . . . ' " (ibid.)

Finally, as Lyons (1968: 307) notes, "the distinction between giving commands and making statements cannot be sharply drawn". Thus, Persian *mæn mi.xah.æm (ke) to be.ya.y.i in.ja* like its English equivalent 'I want you to come here' would normally be considered as a declarative (alternatively indicative) sentence. However, the corresponding utterance, in the right context, might be understood to express a command no less peremptory or authoritative than *be.ya in.ja* 'come here'.

The above points, clearly illustrate that (a) Modern Persian has a system of modal verbs, rather than a system of mood, (b) in Modern Persian mood, tense, and aspect can be distinguished from each other. Having distinguished between tense, aspect and mood the present research can embark on the semantic analysis of the categories of tense and aspect. The Present work does not discuss the Persian system of modal verbs, firstly because the study of Modern Persian modal verbs is beyond its scope, secondly because Marashi (1972), and Farrokhpay (1979) have already investigated the syntactic and semantic features of these verbs.

1.10. Summary

The syntactic structure of the Persian verb forms outlined in the previous sections of the present chapter gives rise to the following conclusions:

a) The two terms of Persian tense system, i.e. the past and the non-past, are marked morphologically on the verb by the presence and the absence of the past tense marker (realizable as /-t/, /-d/, or /-id/, depending on the phonological context of the given verb) respectively, i.e. by the archisegment /D/ and the morpheme /Ø/.

b) The so-called imperative/subjunctive marker *be/o-* is in fact a perfective marker. The main evidence for this is that in Middle Persian the original function of *be-* was to mark perfectivity (cf. Barr (Andreas; 1939: 431-33. f.n.), and there is no reason to believe that the function of the prefix *be-* has drastically changed in Modern Persian from the expression of perfectivity to the expression of imperfectivity, as

Windfuhr wishes to claim. In Middle Persian, unlike in Modern Persian, the perfective non-past (constructed from (the non-past) root), the prefix *be-* and the appropriate personal suffix) could be used both in dependent and independent clauses. In Modern Persian, as already noted, the perfective non-past is mainly confined to dependent clauses, and imperative sentences which are underlyingly dependent clauses.

c) The aspect system of Persian has three terms: the perfective, the imperfective, and the progressive. The perfective is marked by zero morpheme /Ø/ (the perfective form with the perfective marker /Ø/ is restricted to the past tense), and by the old perfective marker *be-* (the perfective form with the perfective marker *be-* is restricted to the non-past tense and to subordinate clauses). The imperfective is marked by the prefix *mi-*. Finally, the progressive is marked by the auxiliary *dash.t.aen* 'to have'.

The tense and aspect system of Modern Persian may tentatively be indicated by the following chart³². In the following chart, the verbal categories of perfect imperfective, progressive imperfective perfect, and the double perfect are excluded owing the fact that they are restricted to the third person singular and plural. The imperative category is also excluded since with the exception of the second person singular the imperative paradigm is identical with the subordinate perfective (*be.xær.aem*) paradigm. The verb forms used to represent the other categories are the first person singular conjugation of the verb *xær.id.aen* 'to buy' in different tenses.

³²The present writer's chart of Modern Persian verb system differs from that of Windfuhr (1979) in a number of ways; particularly in that while Windfuhr considers the non-past subjunctive (present subjunctive) as an imperfective and the perfect subjunctive as a perfective category, the present writer considers the former as a perfective and the latter as a perfect category. This is due to the fact that the present writer fully accepts MacKinnon's (1975) claim that the so-called imperative/subjunctive marker *be/o-* was originally a perfective marker in Classical Persian. His argument becomes convincing specially when one realizes that in Modern Persian subjunctive forms are more likely to present the situation referred to as a single complete whole rather than as an ongoing process, as in *mæn bay.aed be.ræv.aem* 'I must go', *u bay.aed be.ræv.aed* 'he must go'.

	Non-perfect			Perfect
	Non-progressive		Progressive	
	Perfective	Imperfective		
Non-past	_____	mi.xær.æm	dar.æm mi.xær.æm	xær.id.e. æm
	be.xær.æm	_____	_____	xær.id.e. bash.æm
Past	xær.id.æm	mi.xær.id.æm	dash.t.æm mi.xær.id.æm	xær.id.e. bu.d.æm

1.49. Verb system of Modern Persian (verb xær.id.æn 'to buy')

CHAPTER 2

Some theoretical and methodological preliminaries**2.0. Introductory remarks**

Before starting the semantic study of the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian, it is necessary to make a number of remarks in connection with the theoretical assumptions and the methodology.

2.1. Language as a system

In the present study, following Ferdinand de Saussure, language is treated as a system of interrelated items, and the meaning of each item is defined in terms of its relation with other items with which it enters into syntagmatic or paradigmatic relations. Thus, the meaning of each Modern Persian verb form will be characterized on the basis of its relation with other verb forms (paradigmatic relation), and its relation with linguistic elements which may co-occur with it in a syntagm, e.g. subject, object, time adverbial, etc. (syntagmatic relation).

2.2. Verb form as a complex form

Modern Persian verb forms are all complex forms constructed from four linguistic items: the aspect marker, the verb root, the tense marker, and the appropriate person-number suffix¹. Given this, the present study conceives of the meaning of each verb form as the sum total of the meanings of the aspect marker, the verb root, and the tense marker. The meaning of the person-number suffix is not considered as an integral part of the meanings of the verb forms, since its function is essentially the indication of the agreement between subject and the verb² rather than the specification of the categories of person and number. In fact, the categories of person and number, as the following examples demonstrate, are normally marked on

¹The negating particle *næ/e-* is obviously not an obligatory element of the verb form, but rather is affixed to the verb form when the speaker/writer wishes to negate the proposition realized by the utterance.

²In the perfect forms, including the perfect progressive, the perfect imperfective, and the double perfect which are generally restricted to the second person, the concord between the subject and the verb (analytic verb) is indicated by the relative form of the copula verb *bu.d.æn* 'be'. In the perfect progressive, the perfect imperfective, and the double perfect, the copula indicates the concord between a second person singular or plural subject and the perfect verb form.

the subject.

2.1. mæn ne.mi.xah.æm in juri bash.æm. (SGH 99)

I neg. ipfv.want. I this kind be. I

I don't want to be like this.

2.2. bæche.ha.ye sækzabad æz tar.ik.i mi.tærs.id.ænd. (DB 19)

child. pl. of Sakzabad from darkness ipfv. fear. pt. they

Children from Sakzabad (village) were afraid of darkness.

2.3. Synchrony vs. diachrony

One of the major advances in recent linguistic studies has been the distinction between synchronic and diachronic study of a language. Saussure (1959) points out that "the synchronic study of a language is an attempt to reconstruct the system of that language as a functional whole at any given time; i.e. to determine what is involved in knowing, for instance, English in a given period; whereas the diachronic study of language is an attempt to trace its historical evolution through various stages" (ibid. : xx). Saussure insists that the synchronic and diachronic study of a language should be kept separate, "lest the diachronic point of view contaminate and falsify one's synchronic description" (ibid.).

Given Saussure's distinction between synchronic and diachronic study of an individual language, the present study as a synchronic study concentrates on the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian, and disregards the tense and aspect system of the Persian language at previous stages. Thus, for example, a maximally simple analysis of the infinitive in Modern Persian would be to say that in Modern Persian the suffix *-æn* is the infinitive marker which affixes to the third person singular past of a lexical verb to produce the infinitive form of that lexical verb, and its relationship to the infinitive marker *-tænaiy* in Old Persian (cf. Khanlari; 1976: 279) would be disregarded, since that relationship has no function in Modern Persian.

2.4. Colloquial and non-Colloquial Persian

The distinction between Colloquial and non-Colloquial Persian is the other distinction which is crucially important to the present research. The Standard

Colloquial is the style of the language which is used in daily speech, works of fiction, and informal writing, whereas the non-Colloquial is the language of education, literary texts, and official correspondence. The best way to illustrate how the Colloquial differs from the non-Colloquial register is to compare a couple of sentences in one register with its counterparts in the other register.

A. Colloquial:

2.3. a) hæm.in.jur dar.e mi.r.e. be.r.in
 same. this. kind prog. he. ipfv. go. he. pfv. go. you
 be.gir.in.esh. (ST 97)
 pfv. get. you. he

He is going, just like that. Go (pl.) and fetch him.

2.4. a) hærf ne.mi.zæn.e, hich ne.mi.g.e. (ibid.)
 word neg. ipfv. strike. he no. thing. neg. ipfv. say. he
 He does not speak, he does not say anything.

B. non-Colloquial:

2.3 b) hæm.in. tour mi.ræv.æd. be.ræv.id u ra be.gir.id.

2.4 b) hærf ne.mi.zæn.æd, hich ne.mi.guy.æd.

The distinction between Colloquial and non-Colloquial register is relevant to the study of the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian in that some verb forms occur in Colloquial but not in the non-Colloquial, and vice versa. The progressive constructions formed from the auxiliary verb *dash.t.æn* 'have' and the imperfective form of the main verb, are almost exclusively restricted to Colloquial style of speech and writing. On the other hand, periphrastic constructions used in non-Colloquial and literary register to express progressiveness, i.e. *dær hal.e* 'in process of' + infinitive + copula *bu.d.æn* 'be', and *mæshqul.e* 'busy of' + infinitive + copula almost never occur in Colloquial.

The other difference between Colloquial and non-Colloquial in so far as tense-aspect forms are concerned, is that in non-Colloquial the modal construction *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish' + the so-called apocopated infinitive of the main verb is occasionally

used to express futurity, but in Colloquial style the modal sequence just mentioned is almost never used with future time reference.

The above mentioned differences do not, however, call for two different tense-aspect systems: one for the Colloquial and the other for the non-Colloquial language. Since, despite the difference in the codification of the progressiveness in Colloquial style, both styles have a grammatical category of progressive. Furthermore, in both forms of the language, the imperfective non-past is the most common way of expressing the temporal value of futurity or posteriority. Given these facts, it can be claimed that the Standard Colloquial and non-Colloquial Persian have an identical tense and aspect system, the only difference is that they use different linguistic constructions for encoding the semantic category of progressiveness.

2.5. Form and meaning

Perkins (1982: 245) notes that analyses of form-meaning can usually be divided into those which assign a context-independent meaning to a form, and those which regard the meaning of a form as being largely, if not entirely, "dependent upon a specific context of use" (ibid.). The most radical version of the latter 'polysemantic' approach is probably that of the later Wittgenstein who argued that "every difference in a word's use is a consequence of and evidence for a difference in its meaning" (Wertheimer; 1972: 49). A more moderate expression of this is that of Comrie (1985: 19) who retains "the distinction between a context-independent meaning and interpretation fostered by specific contexts", but at the same time postulates that "a given grammatical form may have more than one meaning".

The monosemantic analysis of form-meaning is, however, more popular in modern linguistics. One recent example of this approach is that of Bolinger (1977) whose stated purpose is to "reaffirm the old principle that the natural condition of a language is to preserve one form for one meaning, and one meaning for one form" (ibid. : x). The other advocate of the theory of one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning is King (1983: 113). The basic assumption of King's approach to

grammatical meaning³ is "adherence to the hypothesis that each grammatical form conveys a single invariant meaning". To state it in another way, King's basic assumption is that a form retains its grammatical meaning regardless of the context in which it is used. King's analysis of the grammatical meaning of the English tense-aspect forms is quite interesting in that it addresses some key questions for semantic analysis such as:

"is there a relationship among the various forms, or do they simply function independently? Is semantic structure in speaker competence a system, or merely a collection of intuitions concerning contextual usage of forms? To what extent is the use of competing forms predictable?" (ibid.).

Perkins (1982: 245) contends that neither the monosemantic nor the polysemantic analysis of form-meaning is necessarily wrong or right, and that "each can only be judged according to whether the phenomena it is used to interpret are thereby illuminated" (ibid.). Thus, he adopts a monosemantic strategy for his analysis of the English modals, i.e. makes an attempt to isolate a core meaning for each of The English modals which is independent of its context of use, not because he maintains that a monosemantic approach is superior to a polysemantic approach, but rather because he believes that in the case of the English modals, a monosemantic approach "can be particularly illuminating". Similarly, the present writer adopts a monosemantic strategy in the study of Modern Persian verb forms, i.e. he tries to isolate a general meaning for each of Modern Persian verb forms which is independent of its context of use, mainly because he contends that a monosemantic approach is particularly illuminating in the case of Modern Persian verb forms. The other reasons for choosing such a strategy are as follows: (a) the general premise of the present study is that each component of a linguistic expression has a meaning and as such contributes to the overall meaning of the linguistic expression in question, (b) those

³King (1983: f.n. 3, p149) adheres to the distinction between lexical and grammatical meaning which is a core element of the semantic model of language proposed by Jakobson; 1971) and of the form/content analysis of Diver (cf. Kirnsir; 1977). King defines *lexical* meaning as pertaining to those morphemes which allow the speaker to depict a part of the real world (members of the traditional categories of noun, adjective, etc.), and the *grammatical* meaning as relating "to those morphemes which allow the speaker to organize, interpret, or otherwise to comment upon the real world (tense, aspect, etc.)" (ibid.).

who assign more than one meaning to a grammatical category, simply fail to take into account the semantic contribution(s) of other linguistic element(s) present in the same linguistic context as the grammatical category under investigation.

The adoption of a monosemantic strategy for the study of Modern Persian verb forms, does not however mean that the present writer believes that such an approach is appropriate for all linguistic expressions. It would be difficult, for instance, to isolate a general common meaning for the particle *-e*, apart from saying that it expresses a relation of pertinence between two words; but to say this does not get the scholar very far. On the other hand, in the case of prepositions like *æz* 'from', *be* 'to', *dær* 'in', etc., the present writer thinks that it does afford a sense of explanation to note that the individual meaning of each preposition is essentially the same whether it is used to express a temporal or a spatial relationship. In the case of Modern Persian tense-aspect forms, in particular, there is even more to be gained by isolating a context-independent meaning, as the present writer will try to show.

2.6. Meaning and implicature

Comrie (1985: 23) quite rightly regards the distinction between the meaning of a linguistic item, and the implicatures that can be drawn from its use in a particular context, as "one of the major advances in recent semantic theory". The distinction between the meaning of a linguistic item and its implicatures can best be illustrated by the use of the sentence *in.ja særd æst* 'it's cold here' as a request to close the window. The literal meaning of this sentence clearly refers to the temperature of a given space. However, in a context where the temperature is not likely to have any bearing on the conversation, the hearer can deduce that the literal meaning is not intended, but rather the speaker intends to imply another message; for instance, his desire to have the temperature raised by e.g. closing the window.

A very useful test for distinguishing between what is part of the meaning of a sentence and that sentence's implicatures is that the latter but not the former can be canceled. Thus, in the case of the above example: *in.ja særd æst* 'it's cold here', when the addressee goes to close the window, the speaker might add, *væli pænjere ra*

lotf.æn næ.bænd.id mæn æz hæva.ye særd xosh.æm mi.ay.y.æd 'but please don't close the window, I enjoy the cold', without contradicting himself. On the other hand, the speaker would be contradicting himself, if he were to try to cancel the meaning of his sentence, for instance, by saying *lotf.æn pænjere ra næ.bænd.id, in.ja gærm æst* 'please don't close the window, it's hot (lit. warm) here'.

The distinction between meaning and implicature is obviously very crucial to a correct semantic analysis of linguistic items. Comrie (1985: 24) notes that "No doubt many instances remain where linguistic items have been assigned as meanings that should more properly be assigned as implicatures". The following are a couple of examples from Persian where failure to draw a distinction between meaning and implicature leads to an inaccurate semantic analysis.

In Persian, sentences which contain the imperfective past of certain verbs, e.g. *zendegi kær.d.æn* 'live' (lit. living make), and those which contain the imperfective past of a lexical verb and an adverb of frequency such as *hæmishe* 'always', *mæ'mul.æn* 'usually', etc., generally describe a habitual situation that held in the past relative to the present moment (more accurately relative to deictic centre of the context). Often, it seems that these sentences also communicate the information that the habit in question no longer holds at the moment of speech as in:

- 2.5. *æli dær tehran zendegi mi.kær.d.∅*
 Ali in Tehran living ipfv. do. pt. he
 Ali used to live/lived in Tehran.

The above sentence on its own, i.e. without any disclaimer, might be taken to mean that 'Ali' no longer lives in Tehran. This is, nonetheless, only an implicature, and not a part of the meaning of the sentence or the imperfective past verb form *zendegi mi.kær.d.∅* 'used to live'. The evidence for this is that the information: 'Ali no longer lives in Tehran' can easily be canceled for instance by adding

- 2.6. *væ hæmuz hæm mi.kon.æd.*
 and still also ipfv. do. he
 and still does.

or

- 2.7. *væ ta anja.i ke mæn mi.dan.æm hænuz hæm mi.kon.æd.*
 and till there that I ipfv. know. I still also ipfv. do. he
 and as far as I know, he still does.

The Persian past perfect provides another example where failure to distinguish between the meaning and implicature of a linguistic item leads to an inaccurate semantic analysis of the item in question. Traditional Persian grammars mostly hold that while the simple past indicates the occurrence of an event or the existence of a state in the past regardless of the degree of remoteness, the past perfect denotes the occurrence of an event in a remote past, hence the traditional term *mazi.e bæ'id* 'remote past'. The degree of remoteness is not, however, part of the meaning of the pluperfect, but rather at best an implicature. The Persian past perfect, as it will be explained in detail in the next chapter, only establishes a relation between a state at a past time point and a situation at an earlier time. In other words, it means that at a time point in the past (with respect to the moment of speech or the deictic centre established by the context), the grammatical subject was (in a state of) having performed an action at an even earlier time, as in *væqti ma ræs.id.im, æli fenjan ra shekæs.t.e bu.d.ø* 'when we arrived, Ali had broken the cup', where the state of Ali's having broken the cup is located by the past perfect at the past time point established by the simple past (more accurately the perfective past) verb form *ræs.id.im* 'arrived we'. Nonetheless, by virtue of the fact that there is necessarily a past situation prior to a past stative situation, the past perfect, other things being equal, implies that the past situation related to a subsequent state has occurred in a remote past. This is not, however, as already noted, part of the meaning of the past perfect. The evidence for this is that it is quite easy to construct mini-narratives where the past situation related by the past perfect to a subsequent state of having performed an action has not only occurred recently, but also after a situation referred to by a simple past verb form, as in:

- 2.8. æli yek sa'æt.e pish vared sho.d.ø (pt. tense),
 Ali an hour.of ago entered become. pt. he
 æmma væqti mæryæm amæ.d.ø, u dobare
 but when Maryam come. pt. she, he again
 ræf.t.e bu.d.ø.
 go. pt. ptp be. pt. he
 Ali arrived an hour ago, but he had (already) gone
 (lit. gone was) when Maryam arrived.

In the above example, Ali's departure precedes Maryam's arrival, and Maryam's arrival is subsequent to Ali's arrival. Thus, the only coherent interpretation is to assume that Ali's arrival referred to by the simple past *vared sho.d.ø* 'entered became he', in fact precedes his departure, expressed by the past perfect.

Given the above instances of the necessity of the distinction between the meaning and implicature, it can be concluded that the separation of meaning from implicature enables the linguist, firstly to provide a more accurate characterization of the meaning of a linguistic form, and secondly to account for the implicatures assigned to it in the absence of any cancellation of those implicatures.

2.7. Methodology

In the present study three different stages may be distinguished in the process of the establishment of the meaning of each Modern Persian verb form.

Stage one is the decomposition of each verb form into morphemes, i.e. into the morphological markers of tense, aspect, and the lexical verb, and the assignment of single invariant meaning to the markers of tense and aspect.

Stage two comprises the assignment of a context-independent meaning to each Modern Persian verb form on the basis of its use in the shortest possible linguistic context, and on the basis of the interaction of the tense and aspect markers with the members of the category of Aktionsart, i.e. with different classes of verbs.

Finally, stage three studies how the meanings of Modern Persian verb forms interact with other linguistic elements present in longer sentences and how this

interaction implies pieces of information which are traditionally ascribed to the verb form as its meanings rather than to the sentence as a whole. The three stages just mentioned are in fact distinguishable, not necessarily in the order given here, both in chapter 3 and 4.

2.8. Sources of data

Although the method adopted in the present work is not inductive, the present writer has drawn heavily on actual data collected from a number of Modern Persian works of fiction, newspapers, etc.. References to this corpus are given in parentheses and take the form of an abbreviation followed by a page number, e.g:

2.8. æbr.ha dash.t.ænd færar mi.kær.d.ænd. (SG 105)

Clouds were running away.

This example is taken from Ahmad Sokkani's *Ghesse.ha.ye an donya* (Stories from the other world), P. 105).

Examples used and discussed by other scholars working in the same field of study are specified by the normal method of specifying a quotation from an author:

2.9. an shæb mæn næ.tævanes.t.æm sham bo.xor.æm.

(Rubenchik; 1971: 92).

That night I could not have supper.

This example is from Rubenchik's "The Modern Persian language".

The works of fiction, newspapers, etc., consulted as sources of data, obviously would not provide all kinds of examples relevant to the present research. Thus, the present writer has also evoked his native speaker's intuitions and has compiled a number of sentences which were needed to exemplify further verb usages.

Throughout, examples will be rated for acceptability: absence of marking indicates 'acceptable'; a preceding (*) indicates 'unacceptability'; a question mark (?) indicates 'doubtful'.

CHAPTER 3

Tense system of Modern Persian**3.0. Introduction**

The present chapter has two objectives: first, to describe the tense system of Modern Persian, i.e. the grammaticalization of the semantic notions of anteriority, posteriority, and overlapping¹ in Modern Persian; second, to illustrate that the Persian tense markers /-D/ and /-Ø/ each have one single context-independent meaning. However, since the analysis of Modern Persian tense system should be attempted within the framework of an acceptable theory of tenses, the present chapter first discusses Reichenbach's tense theory and the modifications proposed to this theory in Comrie (1985) and Declerck (1986). The present study does not review the Tense Logic and Generative Semantics' account of tense, as Hornstein in Hornstein and Lightfoot (1981) shows that "empirically, methodologically and linguistically [Reichenbach's approach to tense] ought to be preferred over [these two approaches]" (ibid. : 120) (for the defects of Tense Logic and Generative Semantics' tense theory see Hornstein (1981)). The present work does not study tense models proposed by Allen (1966) and Bull (1967) either, since Reichenbach's tense scheme, given the modifications proposed by Comrie (1985) and Declerck (1986) can adequately account for Modern Persian Tense system.

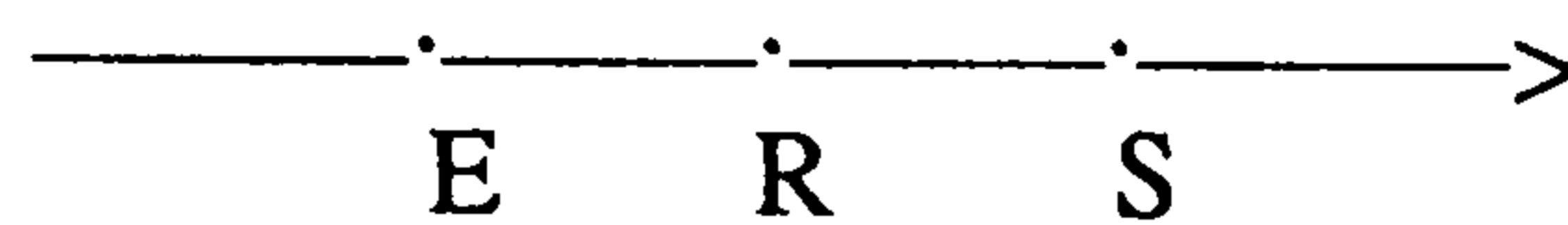
3.1. Reichenbach's theory of tense

Reichenbach's tense theory involves three time points: E, S, and R, and the temporal relations of precedence and overlapping. In his tense model, 'E' symbolizes the time of the event or state described, 'S' is the time at which a given sentence is uttered, and 'R' is the time point (of reference) relative to which the event denoted is located in time. To show how these three time points are interrelated Reichenbach considers the English past perfect.

¹Comrie (1981) quite correctly points out that "overlapping is a more accurate characterization than simultaneity: for instance, a sentence like John is singing does not mean that John's singing is literally coterminous with the present moment, but rather that event and point of speech overlap"(ibid. :24)

"Let us call the time point of the token the *point of speech* (. . .) From a sentence like *Peter had gone* we see that the time order expressed in the tense does not concern one event, but two events, whose positions are determined with respect to the point of speech. We shall call these time points the *point of the event* and the *point of reference*. In the example the point of the event is the time when Peter went; the point of reference is a time between this point and the point of speech. In an individual sentence like the one given it is not clear which time point is used as the point of reference. This determination is rather given by the context of speech." (Reichenbach; 1947: 288)

The schematic representation of the past perfect in Reichenbach's tense system would be as follows:



Reichenbach then claims that the three time points are relevant to the description of every one of the tenses of a given language, not just to the descriptions of tenses such as the past perfect or the future perfect.

"In some tenses, two of the three time points are simultaneous. Thus, in the simple past, the point of the event and the point of reference are simultaneous, and both are before the point of speech (...) This distinguishes the simple past from the present perfect. In the statement *I have seen Charles* the event is also before the point of speech, but it is referred to a point simultaneous with the point of speech, i.e. the point of speech and reference point coincide (...) We see that we need three points even for the distinction of tenses which, in a superficial consideration, seem to concern only two time points. The difficulties which grammar books have in explaining the meanings of the different tenses originate from the fact that they do not recognize the three place structure of the time determination given in the tenses" (Reichenbach; 1947: 289-290).

Finally, Reichenbach notes that there are thirteen possible ways of arranging the three time points. These thirteen linear configurations are shown in the following table (dashes represent an interval of time and comma represents simultaneity).

E-R-S	e.g. I had done it	(past perfect)
E,R-S	e.g. I did it	(past)
R-E-S	e.g. I would do it	(conditional)
R-E,S		
R-S-E		

E-S,R	e.g. I have done it	(present perfect)
S,R,E	e.g. I do it	(present)
S-E-R	e.g. I will have done it	(future perfect)
S,E-R		
E-S-R		
S,R-E	e.g. I will do it	(future)
S-R,E		
S-R-E		

3.2. Defects of Reichenbach's system

Comrie (1981) and Declerck (1986) point out that Reichenbach's tense system has a number of major defects as follows:

(1) The system generates possibilities that are not grammaticalized in natural languages. For instance, Reichenbach provides for three different future perfect tenses (corresponding to the formulas 'S-E-R', 'S,E-R' and 'E-S-R'), but no language seems to have grammatical forms for each of these three different tenses. The same problem is observed in connection with the three configurations corresponding to the English future tense, and in connection with the three arrangements corresponding to the English conditional.

(2) As Prior (1967) points out, Reichenbach's scheme provides for only one reference point, while at least two points of reference are necessary for the analysis of tenses that are more complicated than the past perfect or future perfect, e.g. the English conditional perfect, as in *The others would have left by then..*

(3) Prior (1967: 13) also criticizes Reichenbach for making a sharp distinction between the point or points of reference and the point of speech. He notes that once this possibility is seen that complicated tenses like English *I shall have been going to see John* involve two points of reference rather than just one, "it becomes unnecessary and misleading to make . . . a sharp distinction between the points of reference and

the point of speech; the point of speech is just the first point of reference² (. . .) This makes pastness and futurity relative to *some* point of reference -- maybe the first one (i.e. the point of speech) or maybe some other" (ibid.)

The above-mentioned defects in Reichenbach's tense scheme naturally called for attempts on the part of other linguists to propose theories of tenses which would remedy these defects. Two of these attempts will be investigated in the present chapter.

3.3. Comrie's theory of tense

Comrie (1985) proposes a tense model which is basically a modified version of Reichenbach's theory of tense. Comrie gives up "the representation of tenses as [linear] configurations of points on the time axis in favour of the view that tenses state temporal relations between points" (Declerck; 1986: 317). In his model all that is needed for representing the three 'absolute tenses' (i.e. the past, the present, and the future tense) is two time points (the time of speech (S) and the time of the event (E)) and the temporal relations of simultaneity, anteriority and posteriority.

present tense	E simul S
past tense	E before S
future tense	E after S

For the characterization of other tenses, one more time point is necessary.

pluperfect	E before R before S
future perfect	E before R after S
conditional	E after R before S

For the representation of more complicated tenses, e.g. the English conditional perfect another time point of reference would be necessary.

conditional perfect	E before R ₁ after R ₂ before S
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As the schematic representation of the absolute and the absolute-relative tenses

²Prior points out that the recognition of the point of speech as just the first point of reference "destroys Reichenbach's way of distinguishing the simple past from the present perfect" (1967: 13), i.e. the claim that the perfect differs from the simple past solely in the temporal location of R, which overlaps S in the perfect and E in the past.

exhibits, Comrie's tense system is very simple. Nevertheless, it "remedies the most obvious shortcomings of Reichenbach's analysis" (Declerck; 1986: 309). First, it allows of more than one reference point. Second, it does not construct outlandish formulas for which one does not expect any grammatical realization-- at least none distinct from the realizations for more normal formulas. Finally, whereas Reichenbach's system generates three future perfect tenses (because the point of event can be posterior to, simultaneous with, or anterior to the point of speech), Comrie's system generates only one future perfect tense: the future perfect implies no more than E precedes R and that R follows S. Whether the situation (E) referred to actually precedes, follows, or coincides with the point of speech is irrelevant to the meaning of future perfect tense. The same point can be made about the future tense and the conditional tense.

The last major difference between Comrie's and Reichenbach's tense scheme pertains to the analysis of the present perfect tense. As it may be recalled, Reichenbach analyses the difference between the simple past and the present perfect in terms of the location of the reference point R: in the case of the simple past the reference point 'R' is taken by Reichenbach as simultaneous with 'E' (the point of event), but in the case of the present perfect as simultaneous with 'S' (the point of speech). Comrie (1985), on the other hand, maintains that the present perfect is not distinct from the past "in terms of location in time" (both tenses just locate a situation as prior to the present moment and do not involve a reference point at all), but rather in terms of the aspectual notion of 'current relevance' (while the perfect implies 'current relevance', the past does not). Declerck (1986: 308) contends that Comrie's analysis of the difference between the perfect and the past is the natural outcome of his claim that for absolute tenses the notion of reference point is not needed at all.

3.4. Defects attributed to Comrie's system by Declerck

Declerck (1986: 309) believes that Comrie's theory of tense, in spite of remedying the most obvious shortcomings of Reichenbach's analysis, is not an

adequate system either, and raises new problems. According to Declerck the following points of criticism immediately suggest themselves.

(1) As has been noted, Prior justifiably criticizes Reichenbach for making a sharp distinction between the point or points of reference and the point of speech, since point of speech is just the first point of reference, and pastness and futurity are always relative to some point of reference. "It goes without saying that the same criticism is also applicable to Comrie's analysis" (ibid.).

(2) Comrie's claim that the perfect and the past differ only in aspect (presence or absence of 'current relevance') and not in the way they locate a situation in time, is invalidated by the fact that "if current relevance were the all-important factor, we could not explain why we have to use the past tense in examples like

I know what Tom is like. I (*have) spent my holidays with him two years ago.
where there can be no doubt that there is current relevance: if 'I' know what Tom is like it is because I spent my holidays with him" (Declerck; 1986: 311).

Declerck also notes that the perfect would have to be used if the time adverbial *for the last two years* were used instead of *two years ago*. To her, this is an indication of the fact that "the primary factor determining the use of the perfect and the past is not the presence or absence of the idea of current relevance, but rather the way in which the situation is located in time. The present perfect locates the situation as simultaneous with a time which does not wholly lie before the present moment, but rather includes it. The past tense, by contrast, involves reference to a time which does not last up to the moment of speaking" (ibid.).

(3) Declerck refers to Comrie's statement about the function of the time adverbials in sentences with absolute-relative tenses, namely the establishment of the reference point, and argues that if it is true that time adverbials like 'at five o'clock' in sentences such as *Mary came to visit John at five o'clock, but John had already left at five o'clock*, establish a past reference point, and the past perfect *had already gone* locates the situation prior to this reference point, "it seems logical to hold the view that 'at five o'clock' also serves as a reference point for the location effected by the past

tense, i.e. that *came* represents a situation as simultaneous with this past reference point" (1986: 311). In other words, she maintains that the description of the past tense like other tenses involves three time points: "the time that the situation takes up on the time axis, the time (indicated by an adverbial or by the context) at which the situation is located (i.e. with which the situation is said to be 'simultaneous' [either partly or completely]), and the point of speech" (ibid. : 314)

(4) Declerck considers Comrie's schematic representation of the past tense: 'E before S' (where 'E' is the time point or interval taken up by the situation, and the relation 'before' is represented as 'wholly before' (Comrie; 1985: 122)), and argues that this representation is not always acceptable. Her reason for this is that the time of the situation designated by the past tense verb form is not always wholly located before the moment of speech. Thus, in sentences like *the bread was on the table at five o'clock*, and *John was eating his lunch (when I looked into his room)* nothing is said as to whether the situation still continues at the moment of speech or not, and for that matter as Comrie himself points out, situations referred to in these sentences may or may not continue to the present or into the future. Declerck takes this as evidence for the claim that what is indeed wholly located before the point of speech in sentences like *the bread was on the table at five o'clock* is 'R' (the point of reference) rather than 'E' (the time of the situation), and also for the claim that the past tense locates the time of the situation as simultaneous with the reference point wholly located in the past, and not as prior to the moment of speech.

Declerck's next reason for rejecting Comrie's specification of the absolute tenses (in terms of only two time points) derives from the fact that Comrie offers at least two definitions for the past tense which are not identical. On page 36 of his book, Comrie describes the meaning of the past tense as the "location in time prior to the present moment". This definition is extremely vague in that it is not clear at all what is located in the past; "is it the situation, or is the situation located at a time which is itself located prior to the moment of speech?" (Declerck; 1986: 314). On page 122, however, he defines it as the location of the time of the situation at a time point prior

to the present moment. Similarly, he appears to be uncertain about the meaning of the future tense. On page 36, he characterizes the future tense as "the location of the situation after the present moment, but on page 43 as locating a situation at a time (i.e. at a reference time) subsequent to the present moment.

Declerck contends that another argument against Comrie's analysis of the absolute tenses based on the exclusion of the reference point 'R' is provided by sentences like *the balloon burst when we were looking at it*. Declerck claims that if, following Comrie, one assumes that only ^{the} times involved in the use of the past tense in this sentence are the time of the situation and the time of utterance, one gets into trouble; since the temporal clause does not specify any of these. "The temporal clause cannot define the time of the situation, since the latter is punctual whereas the clause refers to a time span" (Declerck; 1986: 315). Nevertheless, there will be no problem if one assumes that the time of the situation is located relative to some time of reference, "for the temporal clause can then be taken to specify the time of reference" (ibid.)

Declerck's final reason for considering the exclusion of the notion of reference point from the description of the absolute tenses a defect rather than a merit of Comrie's tense system derives from Comrie's treatment of the English non-finite verb forms. According to Comrie the English non-finite verb forms, generally speaking, have relative time reference, "i.e. time reference defined relative to some deictic centre established by the context" (1985: 21-22). Thus, the primary interpretation of *those sitting on the benches were asked to leave* is: *those who were (at that time) sitting on the benches were asked to leave*. Declerck argues that if it is true that the use of a past tense (*were asked*) establishes a past reference point relative to which the situation expressed by the non-finite clause is located, then exactly the same thing happens when one uses a finite clause (*who were sitting*) instead of the participle clause. "That is, the past tense ("were sitting") must also be taken to represent a situation as simultaneous with a past point of reference" (1986: 315).

In sum, Declerck maintains that Comrie's tense system has three major defects. First, it does not recognize the moment of speech as just the *first* point of reference,

i.e. it makes a sharp distinction between the point or points of reference and the point of speech. Second, it describes the absolute tenses (the past, the present, and the future tense) in terms of only two points: 'E' and 'S'; in other words, it leaves out the point of reference as unnecessary for the characterization of the absolute tenses. Finally, it postulates that what distinguishes the perfect from the past is the aspectual notion of current relevance rather than the way each of these tenses locate the time of the situation in time.

Having noticed the above shortcomings in Comrie's tense theory, Declerck attempts an alternative theory which would remedy not only the defects of Reichenbach's system, but also the defects of Comrie's system, i.e. "a theory which both retains the good points from Reichenbach and Comrie, and remedies the defects" (Declerck; 1986: 317). The following section presents an outline of Declerck's tense model.

3.5. Declerck's theory of tense³

The distinguishing features of Declerck's approach to tense can be summarized as follows:

(a) In her treatment of English tense, Declerck makes a distinction between a time point or interval which is the referent of a time adverbial --'time referred to' (henceforth T.R.)-- and a time point or interval which serves as a time of reference or orientation for the location of a situation in time --'time of orientation' (henceforth T.O.). The distinction between the two notions of T.R. and T.O. should not however be taken to mean that they are mutually exclusive. In fact in most cases the time which serves as T.O. for the use of a tense is at the same time the T.R.. Thus, in *when we left at five John had already left* the time point denoted by *at five* is both the time of orientation (T.O.), i.e. the time relative to which the time of the situation is located

³Declerck (1986) clarifies that the temporal schemata that she proposes "are those that hold for the tenses in English" (ibid. : 319). However, she also claims that some of the suggested temporal schemata "are no doubt also valid for many, if not all, languages" (ibid.). Given this, and the claim that the tense theory that she develops retains the good points from Comrie's theory of tense (which is a general linguistic theory of tense rather a theory of the use of tenses in English) and remedies the defects (cf. 1986: 305), her theory of tense is treated in the present study as a universal theory and its applicability to the tense system of Modern Persian is evaluated.

and the time referred to (T.R.), because it is referred to by the time adverbial *at five*.

(b) Declerck's tense theory like that of Reichenbach and unlike that of Comrie is based on the assumption that at least three time points: time of event, time of speech, and one reference point are needed for the characterization of every tense of a given language.

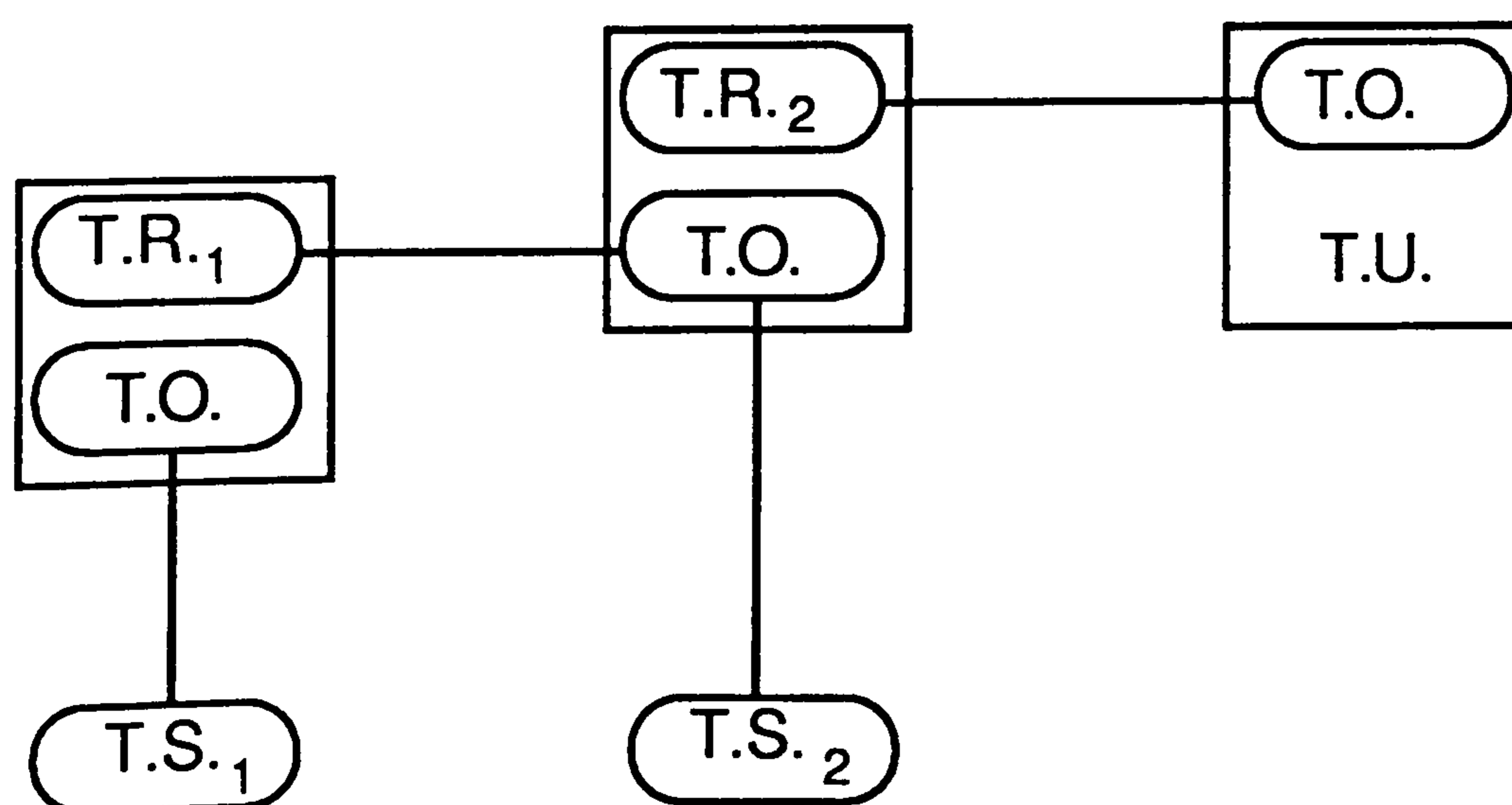
(c) Declerck's approach to tense is different from that of Reichenbach in that while for this scholar 'S' (the point of speech) is not a point of reference like any other reference point, for Declerck 'S' or T.U. (time of utterance) is the primary T.O.: "we might subscribe . . . to Prior's claim that the primary reference is the point of speech" (1986: 310).

(d) Declerck unlike Reichenbach and Comrie characterizes the absolute-relative tenses of the past perfect, future perfect, and future in the past in terms of four time points (T.S. (time of situation), T.O.₁, T.O.₂, and T.U.) rather than three time points. This is discernible from her examination of the English sentence: *John left at five after the others had left at four* :

"In this sentence two situations are referred to, and both are located precisely in time: the others left at four and John left at five. This means that T.S.₁ (the time taken up by the departure of the others) is located as simultaneous with T.R.₁ (four o'clock), while T.S.₂ (the time taken up by John's departure) is located as simultaneous with T.R.₂ (five o'clock)" (Declerck; 1986: 321)

and her schematic representation of the past perfect

3.1.



(Boxed-in elements refer to the same time)

(e) Declerck defines the present perfect as locating the time of the situation referred to as simultaneous with a time interval which extends from a past time point up to the time of utterance. (McCoard (1978: 123) calls this analysis of the present perfect "the extended now theory"). Thus, Declerck's treatment of the present perfect differs from that of Comrie on two parameters: firstly, the present perfect differs from the past as far as the time location is concerned (the past tense locates the time of the situation at a time point or interval wholly before the present moment, but the present perfect locates the time of the situation as simultaneous with a time interval which extends from a time point in the past to the present moment), secondly, the specification of the present perfect depends on three times, the time of utterance, the time of situation, and the time of reference.

3.6. The study of shortcomings attributed to Comrie's approach by Declerck

Having recounted the tense theories of Reichenbach, Comrie, and Declerck, and the shortcomings attributed to Comrie's theory of tense by Declerck, it is time to investigate whether the defects attributed to Comrie's approach are warranted or not. (Defects assigned to Reichenbach's scheme will not be discussed in this study, since other scholars, e.g. Dahl (1985) have discussed them in detail).

As has been explained, according to Declerck, the two major shortcomings of Comrie's approach are the failure to notice that the point of speech is a reference point like any other reference point(s), and the exclusion of the notion of reference point 'R' from the description of the absolute tenses.

As regards the first defect, it would be worth noting that Comrie does not in practice make a sharp distinction between the point of speech and the point or points of reference. The evidence for this comes from the following quotations where the point of speech is unambiguously treated as a reference point like any other reference point.

"In chapter 2 we illustrated absolute tense, whereby the reference point for the location of a situation in time is the present moment [i.e. the point of speech]" (Comrie; 1985: 56).

". . . for relative tenses all that is required is the identification of a reference point, the range of potential reference points being in principle all those compatible with the given context. Thus, the present moment is, unless barred by the context, always available as a reference point for relative tenses" (ibid. : 58).

As regards the second point of criticism, i.e. the exclusion of the notion of 'reference point' from the description of the 'absolute tenses', the present writer strongly disagrees with Declerck's claim that the description of the absolute tenses (the past, the present and the future) obligatorily involve the specification of three time points: the time that the situation takes up on the time axis, the moment of speech, and a second reference point (the point of speech being the first reference point). A brief survey of her arguments for reintroducing the notion of (second) 'reference point' in the representation of the absolute tenses shows that the description of these tenses does not obligatorily need the specification of a reference point in addition to the moment of speech which is in fact a reference point too.

Declerck's arguments against Comrie's representation of the absolute (alternatively basic) tenses (discussed in section 3.4.) are based on three major points. Firstly, Comrie does not offer one single consistent definition for the past or the future tense --he defines the past tense in one place as the location of the situation prior to the present moment, and in another place as the location of the time of the situation at a time point before the present moment. Secondly, in sentences like *the balloon burst when we were looking at it*, the temporal clause defines neither the time of the situation nor the time of speech, therefore it must be defining the reference time. Finally, the time of the situation does not always lie completely before, at, or after the moment of speech. Thus, while in *æli di.ruz be mædrese ræf.t.∅ (pfv.)* 'Ali went to school yesterday', the whole of the situation of 'Ali's going to school' lies in a real sense before the moment of speech, in *æli di.ruz in.ja bu.d.∅* 'Ali was here yesterday', and in *æli (dash.t.∅) nahar mi.xor.d.∅ (ipfv.)* 'Ali was eating his lunch', nothing is said to prevent the situations of 'Ali's being here' and 'Ali's being eating

lunch' from continuing to or beyond the moment of speech. Given the last point of argument, Declerck concludes that Comrie's interpretations of the relations 'before', 'after', and 'simul' respectively as 'wholly before', 'wholly after', and 'completely commensurate' (cf. Comrie; 1985: 122-123) are not always acceptable.

According to Declerck, the problems of Comrie's theory of tense can be disposed of only by reincorporating the notion of the reference point into the specification of even the absolute tenses. She does this and defines every tense of English as locating firstly the time of the situation as simultaneous with a T.O. (Time of Orientation), and secondly relating this T.O. to another T.O. which is the time of utterance in the case of absolute (or basic) tenses, and another intermediary T.O. in the case of absolute-relative tenses such as the past perfect and future perfect (absolute-relative tenses ultimately relate this intermediary T.O. to the first T.O., i.e. the time of utterance). Declerck's schematic representations of the English tenses given below clearly indicate that in her theory of tense the expression of 'simultaneous' is common to all tenses. (In the following schemata, the ideas 'wholly before' and 'before and up to' are represented as 'before₁' and 'before₂' respectively, 'before' is used when the two interpretations are possible, and finally 't' is the 'time of orientation').

present tense	T.S. simul t simul T.U.
past tense	T.S. simul t before ₁ T.U.
present perfect	T.S. simul t before ₂ T.U.
past perfect	T.S. simul t_i before t_j before ₁ T.U.
conditional	T.S. simul t_i after t_j before ₁ T.U.
conditional perfect	T.S. simul t_i before t_j after t_k before ₁ T.U.
future tense	T.S. simul t after T.U.
future perfect	T.S. simul t_i before t_j after T.U.

In spite of Declerck's points of argument, the present writer holds the view that Comrie's specifications of absolute tenses, specifically, and of other tenses,

generally, are more accurate. The following arguments support Comrie's position against that of Declerck.

(a) Declerck points out that it is not appropriate to say that the past, future, and the present tense always locate the time of the situation before, after, and at the present moment respectively. Since, sometimes the time of the situation located in the past may well continue to and beyond the present moment, and that of the situation located in the future may have begun at or before the present moment, and finally the time of the situation located at the moment of speech (which is by definition punctual), except for punctual situations does not completely overlap the point of speech, but rather encompasses it. However, she fails to notice that whenever the time of the situation has one of the above characteristics, the verb denoting the situation is either the stative verb *be* or *have*, or is in the progressive form. In other words, she fails to notice that the linguistic element responsible for the possibility of the continuation of the given situation to and beyond the moment of speech (when the situation is located as prior to the moment of speech), or its beginning at or even before the moment of speech (when the situation is located as posterior to the moment of speech) is the progressive marker 'be + . . . ing' or the imperfective nature of the situation itself, rather than the past tense or the future tense marker, and for that matter the continuation of the situation to and beyond, or its beginning at or before the moment of speech do not impinge on the meaning of the tense markers. The evidence for this is that while the situations referred to by *was* and *was eating* in *the book was on the table yesterday* and *John was eating his lunch (when I looked into his room)* may or may not continue to and beyond the present moment, the situation referred to by *ate* in *John ate his lunch* may not under any circumstances.

What is being emphasized here is that the three-way distinction between aspect, Aktionsart, and tense is as crucial to the study of aspect as it is to the study of tense, and that one can only in the light of such a distinction, arrive at the precise meaning of the tenses of a language. Indeed, given the fact that verbal phrases like *was eating*, *is eating*, *will be eating*, etc. are complex forms consisting of the lexical verb, the

imperfective marker, and the tense marker, the past, future, and present tense should be defined as locating the time of the situation before, after and at the moment of speech, respectively, rather than as simultaneous with a reference point which is before, after, or simultaneous with the moment of speech.

Further evidence for the specification of the past tense (i.e. the perfective past) and the future tense (i.e. the perfective non-past) as the location of the time of the situation before and after the point of speech (which is a reference point like any other reference point) derives from the fact that whereas the combination of the past tense or the future tense with the imperfective aspect occasionally leads to the location of part of the time of the situation before or after the present moment, the combination of the grammatical categories of the past tense and the future tense with the perfective aspect (when the lexical verb is not *have* or *be*) always leads to the proper location of the time of the situation prior to and subsequent to the moment of speech.

(b) The second point in favour of Comrie's specifications of English tenses is the fact that in Declerck's scheme all English tenses have this in common that they locate the time of the given situation as simultaneous with a T.O. established by (one of) the time adverbial(s) which may be present in the sentence. As it may be discerned, this common relation of simultaneity creates a number of problems. First, the view that all tenses of a given language should be characterized as primarily locating the time of the situation at a given time of reference, makes it necessary for Declerck to reject the intuitively attractive view that the past, present, and future tense of a given language are respectively the grammaticalization of the semantic notion of anteriority, simultaneity, and posteriority. Second, the above mentioned view makes the description of the absolute-relative tenses such as the past perfect, the future perfect, the conditional perfect, etc. extremely and unduly complicated: in Declerck's system the definition of e.g. the past perfect needs four time points: T.O.₁, T.O.₂, T.U. and T.S. instead of three. Third, since a tense can also be used without an accompanying time adverbial establishing the T.O. (relative to which the time of the situation is to be located as simultaneous), as in *the others had left before John left*, a

given tense e.g. the past perfect, should also be able to locate the time of situation "at some (unidentified) T.O." (Declerck; 1986: 323). Finally, the function of a tense becomes even more complicated if the time adverbial of the sentence is one that is not tied down to the speaker's here-and-now, such as *ten o'clock, an hour later, etc.*; since in that case, the tense should not only locate the time of the situation as simultaneous with T.O. established by the time adverbial, but also relate the time of orientation to another time of orientation which can be the T.U. or another T.O. (which in that case the given tense must relate to T.U., e.g. *John had gone at four when the others arrived at five*).

(c) The third argument against Declerck's representations of the different tenses is that in Persian sentences like *væqti ræs.id.id lændæn be ma telephone kon.id* 'when you arrive in London (lit. arrived), call us', and *be u gof.t.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd* 'I told him to go' the perfective past verb form *ræs.id.id* 'arrived you', and the perfective non-past verb form *be.ræv.æd* 'go he' are definitely used respectively to locate the time of the situation prior to and subsequent to the time point established by the other verb form present in the sentence, rather than at a time point before and after it. The reason for this is that the exact position of the situations denoted by *ræs.id.id* and *be.ræv.æd* are immaterial to the overall meanings of the sentences under consideration. Given this fact, it would not be difficult to realize that these verb forms should be characterized respectively as locating the time of the situation before and after the time of reference established by the other verb form present in the sentence, rather than as locating the time of the situation as simultaneous with a time point which is prior to and subsequent to the established point of reference.

(d) The fourth argument against Declerck's schematic representations of the different tenses is that as the following mini-text exhibits on many occasions the speakers are only concerned with the occurrence of the event designated prior to or after the moment of speech, rather than with its exact position on the time line. The evidence for this is that the speakers do not bother to specify the exact position of the event by means of a temporal adverbial.

3.2. A: (aya) name ra nevesh.t.i?
 (qu. par.) letter o.m. write. pt. you ?

Did you write the letter?

B: bæle nevesh.t.æm.

yes write. pt. I

yes, I did (lit. wrote)

(e) The last argument against Declerck's specifications of tenses derives from the fact that her specifications imply "a crucial relationship between the presence of a temporal adverb and the uses of tenses . . . [since] adverbials denoting time have the function of setting the T.R.'s that are involved in the schemata of the tenses" (Declerck; 1986: 358). Such a relationship is not linguistically warranted. The reason for this is that tense forms and time adverbials are two separate entities with different functions, and for that matter the meanings of the tenses of a language should be defined independently of the function of the time adverbial present in the sentence. Thus, while tense forms have the function of locating the time of the situation at, before or after a reference point (or the moment of speech) (rather than locating it as simultaneous with a reference point and relating the reference point to another reference point), the time adverbial has the function of specifying the duration, the beginning, the end, or the exact position of the time of the situation relative to the time of speech or any other time of reference.

It is worth noting that one of the points Declerck mentions in support of her description of the tenses as locating the time of the situation primarily as simultaneous with a T.R., i.e. as relating the time of the situation to the here-and-now of the speaker indirectly through one or more T.R.'s, is that the time-when adverbials (e.g. *at ten o'clock*) and boundary adverbials (e.g. *since 1956, from 2 o'clock to 7, until World War II, etc.*) (boundary adverbials refer to at least one of the two boundaries (beginning and end) of a period), unlike purely durational adverbials (e.g. *for two hours*) usually refer to time spans which are not commensurate with the time of the situation, and as such must be taken as establishing the T.R. and not as specifying the

time of the situation⁴. However, a brief reflection reveals that even time-when adverbials and time adverbials of boundary type, although with these two types of adverbials time specifications take different forms, specify the time of the situation⁵. Thus, if the time adverbial is a time-when adverbial like *at four o'clock*, and the lexical verb designates a durative situation, the time adverbial specifies the beginning or the end of the situation referred to, as in *He gave a speech at five o'clock* (where the time adverbial marks the beginning of the situation) and in *At five o'clock, he finished making the chair* (where the time adverbial marks the end of the situation), or the exact position of the situation with respect to a reference point, as in *I wrote a letter yesterday* (where the time adverbial specifies the position of the situation relative to the point of speech). But if the time adverbial is a boundary time adverbial like *since 1956, from 2 o'clock to 7, until 5 o'clock*, etc. and the lexical verb denotes a durative situation, then the time adverbial either specifies for how long the situation has been going on, since when it has been going on, or till when it has been going on, as in *He has been writing from 2 o'clock to 7, He has been sleeping since 5 o'clock, He has worked until 6 o'clock*, etc. Finally, a purely durational time adverbial such as *for two hours* does not specify the position of the situation on the time line, but rather its duration. That is why with these time adverbials another time adverbial which indicates the location of the situation on the time axis may be used, as in:

3.3. di.ruz do sa'æt ketab xan.d.æm.

yesterday two hour book read. pt. I

Yesterday I was reading (lit. read) a book for two hours.

3.7. The shortcomings of Comrie's theory of tense

The study of the defects assigned to Comrie's approach to tense in the previous section clearly indicated that Declerck's arguments against Comrie's

⁴In the framework of Declerck's theory, a T.R. is either a point or an interval on the time line, and the term 'simultaneous with' allows of both partial and complete overlapping between T.R. and T.S.

⁵In co-occurrence with absolute-relative tenses, as Comrie (1981,1985) points out time-when adverbials either specify the time of the situation or the reference point depending on the context. Thus, "in the following mini-texts: (i) *You say that we must leave at six. That's all right I'll have finished at six.* (Time adverbial refers to 'R' and can be replaced by *by six.*) (ii) *you say that you will finish at six You are slow. I'll have finished at five.* (Time adverbial refers to E.)" (Comrie; 1981:28).

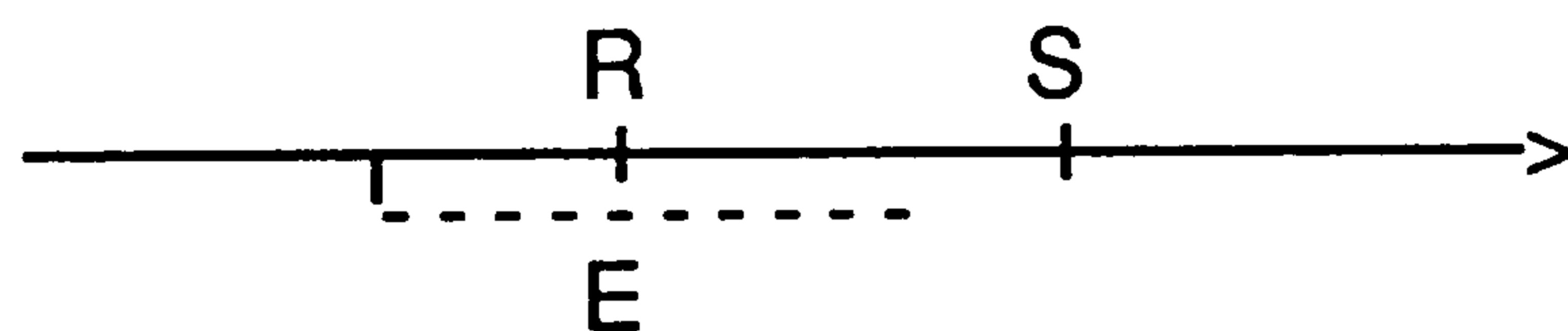
specifications of absolute tenses in terms of only two time points, and for the incorporation of a second point of reference besides the point of speech (which is, as Prior points out, just the first reference point) into the representation of these tenses are not linguistically warranted. The discussion also illustrated that characterizations proposed by Comrie for the three tenses of past, present and future should be preferred to those proposed by Reichenbach and Declerck. Nonetheless, these facts should not be taken to mean that Comrie's theory of tense is perfect and has no shortcomings. Indeed, Comrie's tense model has three major defects as follows:

(1) Comrie fails to realize that the different forms of a given verb, e.g. 'go': *goes, went, is going, was going, will go, will be going*, etc. are complex forms consisting of the citation form, the tense marker and the aspect marker, and for that reason he fails to address the question of the semantics of the tense markers, e.g. English tense markers /D/ and /Ø/. In section 3.10. the present study makes an attempt to define the meanings of Modern Persian tense markers /-D/, and /-Ø/.

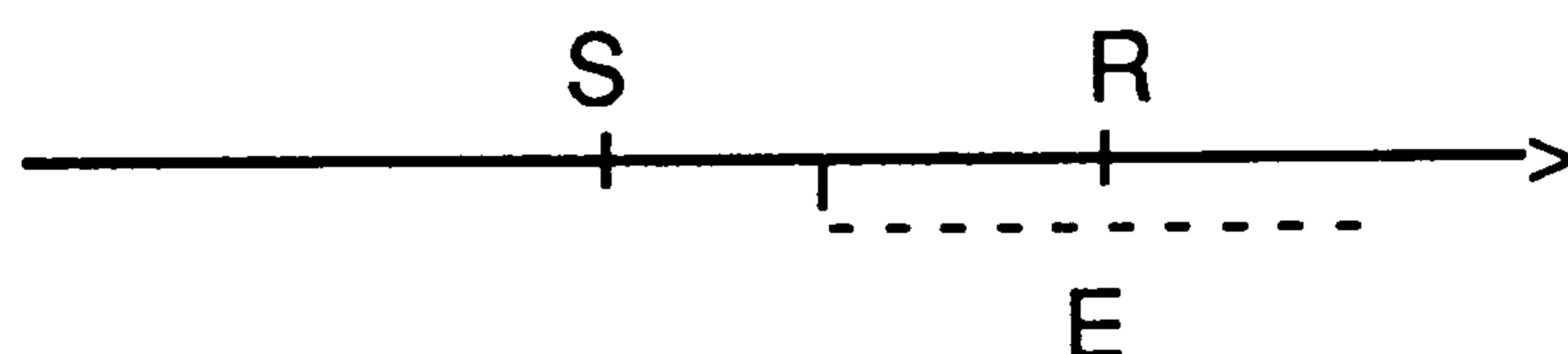
(2) Comrie's schematic representations of the tense forms (more accurately tense-aspect forms) are incomplete because Comrie does not suggest any tense schemes for the imperfective verb forms such as *was going, is going, and will be going*. In other words, he fails to notice that the schemata used for the simple past, the present tense and the future tense, i.e. E before S, E simul S, and E after S can not be used for the imperfective counterparts of these verb forms. The reason for this is that, the imperfective verb forms not only locate the situation in time relative to a reference point, but also present the situation referred to as continuous and as such generally involve one time point more than their perfective counterparts, i.e. the time point at which the situation is presented as continuous or ongoing. This is evident from the fact that the speaker normally presents a given situation as continuous only when he intends to inform the addressee as to what happened as the event referred to by the imperfective verb form was ongoing. Thus, while the schematic representations of the past tense and the future tense involve only two time points: the time of the situation and the time point relative to which the situation is located in time, the

imperfective past and the imperfective future always involve three time points: the time of the situation, the time relative to which the situation is located in time (which is the moment of speech in the case of absolute tenses), and the time point at which the situation is represented as continuous. The telling evidence for this is that while sentences in the perfective aspect like Persian *mæn ræf.t.æm* (pfv.) 'I went', *u name ra belæxære nevesh.t.ø* (pfv.) 'At last, he wrote the letter', etc. are complete and do not necessarily need a time adverbial to convey a complete piece of information⁶, sentences in the imperfective aspect like Persian *mæn ketab mi.xan.d.æm* (ipfv.) . . . 'I was reading a book . . .', *u sobhane mi.xor.d.ø* (ipfv.) . . . 'he was having breakfast . . .', etc. are generally considered as incomplete and may be completed by a temporal adverb, e.g. *sa'æt.e pænj* 'at five o'clock' or a temporal clause, e.g. *(ke) telephone zæng zæ.d.ø* 'when the phone rang' which specifies the time at which the situation was continuing, i.e. the reference point 'R'. Given this, the Persian imperfective past, and the imperfective non-past may be represented schematically as follows (the schematic representation of the Persian imperfective non-past when reference is made to a situation continuing at a time point posterior to the moment of speech, as in *færda be u yek name mi.nevis.æm* 'I will be writing a letter to him tomorrow', requires three time points, but when reference is made to a situation continuing at the moment of speech, it requires only two time points):

3.2.



(the ipfv. past)



(the ipfv. non-past)

⁶It goes without saying that even in sentences with perfective forms a temporal adverbial may optionally be used to indicate the distance between the time of the situation and the time point selected as the point of reference.

(In the above diagrams, the dotted lines are left open-ended on the right hand side to signify the fact that the imperfective verb form is noncommittal as to the completion or incompleteness of the situation designated).

The above schematic representations (of the imperfective past and the imperfective non-past) give rise to the question why the Persian imperfective verb forms should involve three time points but the perfective verb forms only two. The answer is that while the perfective verb forms are normally used in Persian to locate the time of a situation before or after a time point of reference, as in *qæbl æz inke be.ya.y.æd name ra nevesh.t.æm* 'I wrote the letter before he came (lit. comes)', and in *be u gof.t.æm (ke) be.neshin.æd* 'I told him to sit down', the imperfective verb forms are used to locate a situation at a time point which is before or after another time point, as in *væqti am.æd mæn (dash.t.æm) ketab mi.xan.d.æm* 'when he came I was reading a book, and in *færda be u telephone mi.kon.æm* 'I will be calling him tomorrow'. Hence, the definition of the imperfective past as the location of the time of the situation at a *past* time point, of the imperfective non-past as the location of the time of the situation at a *non-past* time point, of the perfective past as the location of the time of the situation prior to another time point, and finally of the perfective non-past, i.e. the subordinate perfective verb form with the prefix *be-*, as the location of the time of the situation after another time point taken by the context of use as the deictic centre.

(3) Comrie's representation of the present tense 'E simul S' and his definition of the relation 'simul' are incompatible with his own observation that despite a couple of cases in which "there is literal coincidence between the time location of a situation and the present moment" (ibid.: 37), "a more characteristic use of the present tense is in referring to situations which occupy a much longer period of time than the present moment, but which nonetheless include the present moment within them" (ibid.). Comrie defines the relation 'simul' as follows: "*X simul Y* means that each time point in *X* is also in *Y* and vice versa. *Simul* is, of course, a symmetrical relation, i.e. *X simul Y* is equivalent to *Y simul X*" (ibid. :123). This definition is, of course,

incompatible with the fact that the present tense not only can refer to punctual situations, but also to states and processes which hold at the present moment, but began before the present moment and may well continue beyond the present moment, as in *rud.e karun be xælij.e fars mi.riz.æd* 'the Karoon river flows into the Persian Gulf'. Given this, the relation 'simul' should be allowed to imply either complete or partial overlapping.

Despite the above defects, Comrie's general theory of tenses still remains a useful theoretical framework for the study of the tense system of a given language, and as such will be exploited as the background of the present study.

3.8. Definition of tense

Comrie (1985: 9) defines tense as "the grammaticalized expression of location in time". His definition is to some extent similar to the ones given in Lyons (1968) and Lyons (1977):

"The category of *tense* has to do with time relations in so far as these are expressed by systematic grammatical contrasts" (Lyons; 1968: 304),

"Tense . . . grammaticalizes the relationship which holds between the time of the situation that is being described and the temporal zero-point of the deictic context" (Lyons; 1977: 678).

Comrie's and Lyons' definitions of tense are based on a distinction between grammaticalization versus lexicalization of location in time⁷. Comrie suggests that the difference between the grammaticalized and lexicalized expression of location in time "can be understood in terms of the interaction of two parameters: that of obligatory expression, and that of morphological boundness" (1985:10).

Given the above criteria, the Persian past/non-past opposition would be a clear instance of a grammaticalized opposition. It is quite impossible to construct a Persian sentence containing a finite verb that is neutral as between the two poles of opposition, i.e. *æli mi.dæv.æd* 'Ali runs/is running' is clearly non-past, and *æli dæv.id.∅* 'Ali ran' is clearly past. Moreover, the expression of the distinction is by means of the bound morphemes /-D/ and /-∅/ (taken to include morphophonemic

⁷Typical examples of lexicalized expression of location in time are temporal adverbials such as 'yesterday', 'tomorrow', 'now', etc..

alternation, i.e. anything that does not involve a separate word).

The question now arises as to which of the tense definitions given above is more accurate. As far as Modern Persian tense is concerned where tense markers have both absolute and relative time reference, Comrie's definition and Lyons' first definition are more accurate, since these definitions do not place any restrictions on the kind of location in time (e.g. absolute, relative or absolute-relative location), and do not restrict the function of the tense to the grammaticalization of the relationship which holds between the time of the situation and the point of speech.

In spite of their higher degree of accuracy, Comrie's definition and Lyons' first definition are to some extent vague in that they do not specify the kinds of relations involved. Thus, in Declerck's tense system where all tense forms are described to locate the time of the situation as simultaneous with a reference time point which is related to the time of utterance either directly or indirectly via (an)other reference point(s), Comrie's definition would be interpreted as specifying that the only temporal relation grammaticalized by tense forms is simultaneity. This is however inconsistent with Comrie's contention that "the notions that are most commonly grammaticalized across the languages of the world are simple anteriority, simultaneity, and posteriority, i.e. with the present moment as deictic centre, past, present and future" (1985: 11). To avoid such inconsistencies, the present study describes tense as the grammaticalization of the semantic notions of anteriority, simultaneity, and posteriority.

3.9. Tense and deixis

Lyons (1977: 637) defines 'deixis' as "the location and identification of persons, objects, events, processes and activities being talked about, or referred to, in relation to the spatiotemporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and the participation in it, typically, of a single speaker and at least one addressee". Given this definition, the category of tense is a deictic category, as tense forms like demonstratives, personal pronouns, certain adverbs, and adjectives are normally meaningful in relation to what is sometimes called the temporal zero-point of the

deictic context. Lyons' characterization of tense confirms this corollary: " Tense . . . is part of the deictic frame of temporal reference: it grammaticalizes the relationship which holds between the time of the situation that is being described and the temporal zero-point of the deictic context" (ibid. : 678). However, it is a well-known fact that tense forms do not always relate the time of the situation to the present moment, i.e. to the deictic centre of the speech situation, but rather to the time of some other situation. Thus, in the Persian sentence

- 3.3. *be u gof.t.e bu.d.æm (ke) be.ya.y.æd.*
 to s/he tell. pt. ptp. be.pt. I (that) pfv. come. he
 I had told him to come.

the subordinate verb form *be.ya.y.æd* 'come he' locates the time of the situation in the future with respect to the time point established by the 'telling' situation rather than with respect to the time of utterance. As a matter of fact, in the above it may not even be possible to determine the time location of *be.ya.y.æd* with respect to the point of speech.

Similarly, Bache (1985: 19) points out that "it could be argued that in:

- 3.4. John was reading when I entered (ex. from Comrie; 1976:3)

there is some sort of non-deictic time relationship between *was reading* and *entered*" (ibid.). He further notes that if it is true that a relation can be established between situations independently of their deictic relations to the present moment, then it would be the case that "deictic time reference and relative time reference are not mutually exclusive or worse still, not clearly distinguishable" (ibid.)

Comrie's solution to this problem is to define a deictic system like tense in a broader sense as "a system which relates entities to a reference point" (Comrie; 1985: 14), and to allow for deictic centres other than the moment of speech: "Although the speech situation, the 'here and now', is the most basic deictic centre, it is possible to have other deictic centres, provided these are clarified by the context" (ibid. : 16). Given his approach to the notion of deixis, a tense form is a deictic element regardless

of whether it relates the time of the situation in question to the time of utterance or to any other time point recognized by the context as the deictic centre.

Comrie's definition of deixis gains support from the fact that other linguists, e.g. Lyons (1977), and Declerck (1986), also allow for the possibility of shifting the deictic centre. Lyons calls the shift of the deictic centre 'deictic projection' -- "the speaker projects himself backwards and forwards in time, as it were into some other world, from which events appear to him as being in the past or in the future" (1977: 690).

3.10. The semantics of the Modern Persian tense

markers: /-D/ and /-Ø/

In section 3.8., the Persian perfective past was defined as the location of the time of the situation referred to prior to the moment of speech or prior to the time point recognized by the context of use as the deictic centre, and the Persian subordinate perfective non-past, e.g. *be.ræv.æm* 'I go' was defined as the location of the time of the situation posterior to the time of reference established by the main verb. The Persian imperfective past and the Persian imperfective non-past were, on the other hand, defined respectively as the location of the time of the situation at (i.e. as simultaneous with) a past and a non-past time point. It was also emphasised that the different verb forms of Modern Persian are complex forms consisting of the aspect marker (*mi-*, *be-*, or *ø-*), the verb root, the tense marker (/D/ or /- Ø/), and the personal ending (*-æm*, *-i*, etc.)⁸, and that the notions of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority are implied by these complex verb forms, rather than by any one of their components.

The observation that the semantic notions of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority are implied by the verb forms as complex units rather than by any one of their composing elements gives rise to the question of the meanings of the components of the verb forms. The semantics of the aspect markers of Modern

⁸In negative verb forms the negating prefix *næ/e-* precedes the other four linguistic elements: the aspect marker, the verb root, the tense marker and the personal ending.

Persian will be discussed in the next chapter. The meaning of the verb root is to specify the type of the situation involved; that of the personal ending is to specify the categories of number and person. The meanings of the tense markers /-D/ and /-Ø/ are the major concern of the present section.

The present study claims that the meaning of the past tense marker /-D/ is that there is a time point subsequent to the time of the situation, and the meaning of the zero morpheme /- Ø/, as the unmarked member of the two-term opposition is the absence of a time point subsequent to the time of the situation. The evidence for this claim is that while the past verb forms, including the perfective and the imperfective past verb forms, locate the time of the situation prior to a given time point and at a time of reference which is before another time point, the non-past verb forms, i.e. the imperfective non-past and the subordinate perfective non-past, locate the time of the situation respectively as simultaneous with a non-past time point and in the future with respect to the deictic centre.

The implication of the existence of a time point prior to the time of situation will not however be ascribed to the tense morpheme /-Ø/, despite the fact that the subordinate perfective non-past verb forms, e.g. *be.ya.y.æm*, as in *pish æz in.ke mæn be.ya.y.æm nazem xod.æsh be in kar res.id.e bu.d.ø* (AM 39) 'The principal had himself looked into this matter before I came (lit. come)' normally locate the time of the situation after a given time point. The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly the non-past verb forms of Modern Persian tense system are the unmarked members of the two term opposition: past/non-past, and the unmarked member of opposition, according to Allen (1966: 185), are characterized by the absence of the marked meaning. Secondly the subordinate perfective non-past verb form does not generally locate the time of the situation at (or as simultaneous with) the present moment or at any other time point only because of the presence of the perfective marker *be-*, but rather, the notion of posteriority is implied by the perfective non-past verb form as a complex unit, i.e. by the categorial interaction between tense, aspect and Aktionsart rather than just by the non-past tense marker /-Ø/.

3.11. Absolute tense

Having defined the meaning of the tense markers /-D/ and /-Ø/, it is high time to study in more detail the semantics of the Modern Persian verb forms in so far as the grammaticalization of the notions of anteriority, posteriority and simultaneity is concerned. The present work, following Comrie (1985), continues further analysis of Modern Persian (tense-aspect) verb forms under the three headings: absolute tense, relative tense, and absolute-relative tense. To anticipate the result of the analysis, the analysis will show that almost all Persian verb forms may have either absolute or relative time reference.

The term 'absolute tense' is traditionally used to refer to those verb forms which take the present moment (i.e. the time of utterance) as their deictic centre. Comrie (1985) notes that the term 'absolute tense' is misleading; as, strictly speaking, absolute time reference is impossible and any given situation can only be located in time relative to some other already established time point. Nevertheless, the present study following Comrie (1985) continues to use the traditional term 'absolute tense' as a technical term to denote verb forms which include as part of their meaning the present moment as deictic centre, in contrast with tense-aspect verb forms which take as their deictic centre a time point other than the present moment.

With the present moment as deictic centre, Comrie postulates three general linguistic categories of tense, namely present, past and future, and defines them as follows: present tense locates the time of the situation at the present moment, past tense locates the time of the situation prior to the present moment, and future tense locates the time of the situation after the present moment.

Given the three general linguistic categories of absolute tense postulated by Comrie, and their characterizations, the task which now faces the present section is to find out first whether Modern Persian has verb forms corresponding to these three categories, second, to determine whether they can be characterized in this way or not.

3.11.1 *Present tense*

If the semantic notion of time is conceptualized as a line, the present moment might be presented as a point on that line. Given the above conceptualization, Comrie defines "the basic meaning of the present tense" as the "location of a situation at the present moment" (1985: 36), i.e. as simultaneous with it.

Having defined the present tense as the location of the time of the situation at the present moment, Comrie embarks on emphasizing the fact that situations which are exactly commensurate with the moment of speech, i.e. situations which occupy, literally or in terms of one's conception of the situation, a single point in time which is exactly co-extensive with the present moment are rare. Comrie mentions performative sentences as one set of examples of this type of situation. In performative sentences the act described by the sentence is performed by uttering the sentence in question, e.g. *mæn ɔʊl mi.dæh.æm (ke) be to dæh pɒnd be.dæh.æm* 'I promise to give you ten pounds' (the utterance of the sentence constitutes the promise to pay ten pounds). These situations, however, are not, strictly speaking, momentaneous, since the utterance of even the shortest sentences takes a certain period of time, and it is not clear at all why Comrie considers performative sentences as one set of examples where the act described by the sentence is conceptualized as momentaneous. The reason could be the use of the perfective present in English and in Russian in performative constructions (for the information on the use of the perfective present in performative constructions in Russian, see Bache; 1985: 108). In Persian, on the other hand, performative constructions are in the imperfective non-past. Given this, it might be appropriate to hypothesize that performative situations may or may not be conceived of as instantaneous (i.e. as co-extensive with the present moment), depending on the language under consideration.

The other set of examples which Comrie mentions as instances of "literal coincidence between the time location of a situation and the present moment" (1985: 37) comprises "the simultaneous report of an ongoing series of events" (ibid.). Thus, according to Comrie, "when a horse-racing commentator says *Red Rover crosses the*

finishing line, his utterance of this sentence coincides, or at least is taken conceptually to coincide, with the event of Red Rover's crossing the finishing line; and since the report is simultaneous with the situation being described, there is literal location of a situation at the present moment" (ibid.). Given Comrie's comment on simultaneous reports of an ongoing series of events, one would expect Modern Persian to use the perfective non-past to report events of very short duration which are actually happening at the time of report. Nevertheless, in practice this expectation is not met, and Modern Persian speakers use the imperfective non-past (as in *æli tup ra shoot mi.kon.æd (ipfv.) tuy.e dærvaze* 'Ali shoots (lit. is shooting) the ball into the goal') even when reporting an ongoing series of events. In other words, they conceptualize even these events as encompassing the present moment rather than as commensurate with it.

After he discusses the above instances where the time location of the situation may be taken conceptually to coincide with the present moment, Comrie points out that "a more characteristic use of the present tense is in referring to situations which occupy a much longer period of time than the present moment, but which nonetheless include the present moment within them" (1985: 37). Despite this, as has been explained, Comrie defines the relation 'simul' invariably as indicating complete overlapping, rather than either complete or partial overlapping. This is of course incompatible with Comrie's own observation that the present tense can be "used to speak of states and processes which hold at the present moment, but which began before the present moment and may well continue beyond the present moment, as in *the Eiffel Tower stands in Paris* and *the author is working on chapter two*" (ibid.). Here the solution is to define the relation 'simul' in the schematic representation of the present tense ('E simul S') as indicating either complete or partial overlapping.

The other problem with Comrie's definition of the present tense in so far as the characterization of Modern Persian (imperfective) non-past is concerned is the use of the term 'basic meaning'. The use of the term 'basic meaning' emphasizes the fact that

in Comrie's theory of tense, "a grammatical category may have a basic and a number of peripheral meanings or uses" (1985: 19).

Despite describing 'the location of the situation at the present moment' as the basic meaning of the present tense, Comrie does not discuss the uses of the present tense which could be considered as its peripheral or secondary meanings (i.e. uses which "are not predictable from the interaction of the basic meaning and context" (Comrie; 1985: 19)).

One of the uses traditionally assigned to the present tense as one of its secondary meanings is the use of this tense to refer to habitual situations, as in English *John goes to work at eight o'clock (every day)*., and as in Persian *hær.ruz sa'æt.e pæn.j.o. nim bolænd mi.shæv.æm* (Boyle; 1966: 64) 'Every day I get up at half past five'. Interestingly enough, Comrie does not consider the use of the present tense in habitual sentences as its secondary meaning. He points out that, at first glance, the use of the present tense in habitual constructions might seem to be a clear contradiction to its definition as the location of a situation at the present moment; since the above English sentence, for instance, can be used to describe 'John's behaviour' even when he is not actually performing the habitual act ascribed to him. He further notes that the fact that the habitual sentence can be uttered even when the habitual act is not actually going on, "has given rise, in some accounts of tense, to the setting up of separate tense categories to refer to situations that actually hold at the present moment [e.g. *nevis.ænde ruy.e bæxsh.e do kar mi.kon.æd* (ipfv) 'the author is working on chapter 2'] versus situations that do occur habitually but do not actually hold at the present moment" (ibid. : 39). Comrie asserts that this distinction is not necessary, since "sentences with habitual meaning refer not to a sequence of situations recurring at intervals, but rather to a habit, a characteristic situation that holds at all times". Thus, in the example *John goes to work at eight o'clock every day*, the present tense is used to assert that a certain property (namely going to work at eight o'clock everyday) holds true of John at the moment of speech, rather than to refer to a sequence of situations recurring at intervals, and for that reason the use of the present

tense in habitual constructions should not be considered as the secondary meaning of this tense.

The second use which is traditionally considered as one of the peripheral meanings of the present tense is the use of this tense in constructions which refer to universal (eternal) truths, as in English *cows eat grass*, or as in Persian

3.5. æbrishæm æz kerm.e æbrishæm be dæst mi.ay.æd.

(Boyle;1966: 64)

silk from worm.of silk to hand ipfv. come. it

Silk is produced (lit. comes to hand) from the silkworm.

However, as Comrie quite correctly points out, sentences like ^{the}above "refer only to the present moment" (1985: 40), and the interpretation of these as universal truths is based on "the structural and extralinguistic factors beyond the meaning of the present tense" (ibid.)⁹. Comrie further notes that "the universality can, of course, be made explicit by a time adverbial, as in *cows always/usually eat grass*, but this does not impinge on the meaning of the present tense" (ibid.).

Some scholars draw a distinction between eternal (omnitemporal, to use Lyons' terminology) and timeless propositions. Lyons (1977: 680) defines a timeless proposition as one "for which the question of time-reference . . . simply does not arise: the situation, or state-of-affairs, that it describes is outside of time altogether". Lyons asserts that "obvious examples of timeless propositions are the so-called eternal truths of mathematics and theology" (ibid.). He categorizes these propositions as third-order entities. In Persian timeless propositions, like eternal (omnitemporal) propositions, are characteristically expressed in the present (more accurately, non-past) tense, example: *do be ælave.ye se mi.shæv.æd pænj* 'two plus three equals (lit. becomes) five'. Given this, the advocates of the theory of one form several meanings, might consider reference to timeless state-of-affairs as another (secondary) meaning of

⁹Quirk et al (1985), like Comrie (1985), consider habitual meaning, and universal (eternal) time as derived meanings, rather than as secondary meanings of the present tense. The major evidence for this is that Quirk et al maintain that whereas with stative and dynamic verbs the English simple present usually implies "an inherently unrestricted time span" (ibid. 179), with punctual verbs it refers "to a single action begun and completed approximately at the moment of speech" (ibid. 180).

the Persian non-past tense. Nonetheless, a close examination shows that timeless proposition is a contextual meaning that is worked out on the basis of the interaction between the meaning of the non-past tense and the meanings of other linguistic elements (in particular arguments of the verb) present in the sentence. The evidence for this is two-fold. Firstly, the Persian non-past tense simply encodes the notion of simultaneity (partial or complete), and as such is non-committal as to whether the situation designated holds only at the moment of speech or lasts through all time without any beginning and without any end, or "is outside space and time" (Lyons; 1977: 443). Secondly, if the arguments of a sentence (e.g. *do* 'two', *se* 'three', and *pænj* 'five' in the above example) expressing a timeless propositions are replaced by some other arguments, the resulting sentence might not be denoting a timeless state-of-affairs anymore.

The third use usually characterized as one of the secondary meanings of the present tense is reference to future events, as in:

- 3.6. *færda* *be tehran* *mi.ay.y.æm* (Boyle; 1966: 64).
 tomorrow to Tehran ipfv. come. I
 I am going to Tehran tomorrow.

In fact, Persian sentences in the present (non-past) tense which refer to future events could be categorised into two groups: (a) sentences with a future time adverbial, e.g. *færda* 'tomorrow', (b) sentences without a time adverbial with future time reference. Sentences with future time adverbials unequivocally refer to a future event, or more accurately locate the time of the situation referred to at a time point in the future with respect to the present moment or some deictic centre established by the context. Sentences without a future time adverbial, e.g. *be pedær.æm yek name mi.nevis.æm* are ambiguous between a present and a future time reference. Thus, the above example may be translated into English as 'I am writing a letter to my father (now)' or as 'I will be writing a letter to my father'. This ambiguity indicates that the future time reference is not a part of the meaning of the Persian imperfective non-past tense, since an imperfective non-past verb form like *mi.nevis.æm* 'am writing' which, due to the

presence of the imperfective marker *mi-* represents the situation referred to as continuous at a given time point, generally locates the time of the situation at the moment of speech; and only when the grammatical subject of the sentence is not actually engaged in performing the action described, or there is a future time adverbial, the verb form locates the situation at a future time point. In other words, given the general theory of the present study, namely that each linguistic item present in the sentence makes its own semantic contribution to the overall meaning of that sentence, the present study claims that the meaning of the Persian imperfective non-past is invariably simultaneity or the location of the situation denoted at a given time point, and that the present and future time reference are interpretations that are worked out on the basis of other features of the structure of the sentence, e.g. the presence versus the absence of a future time adverbial, or on the basis of extra-linguistic context, e.g. the information that the grammatical subject is or is not at the moment of speech engaged in performing the action designated.

The last problem with Comrie's definition of the present tense comes from the fact that his definition does not subsume the narrative or historical use of the present tense, i.e. its use to refer to a past situation, as in:

3.7. di.ruz dær ash.pæz.xane neshæs.t.e.æm ke æli
 yesterday in kitchen sit. pt. ptp. I that Ali
 mi.ay.y.æd væ mi.guy.æd . . .
 ipfv. come. he and ipfv. say. he

Yesterday, I am sitting in the kitchen when Ali comes and says . . .

In other words, in Comrie's framework the historical or narrative use of the present tense is considered as the secondary meaning of the present tense. The present writer, however, maintains that the historical use of the present tense should be recognized as an instance of its relative time reference, i.e. as the location of the situation designated at a time point other than the present moment. In fact, in a narrative sequence, a past time adverbial or a past time verb form establishes a reference point, i.e. a deictic centre in the past, and the present tense verb form(s)

locate(s) the time of the situation (state, event, process) at this reference point, rather than at the moment of speech. Thus, in the above narrative sequence, the time adverbial *di.ruz* 'yesterday', establishes a reference point in the past, and the non-past tenses (the non-past perfect and the imperfective non-past) locate the situations denoted as simultaneous with this reference point.

The relative present time reference of the present tense in narrative sequences is further supported by the fact that in Persian to narrate a number of events which were going on at a time point in the past the narrator can also use the imperfective past, as in the following example:

- 3.8. *di.ruz mæn ketab mi.xan.d.æm, bæche.ha dær baq bazi
mi.kær.d.ænd, væ pedær televezion tæmasha mi.kær.d.ø.*

Yesterday, I was reading a book, children were playing in the garden,
and father was watching the television.

However, if in a narrative sequence the imperfective past is used instead of the imperfective non-past to locate a series of events at a past time point, it goes without saying the past time location of the events in question is expressed not only by the adverbial with past time reference, but also redundantly by the past tense morpheme /D/ present in the imperfective past verb forms. Now, Modern Persian seems to allow the narrator, if s/he wishes to, to express the past time reference of the narrated events only by means of a past time adverbial or a past time verb form which comes first in the narrative sequence, and use the imperfective non-past instead of the imperfective past to render the simultaneity of the events in question.

The use of the Persian imperfective non-past in historical present appears to complete the maximum range of the use of this tense: the imperfective non-past locates a situation at the present moment provided that there does not exist a time adverbial establishing a reference point either in the past or in the future relative to the moment of speech. In cases where a time adverbial establishes a reference point prior to or after the moment of speech, the imperfective non-past locates the time of the situation denoted as simultaneous with that reference point rather than as simultaneous with the

moment of speech. This observation coupled with Prior's observation that a sharp distinction between the point or points of reference and the point of speech is unnecessary and misleading (the point of speech is just the *first* point of reference) clearly indicates that the context-independent meaning of the Persian imperfective non-past is the expression of the notion of simultaneity, i.e. the location of a situation at a given reference point; the information as to whether this reference point is the point of speech itself or a point in the past or in the future with respect to the moment of speech derives from linguistic and/or extra-linguistic context.

3.11.2 *Past tense*

Given the conceptualization of time as a line with the present moment marked as a point on it, Comrie defines the meaning of the past tense as "location in time prior to the present moment" (1985: 41). However, as it may be recalled, Declerck (1986) considers this characterization as inaccurate and proposes a definition for the past tense in terms of three time points: "the past tense does not simply locate the time of the situation before the moment of speech. Rather, it relates the time of the situation to some reference time and locates this reference time before the moment of speech" (ibid. : 313).

As has been explained, Declerck's major reason for replacing Comrie's definition of the past tense with the above definition is her observation that in sentences like *the book was on the table at five*, and *John was writing a letter (when I looked into his room)*, the time of the situation may not lie completely before the moment of speech and may well continue to and beyond it. As a matter of fact Comrie also makes the same observation:

"... use of the past tense only locates the situation in the past without saying anything about whether that situation continues to the present or into the future, although there is often a conversational implicature that it does not continue to or beyond the present" (1985: 41).

Nevertheless, Comrie unlike Declerck attributes any deduction as to whether the past situation occupies just a single point prior to the present moment, or indeed the whole time up to the present moment (as in, *up to this moment this disease was*

incurable), to other relevant features of sentence structure, rather than to the meaning of the past tense. Aspect is one of these relevant features of the sentence structure which helps to decide whether the time of the situation lies completely before the moment of speech or may continue to and beyond it. Thus, if the aspect of the verb form is the imperfective or the progressive aspect, the time of the situation referred to may continue to the present moment or into the future, but if it is the perfective aspect, the time of the situation lies completely before the moment of speech. Aktionsart is the other feature of the structure of the sentence which is relevant to further deduction about the temporal location of the situation in question; if the lexical item of the past tense verb form is the verb 'be' or 'have', the time of the situation in the absence of any disclaimer, may continue to and beyond the present moment, examples:

3.9. æli do sa'æt.e pish in.ja bu.d.ø, væ hænuz hæm hæst.ø.

Ali two hour. of ago this. place be.pt. he, and still also be. he

Ali was here two hours ago, and he is still here.

3.10. æli di.ruz do ketab dash.t.ø, væ hænuz hæm do

Ali yesterday two book have.pt. he and still also two

ketab dar.æd.

book have. he

Yesterday, Ali had two books, and he still has two books.

The above points illustrate that while Comrie bases his definition of the past tense on non-progressive (or more accurately perfective) verb forms, Declerck bases hers on the progressive (or more accurately imperfective) verb forms and on the interaction of tense and Aktionsart. The result is that Comrie has to disregard the temporal implication of the imperfective marker of the imperfective verb forms and of the lexical verbs 'be' and 'have' (i.e. the implication of the existence of a past time point simultaneous with the time of the situation), and Declerck has to disregard the fact that the perfective past verb forms (except where the lexical item is the verb 'be' or 'have') is generally used (as in Persian *qæbl æz in.ke be.ræv.æd be mæn telephone*

kær.d.ø 'he called me before he went' (lit. he goes)) to locate the time of the situation prior to a given time point.

Given the above observations, the present writer contends that Comrie's and Declerck's definition of past tense are both useful. Comrie's definition characterizes the perfective past (non-progressive past in languages where there is a progressive/non-progressive aspectual distinction) of all lexical verbs except 'be' and 'have', and Declerck's definition characterizes the meaning of the imperfective past verb forms (which locate the time of the situation as simultaneous with a time point prior to the present moment), and the perfective of 'be' and 'have'.

Having established that Comrie's definition of the past tense characterizes only the perfective past verb forms (with the exception of the perfective past of 'be' and 'have'), and that of Declerck only the imperfective past verb forms and the perfective past of 'be' and 'have', the next issue to deal with is the question of whether Modern Persian past tense verb forms have one single invariant meaning, or a number of meanings one of which is more central and more typical than the others.

The Persian simple past (pfv. past) can be used in sentences like the following.

3.11. - *bätul, pa sho xærboze ro be.yar par.e kon*

Batul stand up melon o.m. pfv. bring cut make

Batul, stand up and fetch the melon and cut it.

bätul pa sho.d.ø væ ræf.t.ø tu.ye otaq (AS 76).

Batul stand up. pt. she. and go. pt. she into room

Batul stood up and went into the room.

3.12. *englestan ke ræf.t.id name.i be mæn be.nevis.id*

(Lambton; 1963: 145).

England that go. pt. you letter. a to I pfv. write. you

When you go (lit. went) to England, write a letter to me.

3.13. *væqti ke hærf.e xod ra tæmam kær.d.ø.*

when that word. of self o.m. end make. pt. s/he

jævab da.d.æm . . . (Lambton; 1963: 146).

answer give. pt. I

When he had finished (lit. finished) what he had to say, I answered. . .

3.14. ægær chiz.i pors.id. ø, ævæz.e mæn hærf be.zæn (ST 78).

if thing. a ask. pt. he instead. of I speech pfv. strike

If he asks (lit. asked) anything, you speak for me.

3.15. ægær dozd ra di.d.i, u ra tosif kon

if thief o.m. see. pt. you, he o.m. describe make

If you saw the thief, describe him to us.

3.16. (mæn) fæqæt mi.xas.t.æm be.pors.æm:

(I) just ipvf. want. pt. I pfv. ask. I:

"mi.tævan.i be mæn yek pond qærz be.dæh.i".

"ipfv. able. you to I one pound loan pfv. give. I"

I just wanted to ask you whether you could lend me a pound.

3.17. (mæn) mi.xas.t.æm u ra be.bin.æm, æmma

(I) ipfv. want. pt. I s/he o.m. pfv. see. I, but

movæffæq næ.sho.d.æm.

successful neg. become. pt. I

I wanted to see him, but I didn't succeed.

3.18. amæ.d.æm! (in answer to a question or implied

come. pt. I question such as 'are you coming',

I am coming. or a command such as 'hurry up')

(Lambton; 1963: 146)

In ex. 3.11. the past tense verb forms *pa sho.d.ø* 'stood up. she' and *ræf.t.ø* 'went. she' clearly have absolute past time reference and locate the time of the situations denoted prior to the moment of speech. In the temporal clause in example 3.12., on the other hand, the past tense verb form *ræf.t.id* 'you went' definitely does not have absolute past time reference; but rather refers to an action which is in the future with respect to the moment of speech, i.e. it has future time reference. One

analysis would be to argue that in main clauses the Modern Persian past tense verb form has (absolute) past time reference, but in temporal clauses has (relative) future time reference, i.e. to argue that the past tense verb form has at least two meanings: (absolute) past and (relative) future time reference. However, sentences like 3.13. reveal that this analysis is inaccurate. Since, in this sentence, the past tense verb form of the temporal clause, i.e. *tæmam kær.d.ø* 'finished he', unlike the past tense verb form of the temporal clause in ex. 3.12., has past time reference. This clearly indicates that past and future time reference are both contextual meanings. Since, in ex. 3.12. where the temporal clause is subordinate to a main clause whose verb form has future time reference, the past tense verb form of the subordinate clause has future time reference with respect to the moment of speech, but in ex. 3.13. where the temporal clause is subordinate to a main clause whose past tense verb form has past time reference, the past tense verb form of the temporal clause has past time reference. In other words, the future and the past time reference of the past tense verb form in sentences like 3.12. and 3.13. are interpretations that are worked out on the basis of the interaction of the meaning of the past tense verb form and other features of the structure of the sentence, e.g. the time reference of a main verb. This gives rise to the question of what is the meaning of the past tense verb form.

The best way to isolate the context-independent meaning of Modern Persian past tense verb form is to compare examples 3.11. to 3.13. with one another. The comparison shows that these three examples have one thing in common. In each of these examples the time of the situation is in the past with respect to a given time point. In ex. 3.11. the time point the situation denoted by the past tense verb form is related to is the point of speech, i.e. Lyons' "the temporal zero-point of the deictic context". In ex. 3.12. the time of the situation is in the past with respect to the reference point established by the verb of the main clause, i.e. *be.nevis.id* 'write. you'. Finally, in ex. 3.13. the time of the situation is related to a past reference point which is itself in the past relative to the here-and-now of the speaker. Given the outcome of the above comparison it can be claimed that the meaning of the past

perfective in Modern Persian is invariably the expression of the notion of anteriority without saying anything about the absolute time location of the situation denoted. To put it in another way, it can be claimed that Modern Persian past tense is a relative tense which locates the time of the situation in the past relative to a time reference established by the context. There are two pieces of evidence which fully support the meaning isolated here for the Modern Persian past tense. The first is Comrie's observation that ". . . one of the possible deictic centres for a relative tense is the present moment, especially when the context does not suggest any other reference point" (1985: 22). The second is King's observation that "scholars have failed to cross the time barrier and recognize that all reference to objective real world time is contextual" (1983: 113) (King's observation reaffirms Calver's statement that "Confusion of the meaning of the verb-form with some part of its context has been frequent when the theory of time has been mistaken" (1946: 319)).

Having established the invariant meaning of the past tense which also corroborates the general common meaning assigned to the past tense morpheme /D/ in section 3.10., in the rest of the present section an attempt will be made to prove that other meanings assigned to Modern Persian past tense as secondary or peripheral are in fact predictable from the interaction of the general meaning proposed in this study and context.

Sentence 3.14. exemplifies the use of the past tense in conditionals or counterfactuals (to use Comrie's terminology). Comrie (1985: 19) argues that "in counterfactuals, e.g. *if you did this, I would be happy* [the past tense] clearly does not have past time reference, but refers rather to a potential action in the present or future" (ibid.), and for that matter the use of the past tense in conditional sentences should be considered as one of its secondary meanings. The present writer, on the contrary, maintains that in conditional sentences like 3.14. above, the past tense verb form, i.e. *pors.id.∅* 'asked. he' does not refer to a potential action in the present or future but rather has relative past time reference and locates the time of the situation referred to in the past, with respect to the time of the situation denoted by the verb

form of the apodosis clause. There are two types of evidence for this; firstly, the linguistic element which implies the notion of 'potentiality' in conditional sentences is the conditional particle *ægær* 'if', rather than the past tense, secondly, in some conditional sentences, e.g. 3.15. above, the past tense has past time reference, i.e. locates the time of the situation referred to prior to the moment of speech. Thus, in *ægær dozd ra di.d.i, u ra tosif kon* 'if you saw the thief, describe him'¹⁰, the past tense verb form *di.d.i* 'saw' has past time reference and as such refers to a potential action in the past rather than in the present or in the future (potentiality is of course implied by the conditional particle *ægær* 'if').

Sentence 3.16. exemplifies the use of the past tense in polite requests. Comrie (1985: 19) argues that in polite requests such as *I just wanted to ask you if you could lend me a pound* -- "which in most circumstances is unlikely to be intended or to be interpreted as a report on the speaker's desires in the past, but rather as an expression of a present desire to borrow some money" -- "the function of the past tense is to indicate politeness" (ibid.). In other words, he contends that the indication of politeness is a secondary meaning of the past tense (cf. ibid. :20). The present writer, however, maintains that the expression of politeness in sentences like 3.16. (which is the Persian translation equivalent of the English example just given) is a function of the context rather than of the past tense, and that the past tense in this sentence, like in any other sentence containing a past tense verb form, simply indicates the notion of anteriority. The evidence for this is two fold. First, ex. 3.17. above which also contains the (imperfective) past tense of the lexical verb *xas.t.æn* 'want' (i.e. *mi.xas.t.æm* 'I wanted') reports the speaker's desire in the past to see someone, rather than indicating politeness. Second, as King (1983: 110) points out in sentences like *Did you want to tell me about it now*, "even if the situation is ascribed to the present moment, it is still true that the situation was valid at a time anterior to the act of

¹⁰The present writer wishes to extend his gratitude to Mr. David Barber (an ex-lecturer in the linguistics and phonetics department of the University of Leeds) for drawing his attention to the English example *If you saw the thief, describe him* where 'saw' has past time reference. Example 3.15. above is actually the Persian translation equivalent of this English example.

communication".

Finally, sentence 3.18. : *amæ.d.æm!* 'I am coming' (lit. I came') is an example of the use of the past tense in Modern Persian for imminent future events. Interestingly enough, as Comrie (1985: 20) notes, in Russian the past tense can also be used for imminent future events. Thus, in this language, "the usual expression for use when one is about to leave is *ja poshel* , literally 'I left' even though this is clearly not true" (ibid.). Comrie considers such uses of the past tense in Russian and in several other languages simply as exceptions. The present writer, however, treats the expression of the future time reference in sentences like 3.18. above as the function of the context. Since the past tense verb form is used in these sentences not to denote an action about to be completed but rather to imply that the event is so certain to occur that can be considered as belonging to the past time sphere. This is further supported by the fact that past tense verb forms like *amæ.d.æm* 'I came', *ræf.t.æm* 'I went', etc. may be used for an action about to be completed only in contexts where the speaker wishes to avoid the addressee's further complaints by assuring him/her that the event designated will definitely take place, and by the fact that only the perfective past which represents the event as a complete whole can be used in these contexts.

Having established that the Persian past tense is a relative tense whose meaning is invariably the expression of the notion of anteriority, it is time to find out whether Comrie's definition of the past tense as a general linguistic category is general enough to account for Modern Persian past tense uses or not. As has already been noticed, the Persian past tense verb forms, unlike their English counterparts which "have absolute time reference in nearly all instances" (Comrie; 1985: 56), can have either absolute or relative past time reference. Given this, Comrie's definition of the past tense, namely, "location in time prior to the present moment" (ibid. : 41) clearly does not subsume the relative time reference of the Persian past tense, and for that matter a more general definition should be attempted. The description which is proposed is the location of the time of the situation in the past with respect to some deictic centre established by the context. This characterization is strengthened when one realizes that one of the

possible deictic centres for a tense is the present moment, especially when the context does not suggest any other reference point.

3.11.3 *Future tense*

As has been pointed out, Comrie (1985) defines the general linguistic category of future tense as locating the time of the situation after the moment of speech (cf. *ibid.* : 123), i.e. to the right of the present moment time point on the time line. Before going into the question of whether Modern Persian has a separate grammatical category of future time reference, i.e. a future tense, it is necessary to examine a number of objections raised to the notion of future tense, both in general linguistic theory and in the analysis of individual languages (including English and Persian). Comrie (1985) discusses the major objections raised to the concept of future tense as follows:

(a) **Conceptual objection:** Diagrammatical representation of time as a line with the axis of the present moment actually introduces the future as being the same as past, only in the opposite temporal direction. However, in at least one sense the future is different from the past. The past comprises what may already have happened and, barring science fiction, is immutable and beyond the control of the present actions. The future, on the other hand, is more speculative, in that it subsumes events predicted to happen, i.e. events whose occurrences may be barred or changed by intervening events, including one's own conscious intervention. Thus, in a real sense the future is not so definite as the past. Following on from this, some linguists argue that while the difference between past and present is indeed one of tense, that between future, on the one hand, and past and present on the other is one of mood rather than of tense, and some other linguists like Lyons argue that "futurity is as much a matter of mood as it is of tense" (Lyons; 1968: 306). Lyons' argument seems more acceptable, since as Comrie (1985: 44) points out the above-mentioned conceptual objection to the notion of future tense, "simply says that the past and future differ from one another in certain respects, [and as such] it is not inconsistent with their

being similar to one another in other respects, perhaps even those crucial respects that are relevant to tense".

(b) The second objection to the notion of the future tense is based on the observation that a great number of languages, including most European languages, have a clear grammatical distinction between past and non-past (the latter subsuming present and future time reference), but either no or a much less clear grammatical distinction between future and non-future, in particular between future and present. (In Persian, for instance, the distinction between the past and the non-past is grammaticalized very distinctively: the past is marked by the past tense marker /-D/, and the present (or more accurately the non-past) by its absence, but there is no grammatical distinction between the present and the future). In most of these languages, the so-called present tense is the normal verb form used to express future time reference, as for instance in Persian *færda be u yek name mi.nevis.æm* 'I will write a letter to him tomorrow' (lit, 'I am writing a letter to him tomorrow').

Comrie, however, argues that the only thing the above observation "would demonstrate is that these languages lack a future tense, but this would not in itself be proof that the concept of future tense is not needed in general linguistic theory, since the general linguistic theory must be able to deal with the tense system of any language" (1985: 45).

(c) The last objection to the notion of future tense is that expressions of future time reference often derive diachronically from modal expressions, e.g. of desiderativity, such as English *will* and Persian *xas.t.æn* 'wish, want'. Comrie basically rejects this objection and maintains that this diachronic relation does not impinge on the synchronic status of such forms, and further historical development may even separate them formally. Lyons (1977), on the other hand, considers this as significant and points out that since "throughout the history of the Indo-European languages what are traditionally described as future tense have invariably been created, independently in different languages, from word-forms or phrases that were originally used to express, not futurity as such, but various kinds of non-futurity"

(1977: 618), futurity must be treated "as much a matter of mood as of tense" (1968: 306).

Having reviewed the objections raised to the notion of future tense in general linguistic theory, it is time to find out whether Modern Persian has a separate grammatical category of future time reference, i.e. a future tense, or not. Traditional grammar usually presents Modern Persian as having a future tense, namely the form using the perfective present of the auxiliary *xas.t.æn* 'wish, want' and the short infinitive of the verb (i.e. the infinitive without the infinitive marker *-æn*), as in *færda xah.æd ræf.t.* (Lambton; 1963: 154) 'he will go tomorrow'. However, given the following reasons, the so-called Definite future of Modern Persian "is not a tense, but at best a modality" (Windfuhr; 1987: 537).

(a) As already pointed out, in Modern Persian the normal verb form used to indicate future time reference is the present tense. In this language, the present tense (more accurately the non-past tense) can be used in almost all independent and certain subordinate clauses to indicate future time reference. Modern Persian present tense can be used with future time reference even where the use of the English present tense with future time reference is unacceptable, as in *?it rains tomorrow*. Thus, the Persian sentence *færda baran mi.ay.æd*, unlike its English translation equivalent just given is quite acceptable.

(b) The construction *xas.t.æn* + short infinitive is used very infrequently in Modern Colloquial Persian to indicate future time reference. In colloquial speech the imperfective non-past, e.g. *mi.ræv.æm* 'I go/ am going/ will be going', and the subordinate perfective non-past, e.g. *be.ræv.æm* 'I go' are in fact almost the only grammatical forms that are used with future time reference. This is further supported by the fact that the present writer hardly ever uses the periphrastic construction *xas.t.æn* + short infinitive to refer to a future event, and by the fact that the so-called definite future does not occur even once in the works of fiction studied for the present research.

(c) The auxiliary *xas.t.æn* has a number of other uses in addition to the expression of future time reference, in particular modal uses which do not necessarily have future time reference; in particular *xas.t.æn* can be used to indicate volition with present time reference (*u dær ab.ha.ye xætær.nak shena xah.æd kær.d* 'he will swim in dangerous waters'), prediction with present time reference (*in æli xah.æd bu.d* 'this will be Ali'), and insistence (*qæbl æz nime shæb mænzel xah.i bu.d, mærd.e jævan* 'you will be at home by midnight, young man'). (These sentences may occur solely in the speech of educated people and writing).

(d) The Modern Persian auxiliary *xas.t.æn* used to form the so-called 'future tense' has three forms in the non-past tense: two perfective forms and one imperfective form¹¹. The perfective aspect is marked in the first perfective non-past form by a zero morpheme (\emptyset -), i.e. by the absence of the imperfective marker *mi-*, and by the perfective marker *be-* in the second. The two perfective non-past forms of *xas.t.æn* are complementarily distributed, the first mainly occurs in main clauses, e.g. *u xah.æd ræf.t* 'he will go', and the second is restricted to the dependent clauses, e.g. *ægær be.xah.æd (ke) be.ræv.æd . . .* 'if he wants to go . . . '.

The imperfective form of *xas.t.æn* is always, like the second perfective form, followed by the subordinate perfective of the main verb, as in *mi.xah.æm (ke) be.ræv.æm* 'I want to go'. The first perfective non-past form is, on the other hand, always followed by the short infinitive of the main verb, as in *xah.æm ræf.t* 'I will go, intend to go'. Of the three non-past verb phrases consisting of a non-past form of the modal verb *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish' and a lexical verb, only the one constructed from the first perfective form of *xas.t.æn* and the short infinitive of a main verb is recognized by traditional grammarians as a future tense category. This would, however, appear a rather arbitrary ruling to claim that the non-past perfective of *xas.t.æn* plus short infinitive is a future tense category, but its perfective and imperfective non-past plus the subordinate perfective form of the main verb are modal

¹¹In the past tense, the modal verb *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish', however, like all other Persian verbs, has only one perfective form which is marked by the absence of the imperfective marker *mi-*.

constructions expressing the modal notions such as 'volition', 'willingness', 'wish', etc., rather than mainly future time reference. The arbitrariness of this claim is further shown by the fact that in the past tense the perfective and imperfective of *xas.t.aen* are both followed obligatorily by the subordinate perfective of the lexical verb, as in *xas.t.aem be.raev.aem* 'I wanted to go', *mi.xas.t.aem be.raev.aem* 'I wanted (lit. was wanting) to go'. Given the above observation, the present writer claims that the correct analysis would be to say that verb forms consisting of the perfective non-past of *xas.t.aen* and the short infinitive, and verb forms consisting of the imperfective (or perfective non-past of *xas.t.aen* with the perfective marker *be-*) and the subordinate perfective of the main verb, are both modal constructions which modify the surface structure subject and indicate his volition, intention, desire, etc. If the above analysis is true, then the two sets of constructions would be distinguished by aspect, i.e. imperfective vs. perfective. The verb form consisting of the perfective of *xas.t.aen* and the short infinitive (or the subordinate perfective) presents the stative situation of wanting as a single complete whole, i.e. as a punctual situation holding at a future time point (cf. Bache's observation that the perfective aspect is logically incapable of referring to the present progression of a process, a state or an activity (Bache; 1985:68)), and the verb form consisting of the imperfective of *xas.t.aen* and the subordinate perfective presents the stative situation of wanting as continuous at the moment of speech or any time point recognized as the deictic centre by the context of communication.

The above mentioned points (a to d) clearly illustrate that first, the sequence *xas.t.aen* + short infinitive is essentially a modal construction, second Modern Persian does not have a separate grammatical category of future time reference, i.e. a future tense. Having established these facts, it is time to investigate whether Comrie's description of the general linguistic category of future tense is relevant to the Modern Persian tense system or not.

The fact that Modern Persian does not have a separate category of future tense, does not, however, mean that the concept of futurity is not necessary for an accurate

analysis of Modern Persian tense system. Clearly, any natural language, as a means of communication, has to have way(s) of expressing the notion of posteriority as well as anteriority and simultaneity. As has already been explained, Modern Persian normally uses the (imperfective) present to indicate future time reference. This gives rise to the question of whether the Persian present tense should be allocated at least two meanings: a present and a future time reference meaning, or a fairly general common meaning which subsumes not only the present and future time reference, but also the other uses of this tense, in particular narrative present, where the present tense is used to refer to a past situation. Given the general theory of the present study which contends that every single linguistic item of a given sentence has a meaning and as such contributes to the overall meaning of the sentence in question, the correct analysis would be to attempt a general common meaning subsuming all the uses of the present tense.

The present study, as it may be recalled, defines the context-independent meaning of the non-past tense of Modern Persian, which is also imperfective, as the expression of the notion of simultaneity, i.e. as locating the time of the situation at a given time point whose absolute time reference is normally determined by the linguistic and/or extra-linguistic context. The given time point is the moment of speech where there is no temporal adverbial referring to a time point other than the moment of speech, or where the grammatical subject is actually engaged in doing the action designated by the lexical verb, but a past time point or a future time point where there is a temporal adverb referring to a time point prior to or subsequent to the moment of speech or where the grammatical subject is not actually engaged in performing the action denoted. This definition is further supported by the fact that it is in line with King's contention that the linguist analysing the verb forms of a given language should "cross the time barrier and recognize that all reference to objective real world time is contextual" (King; 1983: 113).

The analysis of the future time reference as the interaction of the context-independent meaning of the imperfective non-past and linguistic and extra-linguistic

context should not, however, be taken as implying that Comrie's definition of the metalinguistic category of future tense is absolutely irrelevant to the Persian system. As it may be recalled, the so-called non-past subjunctive of Modern Persian, namely the verb form constructed from the perfective marker *be-*, the (non-past) root of the verb, and the appropriate personal ending, as in *be.ræv.æm* 'pfv. go. I' is essentially a perfective non-past which almost always occurs in dependent clauses and imperative sentences which are underlyingly dependent clauses. This verb form, as perfectivity is in general incompatible with present time reference, normally has relative future time reference, i.e. locates the time of the situation in the future with respect to the time point of reference established by the main verb, as in *be u gof.t.e bu.d.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd* 'I had told him to go' where the time of 'his going' is located in the future relative to the time point established by the main verb *gof.t.e bu.d.æm* 'I had told' (lit. I was having told). Given this fact, Comrie's characterization of the future tense, i.e. 'the location of the situation subsequent to the moment of speech' if it is modified to read as 'the location of the time of the situation posterior to the time point taken by the context as the deictic centre', could be considered as the definition of Modern Persian subordinate perfective non-past, i.e. the so-called non-past subjunctive.

3.12. Modern Persian tense system as a binary system: anterior vs. non-anterior

Comrie (1985) holds the view that "past versus non-past is the basic tense split in many European languages, with subdivisions within non-past (especially future as opposed to present) being at best secondary" (ibid. : 49). The major argument for this view is two-fold. First, in these languages the present tense is either frequently used for future time reference or is the basic means of expressing the future time reference. Second, the so-called future tense has modal uses which do not involve future time reference.

Given the fact that these points of argument equally apply to Modern Persian, it would seem appropriate to claim that the basic tense distinction in the Persian tense

system is the distinction between past and non-past. In fact, the study of Modern Persian tense verb forms thus far indicates that Modern Persian tense system is a two term system. Nevertheless, since the terms 'past' and 'non-past' are closely associated with absolute time reference, and since Modern Persian tense forms have both absolute and relative time reference, the present study proposes the terms 'anterior' and 'non-anterior' for 'past' and 'non-past' respectively. Given these terms, the basic tense split in Persian would be anterior vs. non-anterior: the anterior including tenses that always locate a situation prior to, or at a time point prior to a reference point taken by the context as the deictic centre, and non-anterior subsuming the imperfective non-past that locates a situation at a non-past time point which would be the moment of speech where no other reference point is given by the context, and the subordinate perfective non-past which has relative future time reference, except where the lexical verb is the copula *bu.d.æn* 'be' or *dash.t.æn* 'have'¹². In the case of the lexical verbs *bu.d.æn* and *dash.t.æn*, the subordinate perfective normally has relative present time reference and locates the time of the stative situation of 'being' or 'having' as simultaneous with the time point established by the main verb, as in

- 3.19. æl'an gæman mi.kon.æm (ke) bær ru.ye
 now belief ipvf. do. I (that) over on. of
 rud.xane.ye qære su bash.im. (Boyle; 1966: 67)
 river. house. of Qara Su be. we
 I think we are now over the River Qara Su.

3.13. Relative tense

In section 3.11. absolute tense was characterized as locating a given situation in time relative to the present moment, and it was illustrated that the Persian major tenses, i.e. the past and the non-past (more accurately the anterior and the non-

¹²*bu.d.æn* and *dash.t.æn* do not combine with the perfective prefix *be-* neither in the past nor in the non-past tense. Thus, *bu.d.æn* uses its *mi-* less form (e.g. *bash.æm*, *bash.i*, etc.) and *dash.t.æn* its subordinate perfect form (i.e. *dash.t.e bash.æm*, *dash.t.e bash.i*, etc.) in subordinate clauses. (In Modern Persian the non-past *mi-* less form of *bu.d.æn*, which consists of its second non-past root *bash* and the appropriate personal suffix, i.e. *bash.æm*, *bash.i*, *bash.æd*, etc. does not occur in main clauses at all, and its imperfective form i.e. *mi.bash.æm*, *mi.bash.i*, etc. is restricted to highly formal speech and writing).

anterior) do not always have absolute time reference. Rather they may have absolute, or relative time reference depending on the context. This observation led to the modification of Comrie's definition of the past, the present, and the future tense to read respectively as the location of the time of the situation prior to, at, and posterior to a given reference time point, rather than prior to, at and posterior to the present moment (i.e. the moment of speech). Now this section will discuss "pure relative tense" (Comrie; 1985: 56) as a general linguistic category "where the reference point for the location of a situation in time is some time point given by the context, not necessarily the present moment" (ibid.).

The notion of relative tense can be exemplified by examples from English where non-finite verb forms characteristically have relative time reference. (In this language, finite verb forms, in nearly all instances, have absolute time reference). Examples will also be given from Persian where the finite verb forms have absolute as well as relative time reference depending on whether the moment of speech is the deictic centre or not, but the non-finite verb forms, i.e. the present and past participle only have relative time reference.

The best way to illustrate the distinction between absolute and relative tense is to discuss the conceptually identical distinction within time adverbials, "since here it is somewhat easier to see precisely the factors involved" (Comrie; 1985: 56). Some time adverbials have absolute time reference, i.e. they serve to locate a situation relative to the present moment, e.g. *em.ruz* 'today', (the day including the moment of speech), *di.ruz* 'yesterday' (the day preceding the day including the moment of speech), *færda* 'tomorrow' (the day following the day including the moment of speech). Some other time adverbials locate the situation in question relative to a reference point given by the context, such as (*dæx*) *hæman ruz* 'on the same day', *ruz.e qæbl* 'on the day before' (lit. day of before), *ruz.e bæ'd* 'on the next day', etc. Adverbials of this kind are all instances of relative time reference. On hearing a sentence with an adverbial of relative time reference, like

3.20. ruz.e bæ'd be xane.ye dust.æm ræf.t.æm.
 day. of next to house. of friend. my go. pt. I

The next day I went to my friend's house.

one's natural reaction would be to look for a reference point in terms of which the time adverbial *ruz.e. bæ'd* can be interpreted --the next day after what? On the contrary, a sentence with an adverbial of absolute time reference does not give rise to a search for a reference point; the time reference of *færda* 'tomorrow' in

3.21. æli færda be xane.ye dust.æsh mi.ræv.æd.

Ali tomorrow to house. of friend. his ipfv. go. he

Ali will go to his friend's house tomorrow.

is quite clear (though one would have problems in relating this time adverbial to other non-deictic systems of time co-ordinates if one does not know what day of the week, or what date today is).

As already noticed, English non-finite verb forms basically have relative time reference. Thus, Comrie (1985: 57) points out that one interpretation of English *the passengers awaiting flight 26, proceeded to departure gate 5* is that the time reference of *awaiting* is simultaneous with the time reference of the main verb *proceeded*. "Since the time reference of *proceeded* is past, the time reference of *awaiting* is interpreted as simultaneous with that past moment in time" (ibid. : 57). Therefore, the above sentence in many contexts can be considered as equivalent to the following sentence, with a finite subordinate clause: *the passengers who were awaiting flight 26 proceeded to departure gate 5*.

The other interpretation that the participle clause: *awaiting flight 26*, according to Comrie, can have is that the reference is to passengers who are now, i.e. at the present moment awaiting flight 26. This reading is not of course compatible with the finite clause paraphrase given above, but rather with the finite clause paraphrase: *the passengers who are now awaiting flight 26 proceeded to departure gate 5*.

The Persian present participle¹³, unlike the English present participle, in non-finite clauses, can only have a time reference simultaneous with the time reference of the finite verb in the main clause. Thus, the only interpretation of the Persian sentence 3.22. below is that the time reference of the present participle *xænd.an* 'smiling' is simultaneous with the time reference of the main verb *amæ.d.ø* 'came'.

3.22. æli xænd.an pish amæ.d.ø.

Ali smiling forward come. pt. he

Ali came forward smiling.

In other words, in all contexts the above sentence is informationally equivalent to the following sentence with two finite verb forms: *æli væqti ke pish amæ.d.ø mi.xænd.id.ø* 'Ali was smiling when he came forward', and never equivalent to *Ali ke æl'an mi.xænd.æd, pish amæ.d.ø* 'Ali who is (now) smiling, came forward', where the time reference of the imperfective non-past *mi.xænd.æd* 'is smiling' is simultaneous with the present moment, rather than with that of the perfective past *amæ.d.ø* 'came'.

Even in English the unmarked time reference of a present participle is the one simultaneous with the time reference of the main verb in the sentence; the interpretation where the time reference of the present participle is simultaneous with the present moment is less likely. The finite clause paraphrase for the second interpretation of the above English example, as already noted, would be *the passengers who are now awaiting flight 26 proceeded to gate 5*. In fact, according to Comrie (1985: 57) one needs "to build up a more specific context for this interpretation of the participle construction [*awaiting*] to make sense" (ibid.).

Summing up, while the Persian time adverbials like those of English can be classified into adverbials with absolute time reference and adverbials with relative time reference, the Persian present participle, unlike its English counterpart which may also have absolute time reference (i.e. may also locate the time of the situation at the

¹³Present participle is formed in Persian by affixing the present participle suffix *-æn* to the (non-past) verb root (cf. chapter 1).

present moment rather than at the time point of the main verb), always has relative time reference. I.e. its time reference is always simultaneous with that of the main verb in the finite clause.

The Persian present participle is not, however, one of the tenseless constructions. Since, tenseless constructions such as derived nominals do not necessarily have time reference simultaneous with that of the main verb in the closest finite clause. In fact, in a sentence such as *tæxrib.e shæhr tævæssot.e doshmæn, ma ra æsæbani kær.d.∅* 'the enemy's destruction of the city made us angry', the time reference of the construction *tæxrib.e shæhr tævæssot.e doshmæn* 'destruction of the city by the enemy' seems more likely to have occurred prior to our getting angry, rather than simultaneous with it.

The present participle in Persian should also be distinguished from finite verb forms in that, as already shown, finite verb forms in Persian can have both absolute and relative time reference, but the present participle can only have time reference simultaneous with that of the main verb in the finite clause.

Given the differences between the present participle on the one hand and tenseless constructions and finite verb forms on the other, the meaning of the Persian present participle which is a non-finite verb form can be defined as locating the time of the situation denoted as simultaneous with the time reference of the following finite verb form, i.e. as expressing the notion of simultaneity.

Another instance of 'pure relative tense' in Modern Persian is exemplified by the past participle. The Persian past participle, like the English past participle, has relative past time reference, i.e. locates the time of the situation in the past relative to the reference point (or more accurately the secondary deictic centre) established by the time location of the main verb in the sentence, as in the following example

3.23. *mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.e be mædrese ræf.t.∅.*

Maryam meal o.m. cook. pt. ptp. to school go. pt. she

Having cooked the meal, Maryam went to school.

where the past participle *pox.t.e* 'cooked' locates the 'cooking' situation prior to the time location of the past tense verb form *ræf.t.ø* 'went'. Example 3.23. is informationally equivalent to the following compound sentence.

- 3.24. *mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.ø væ (bæ'd) be mædrese ræf.t.ø.*
 Maryam meal o.m. cook.pt. ptp. and (then) to school go. pt. she
 Maryam cooked the meal and (then) went to school.

In ex. 3.24. 'cooking' and 'going' situations, given the finite verb forms *pox.t.ø* 'cooked' and *ræf.t.ø* 'went' are both located prior to the moment of speech, and the conjunction *væ (bæ'd)* 'and (then)' indicates that the cooking situation precedes the leaving situation.

Changing the tense of the main verb in ex. 3.23., but keeping the past participle, produces the following sentence.

- 3.25. *mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.e be mædrese mi.ræv.æd.*
 Maryam meal o.m. cook. pt. ptp. to school ipfv. go. she.
 Having cooked the meal, Maryam will go/is going to school.

Given the fact that Persian imperfective non-past depending on the context locates the time of the situation denoted either at the moment of speech or at a time point in the future, the above example is three way ambiguous. In one interpretation, the situation referred to by the finite verb *mi.ræv.æd* 'is going' is actually happening at the moment of speech, i.e. Maryam is on her way to school, and as a consequence the situation referred to by the past participle is in a practical sense prior to the moment of speech, and for that matter the sentence under consideration is informationally equivalent to

- 3.26. *mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.e æst (perf.) væ hala be*
 Maryam meal o.m. cook. pt. ptp. is and now to
 mædrese mi.ræv.æd.
 school ipfv. go. she
 Maryam has cooked the meal and is now going to school.

where the cooking situation is in the past relative to the time reference of the main verb *mi.ræv.æd* 'is going' which is overlapping the moment of speech.

In another interpretation, the finite verb *mi.ræv.æd* has future time reference, i.e. locates the time of the 'going' situation at a time point in the future. With this interpretation, depending on the time location of the situation denoted by the past participle with respect to the moment of speech ex. 3.25. is informationally equivalent either to

3.27. *mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.e æst, væ be mædrese mi.ræv.æd.*

Maryam has cooked the meal and will be going (some time in the future) to school.

or to

3.28. *mæryæm qæza ra mi.pæz.æd væ be mædrese mi.ræv.æd.*

Maryam meal o.m. ipfv. cook. she and to school ipfv. go. she

Maryam cooks the meal and (then) goes to school.

To sum up, depending on the absolute time reference of the main verb, the absolute time reference of the past participle varies. This very fact indicates that the absolute time location of the situation designated by the past participle is an interpretation that is worked out on the basis of other features of the structure of the sentence rather than a part of the meaning of the past participle. In other words, all that the past participle in sentences like 3.23. and 3.25. implicates is that the situation referred to is in the past with respect to the time reference of the closest finite verb.

Persian does not have non-finite verb forms with future time reference. This is not, however, surprising, since Persian does not have a separate category of future time reference either.

3.14. Absolute-relative tense

In the previous sections of this chapter, it was pointed out that Comrie (1985) makes a distinction between absolute tenses where a situation is located at, before, or after the present moment, and relative tenses, where a situation is located at, before, or after a reference point given by the context. It was also illustrated that

Persian finite verb forms, unlike their English counterparts which in almost all instances have absolute time reference (Comrie; 1985: 56), can have both absolute and relative time reference, and that Persian non-finite verb forms only have relative time reference.

The absolute and relative time reference of Modern Persian finite verb forms, and the fact that "the present moment is, unless barred by the context, always available as a reference point for relative tenses" (Comrie; 1985: 58) give rise to the question of whether a sharp distinction between relative and absolute tense in the Modern Persian tense system is linguistically justifiable or not. The general definitions already suggested for some of the Persian finite verb forms, namely, the (perfective) past, the imperfective past, and the (imperfective) non-past, indicate that the present writer, given Prior's argument that it is "[both] unnecessary and misleading to make a sharp distinction between the point or points of reference and the point of speech, [since] the point of speech is just the first point of reference and pastness and futurity are always relative to some point of reference" (Prior; 1967: 13), holds the view that a distinction between relative and absolute time reference is unwarranted in so far as the Persian tense system is concerned and that Persian tenses are relative. Further evidence for this view derives from the distinction made by Comrie between the absolute and relative tense. According to Comrie:

"The difference between absolute and relative tense is not that between the present moment versus some other point in time as reference point, but rather between a form whose meaning specifies the present moment as reference point and a form whose meaning does not specify that the present moment must be its reference point. Relative tenses thus have the present moment as one of their possible reference points, but this is a problem of interpretation rather than of meaning" (1985:58).

If Comrie's postulation as regards the difference between absolute and relative tense is linguistically warranted, then the Persian tenses, at least those studied thus far, should not be subsumed under the rubric of absolute tense, as their meanings do not always specify the present moment as reference point¹⁴. Thus, while in a Persian

¹⁴Declerck (1986) who allows for a shift in the deictic centre ("it appears possible for the speaker to report situations in such a way that the 'deictic centre' . . . is no longer the place and time of utterance

sentence like *name ra nevesh.t.æm* 'I wrote the letter', the present moment is taken as the deictic centre, in a sentence like *væqti name ra nevesh.t.æm an ra post mi.kon.æm* 'when I write (lit. wrote) the letter, I will post it', the reference point established by the main verb, i.e. *post mi.kon.æm* 'I post' is taken as the deictic centre, and the time of writing situation is located in the past relative to that.

Related to the general linguistic notions of 'absolute' and 'relative' tense is the notion of 'absolute-relative' tense. Comrie (1985: 65) employs the term 'absolute-relative' tense to refer to verb forms which combine absolute and relative time reference, in other words to verb forms which have as part of their meaning "that a reference point is situated at, before, or after the present moment and in addition that a situation is located at, before, or after that reference point" (ibid.)¹⁵. Given Comrie's definition of 'absolute-relative tense', one candidate within the Modern Persian tense system would be the imperfective past. The reason for this is that, this tense, as has already been explained, may be used --by virtue of the presence of the imperfective marker *mi-* whose meaning is the expression of the situation as continuous and for that matter implies a time point at which the situation is expressed as continuous-- to locate the time of the situation at a time point which precedes the moment of speech. I.e. it can be claimed to have as part of its meaning that a reference point is situated before the present moment and in addition that a situation is located at that reference point. The imperfective non-past, on the other hand, can not be claimed to have absolute-relative time reference even in sentences with future time reference, as in *æli færda name.i be pedær.æsh mi.nevis.æd* 'Ali will be writing a letter to his father tomorrow'. Since, in these sentences the imperfective non-past simply locates the time

but lies somewhere else, usually in the past" (ibid. : 334)) disagrees with Comrie as to the claim that the meaning of the English finite verb forms specifies that the present moment must be their reference point. Thus, She claims that "the [English] past tense can either refer to a situation that is anterior to the present deictic centre or to a situation that is represented as simultaneous with a past deictic centre" (ibid. : 338).

¹⁵Given Comrie's definition of 'absolute-relative tense', within Declerck's tense theory, all English tenses would be absolute-relative, since according to Declerck, they all locate the time of the situation primarily as simultaneous with a given time point reference established by a time adverbial or by a verb form in the context, and then relate this time point to the speaker's temporal and spatial standpoint, either directly (basic tenses: past, present, and future) or indirectly via one or more time points of reference (the past perfect, future perfect, conditional and conditional perfect).

of the situation at a given reference point established by the time adverbial and the information that the established reference point is posterior to the time of speech comes from the time adverbial present in the sentence. Whereas in sentences like *æli di.ruz be pedær.æsh name mi.nevesh.t.ø* 'yesterday, Ali was writing a letter to his father', the imperfective past not only locates the time of the situation at a given time point established by the time adverbial, but also given the existence of the past tense marker /D/ indicates that the time point in question is anterior to another time point which could be, unless barred by the context, the moment of speech.

Having established that the Persian imperfective past (where the deictic centre of the context is the point of speech) could be cited as an instance of absolute-relative time reference, the next question to consider is whether the notion of 'absolute-relative tense' --which in a sense presupposes the distinction between absolute and relative tense-- is necessary for the analysis of the Modern Persian tense system or not. Persian sentences like *be u mi.gu.y.æm (ke) name mi.nevesh.t.æm ke in etefaq ofta.d.ø* 'I will tell him that I was writing a letter when this happened' show that the imperfective past, e.g. *mi.nevesh.t.æm* 'I was writing' may also be used to locate the time of the situation at a reference point which is situated in time before a secondary deictic centre established by the context (by the reporting verb *mi.gu.y.æm* 'I will tell' in the above example) rather than the moment of speech. In other words, sentences like the above show that the Persian imperfective past may have relative-relative, so to speak, as well as absolute-relative tense. This point and Comrie's contention that "the present moment is, unless barred by the context, always available as a reference point for relative tenses" corroborates the fact that the notion of 'absolute-relative tense' is not essentially needed for the analysis of Modern Persian tense-aspect forms.

The above observation gives rise to a new question, namely whether the Persian verb forms could be distinguished from one another in terms of oppositions similar to the three way opposition between relative vs. absolute vs. absolute-relative time reference or not. The analysis proposed here is that as far as the type of time reference is concerned Modern Persian verb forms should be distinguished from one another on

the basis of the number of the reference points involved. The major distinction in the verb system of Modern Persian is between verb forms which involve only one reference point and those which involve two reference points. Given this major distinction, the present section embarks on the analysis of the Persian verb forms not studied yet.

3.14.1 *The past perfect (pluperfect)*

As has been explained, in Comrie's tense theory, absolute tenses are tenses which locate a situation at, before, or after the present moment, and relative tenses are tenses which locate a situation at, before, or after a reference point given by the context. Having defined the absolute and relative tenses, Comrie considers the question of whether in a given language it is possible for a single verb form to combine both absolute and relative time reference; "In other words, to have as part of its meaning that a reference point is situated at, before, or after the present moment and in addition that a situation is located at, before, or after that reference point" (1985: 65). Comrie's reply to this question is in the affirmative. He points out that "such tenses do exist, indeed are very widespread across the languages of the world. They may be termed absolute-relative tenses, since their meaning combines absolute time location of a reference point with relative time location of a situation" (ibid.).

Comrie notes that one of the absolute-relative tenses is the pluperfect. He defines the meaning of the pluperfect as indicating that "there is a reference point in the past, and that the situation in question is located prior to that reference point; i.e. the pluperfect can be thought of as 'past in the past'. To put it in another way, Comrie describes the pluperfect as locating the time of the given situation (event, process, state) prior to a past reference point, which is generally established either by a time adverbial, as in English *John had arrived by six o'clock yesterday evening*, where the time adverbial *by six o'clock yesterday evening* establishes a reference point in the past, or by a main clause to which the clause containing the pluperfect is subordinate, as in English *when John had left, Mary emerged from the cupboard*, where the past tense of the main clause defines a reference point in the past, or "by the context, as in

a sequence of independent clause like *the clock struck ten; John had already left*, where the first clause defines the reference point in the past and the pluperfect of the second clause locates John's leaving prior to that reference point" (Comrie; 1985: 66).

The Persian verb form constructed from a past participle and the past tense of the copula *bu.d.æn*, as in

3.29. yek shæb sham.æsh ra xor.d.e bu.d.ø ke
 one night dinner. his o.m. eat. pt. ptp be. pt that
 di.d.ø bad.e særd.i mi.ay.æd (Boyle; 1966: 67)

see. pt. he wind. of cold.a ipfv. come. it

One night he had eaten his supper when he noticed (lit. saw)

that a cold wind was blowing (lit. is coming)

is generally defined as "describing a past event that preceded another past event" (Boyle; 1966: 67). For that matter the Persian sequence past participle + past tense of *bu.d.æn* might appear, at first glance, characterizable by Comrie's definition of the general linguistic category of pluperfect, and as an example of absolute-relative tense. A closer examination, however, reveals that Modern Persian pluperfect is by no means characterizable by Comrie's definition of the meta-linguistic category of pluperfect. The so-called pluperfect of Modern Persian (named *mazi.e bæ'id* 'remote past' by Iranian grammarians) is neither used to locate the time of the situation prior to a past reference point, nor "to refer to the occurrence of an event in a remote past"¹⁶ (Mashkour; 1971: 78) (translation rendered by the present writer), but rather to predicate a state of the surface structure subject and to locate the predicated state at a past time reference point. To put it in another way, the meaning of the Modern Persian pluperfect is not that "there is a reference point in the past, and that the

¹⁶Mashkour's description of the Persian past perfect, namely the indication of the occurrence of an event in a remote past is definitely inaccurate. Since, the Persian past perfect may occur in sentences like *in onsor 10⁻⁶ sanie qæbl æz in ke onsor.e digær 10⁻⁹ sanie.ye pish xælq be.shæv.æd xælq sho.d.e bu.d.ø* 'This particle had been created 10⁻⁶ seconds before the other particle was created 10⁻⁹ seconds ago. For that reason any impression of a more remote past created by sentences like *bijæn par.sal emtehan næ.da.d.e bu.d.ø* (ex. from Mashkour) 'Bijan had not taken his exam last year' is an implicature that is worked out on the basis of other features of the structure of the sentence, e.g. the time adverbial.

situation is located prior to that reference point" (Comrie; 1985: 65), but rather that there is a reference point in the past, and that the state predicated of the surface structure subject is located at (i.e. as simultaneous with) that reference point. The state claimed to be predicated of the grammatical subject is the state of having performed an act or an action at an earlier time. In other words, the present writer holds the view that all that the Persian past perfect means is that at a time point prior to another time point recognized by the context as the deictic centre the grammatical subject was in a state of having performed an action at an earlier time. One type of evidence for defining Modern Persian past perfect as indicating that at a time point in the past the sentence subject was in a state of having performed an action, i.e. for claiming that the past perfect is a stative construction, is that there does not exist any linguistic reason for making a distinction between the past perfect and other stative constructions consisting of an adjective (e.g. *æsæbani* 'angry', *qæm.gin* 'sad', etc.) and the past tense form of the copula verb *bu.d.æn* 'be'. In fact the only difference between a past perfect verb form and an ordinary adjective past tense copula construction is that with the past perfect, given the fact that the past participle is an adjective derived from a verb, the action initiating the stative situation is specified, but with the ordinary adjective past tense copula sequence the event which brought about the stative situation denoted by the adjective is not, as in *æli qæm.gin bu.d.∅* 'Ali was sad'.

The second type of evidence is that the past tense form of the copula *bu.d.æn* as a stative verb despite being perfective in form is clearly imperfective (cf. Comrie; 1985: 121), and as such by virtue of the presence of the past tense morpheme /D/ locates the stative situation of 'being' at (i.e. as simultaneous with) a reference point which is prior to another time point recognized by the context of communication as the deictic centre.

The third type of evidence for the description proposed in this section for the Persian past perfect is that this definition explains neatly why *bu.d.æn* 'be' and *dash.t.æn* 'have' do not have a past perfect form, hence the unacceptability of verb forms like *bu.d.e bu.d.æm* 'I had been', *bud.e. bu.d.i* 'you had been', etc., and

dash.t.e bu.d.æm 'I had had', *dash.t.e bu.d.i* 'you had had', etc. in Modern Persian. The past tense of these verbs, as already explained, locate respectively the stative situations of 'being' and 'having' at certain time point in the past. Now if the speaker wishes to assert that the grammatical subject of these verbs was, in a subsequent time point in the past, still in a condition or still had something, given the definition of the past perfect proposed here, one would expect him to use the past perfect of *bu.d.æn* or *dash.t.æn*. However, given the fact that the stative situations of 'being' and 'having' which characteristically stretch out indefinitely on both sides of a given time point, the past tense of *bu.d.æm* and *dash.t.æm* suffice for this purpose, hence the unacceptability of their past perfect forms.

The last piece of evidence supporting the description offered for Modern Persian past perfect is that the English progressive which also consists of a participle and the copula verb 'be' is treated by a number of linguists as stative. Salkie (1989: 10), for instance, treats the English sentence *Judy is walking to work* as stative and paraphrases it as 'Judy is in a walking-to-work state at the present instant'. Galton (1984: 24) similarly holds that sentences like *Jane was swimming* present the situation as a state of affairs (see also Vlach; 1981: 273).

An apparent counterexample to the position taken here in relation to the past perfect of Modern Persian is Comrie's assertion that Reichenbach's claim about time adverbials does not hold for the pluperfect. Reichenbach (1947: 294) generalizes the specific observation that the Perfect in English cannot be qualified by a time adverbial referring to a specific point or time period in the past, and claims that "when a time determination is added . . . , it is referred, not to the event, but to the reference point of the sentence" (ibid.). Comrie quite correctly notes that "while Reichenbach's claim about time adverbials holds, by and large, for the perfect in English, it does not hold for the pluperfect or future perfect, where a time adverbial may characterize either R (reference point) or E (event time)" (1981: 28). Comrie's observation with regard to the English pluperfect also holds for the Persian pluperfect, i.e. a time adverbial co-occurring with a past perfect verb form may characterize either R, or E. Thus, in a

sentence like

- 3.30. æli sa'æt.e dæh ræf.t.e bu.d.ø
 Ali hour. of ten go. pt. ptp. be. pt. he
 Ali had (already) gone at ten o'clock.

the time adverbial can receive two interpretations: first, *sa'æt.e dæh* 'ten o'clock' could be the reference point prior to which Ali had gone, second, it could be the time at which Ali went (in which case the reference point must be sought somewhere else in the context).

Now, if it is true that in a sentence like 3.30. the time adverbial can receive two interpretations the Persian pluperfect like the English pluperfect, following Salkie (1989: 13), should be taken as viewing a situation as a current state at a reference point in the past (perfect-in-the-past) or as a past event at a reference point in the past (past-in-the-past). However, it should be noted that in the above example the time adverbial *sa'æt.e dæh* '(at) ten o'clock' is forced to take on the interpretation of the time of Ali's departure only where the context, for instance a preceding clause establishes a reference point of midnight:

- 3.31. sa'æt zæng.e dævazdæh ra zæ.d.ø, æli
 clock bell. of twelve o.m. strike. pt. it Ali
 sa'æt.e dæh ræf.t.e bu.d.ø.
 hour. of ten go. pt. ptp. be. pt. he
 Clock struck twelve, Ali had gone at ten.

i.e. where a preceding clause establishes, a reference point prior to which the act of going had taken place. It should also be noted that, the sentence under consideration, i.e. 3.30. with the second interpretation is still analysable as meaning that at the past time reference point established by the broader context, 'Ali was in a state of having gone at ten'. Given these facts, the Persian past perfect will invariably be analysed as a past tense stative construction, and as perfect-in-the-past, and never as past-in-the-past.

Having illustrated that the Modern Persian past perfect is essentially a past tense and a stative verb construction which locates a state, namely the state of having performed the action expressed by the past participle, at a reference point in the past, it is time to address the question of whether this verb form could be considered as an instance of absolute-relative tense, or not. The Persian past perfect, in the sense that it generally locates the state ensuing an action performed at an earlier time, at a reference point in the past relative to the moment of speech, might be conceived of as an example of the notion of absolute-relative tense. Nevertheless, given the fact that the Persian past perfect can also locate the state of having performed an action, at a reference point which is in the past with respect to a deictic centre other than the moment of speaking, as in 3.32. below, once again the distinction between absolute and relative time reference would be taken as unnecessary, and the Persian past perfect (more accurately 'anterior' perfect) would be considered as a relative rather than an absolute-relative tense. However, as already pointed out, the Persian past perfect may be distinguished from other tense forms in terms of the number of reference points needed for its schematic representation; the past perfect involves two reference points: the deictic centre, and the reference point which is in the past relative to the deictic centre and at which the state of having performed an action is located.

- 3.32. be u mi.gu.y.i ke amæ.d.e bu.d.i be.bin.ish.
 to he ipfv. say. you that come. pt. ptp. be. pt. you pfv. see. he
 You will tell him that you had come to see him.

3.14.2. *The (non-past) perfect in Modern Persian*

The Persian non-past perfect (simply perfect) is, as in many other languages, formally similar to the past perfect; the past perfect consists of the past tense of the auxiliary verb *bu.d.æn* 'be' and a past participle, and the perfect of the non-past of *bu.d.æn* and a past participle. In a Reichenbachean framework the formal similarity between the perfect and other absolute-relative tenses (i.e. the past perfect and the future perfect) is considered as significant, and for that matter the perfect is given a uniform treatment with them. Thus, on the Reichenbachean account the three

perfect tenses all locate event time (E) prior to a reference point (R); the difference between them lies in the relation between R and the moment of speech (S): R is simultaneous with S for the present perfect, R is before S for the pluperfect, and R is after S for the future perfect.

Comrie, however, rejects Reichenbach's analysis of the perfect as an absolute-relative tense. He postulates that "despite the apparent formal similarity between perfect and absolute-relative tenses . . . the perfect is in fact different from the absolute-relative tenses, and should not be given a uniform treatment with them" (Comrie; 1985: 78). The following are the reasons he mentions for the rejection of Reichenbach's analysis of the perfect as involving a reference point which coincides with the point of speech.

(1) "A reference point coinciding with the present moment simply gives absolute time reference, not absolute-relative time reference" (Comrie; 1985: 6).

(2) "The perfect in English cannot collocate with a time adverbial referring to a specific point or period in the past, e.g. **I have arrived yesterday* (ibid. : 78) . . . [but] with the English pluperfect and future perfect, it is possible for time adverbials to refer to the specific point or period of time at which the situation is located (in addition to being able to refer to the reference point)" (ibid. 79).

(3) "There is also typological evidence in favour of separating the perfect off from the pluperfect and future perfect. Many languages have tenses corresponding closely to the English pluperfect and future perfect, but have no tense even close in range of functions to the English perfect" (1981: 28).

The above arguments, in particular argument two, give rise to the question: what is then the difference between the perfect and the past tense? Comrie's reply is that the difference between the past and the perfect is exclusively one of aspect: the perfect implies 'current relevance', whereas the past does not. In other words, he contends that while the distinction between the past and the pluperfect involves 'location in time' and falls under tense theory, the distinction between the past and the perfect is aspectual and falls outside tense theory.

Comrie's arguments as regards the aspectual status of the perfect, and the perfect being radically different from the other absolute-relative tenses, in particular the past perfect¹⁷, do not however hold for the perfect in Modern Persian¹⁸. Firstly, as the following Persian examples indicate, the Persian perfect like the past perfect can collocate with a time adverbial referring to a specific time point in the past (in sentences like the following examples the specific time adverbial refers invariably to the time of the situation).

3.33. mænucəhr ketab ra di.ruz be u pæs

Manuchhr book o.m. yesterday to he back

da.d.e æst (Madani; 1984: 84).

give. pt. ptp. is

Manuchehr gave (lit. has given) the book back to him yesterday.

3.34. puyan in shæxs ra par.sal di.d.e æst. (ibid.)

Puyan this person o.m. last. year see. pt. ptp. is

Puyan saw (lit. has seen) this person last year.

3.35. nam bor.d.e dær sal.e 1317 ba dæræje.ye sotvan dovvom.i

name taken in year.of 1317 with degree.of lieutenant second

æfsær sho.d.e æst (Keyhan newspaper; no. 13009: p. 19).

officer become. pt. ptp. is

The named person became (lit. has become), with

the rank of second lieutenant, an officer in 1938.

Secondly, in sentences where the non-past perfect has future perfect time reference, the time adverbial may characterize either R (point of reference) or E (event time), as can be seen in the translation of the following English mini-texts given by

¹⁷As it will be seen later, Modern Persian does not have a separate category of future perfect.

¹⁸Salkie (1989) shows that Comrie's claim that the perfect, despite apparent similarity, is in fact radically different from other absolute-relative tenses does not stand up to careful scrutiny, even in so far as the English perfect is concerned. Salkie actually believes that "the differences [linguists like Comrie (1981, 1985), Dahl (1985), and Bouscaren *et al*] bring to light between the perfect and the pluperfect follow from independent considerations" (ibid. : 3).

Comrie (1981: 28) to illustrate that with the future perfect the time adverbial may refer either to R or to E.

(a) English

3.36. You say that we must leave at six. That's all right. I'll have finished at six. ("Time adverbial refers to R, and can be replaced by *by six*").

3.37. You say that you will finish at six. You are slow. I'll have finished at five. ("Time adverbial refers to E").

(b) Persian

3.38. to mi.gu.i ke ma bay.æd sa'æt.e shesh in ja ra
tærk kon.im. mæs'æle.i nist. mæn sa'æt.e shesh tæmam kær.d.e æm
(non-past perfect). (Time adverbial *sa'æt.e shesh* 'six o'clock' refers to R and can be replaced by *ta sa'æt.e shesh* 'by six o'clock').

3.39. to mi.gu.i ke sa'æt.e shesh tæmam mi.kon.i. to aheste kar mi.kon.i.
mæn sa'æt.e pænj tæmam kær.d.e æm. (Time adverbial refers to E).

Thirdly, regarding typological evidence in favour of separating the perfect off from the pluperfect and future perfect, it would be interesting to note that Persian, unlike the languages Comrie speaks of, has tenses corresponding closely to the English pluperfect and *perfect*, but no tense corresponding to the English future perfect, rather than having tenses corresponding to English pluperfect and future perfect but no tense corresponding to the English perfect. Apart from that, lack of a distinct future perfect in Modern Persian tense system follows immediately from the fact that Modern Persian has no separate future tense at all, and for that reason lack of a future perfect tense could have no consequences of any importance for the tense system of Modern Persian as a whole.

Finally, as Salkie (1989: 6) points out "Comrie's mistake is in taking the notion of 'current relevance' as the basic meaning of the perfect (see also MacCoard (1978) for extensive criticism of [current relevance] view). Current relevance should instead be seen as a natural inference from the basic temporal meaning of the perfect".

Having established that Modern Persian perfect is, like the past perfect, a tense rather than an aspect category, and that the perfect and the past perfect are both conceptually and formally parallel, it is time to embark on the characterization of the meaning of the perfect in Persian.

According to McCoard (1978: 17) the theories of the perfect could be grouped into the following four categories:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|------|
| (a) | current relevance | (CR) |
| (b) | indefinite past | (ID) |
| (c) | extended now | (XN) |
| (d) | embedded past | (EB) |

McCoard's major criticism of the current relevance theory, which defines the perfect as expressing a present state resulting from past action, is that it has great difficulty in explaining what is currently relevant about a sentence like

3.40. Since the dawn of time, humans have gazed in wonder at stars.

Salkie (1983) also criticizes the current relevance theory. He notes that no version of current relevance theory has ever managed to account in a non ad hoc way for the experiential use of the perfect in sentences like:

3.41. I have visited America three times in my life.

Despite the above points of criticism, the present writer holds the view that there is undoubtedly a genuine insight in the current relevance view of the perfect, and that if this view is slightly modified, it would neatly account for the Persian perfect. For the purpose of illustration Comrie's characterization of the perfect (Comrie is a proponent of (CR) theory) will be examined here.

Comrie defines the perfect as expressing "a relation between two time points, on the one hand the time of the state resulting from a prior situation, and on the other the time of that prior situation" (1976: 52). Given this definition, the English sentence *I have lost my penknife* is analysed by Comrie as relating the present state, namely 'the penknife is lost' to the preceding situation of losing the penknife. However, as McCoard (1978) notes, Comrie's definition falls short of accounting for a sentence

like 3.40. above. Since it is not clear which present state is related to persisting and recurring situation: gazing in wonder at stars. Nonetheless, if the state related to a past action is taken to be the state of having performed that action, i.e. if the perfect is described as meaning that the surface structure subject has a certain property at a given time point, namely the property of having performed an action at an earlier time, then CR theory of the perfect will be able even to account for examples like 3.40. and 3.41. which McCoard and Salkie quite rightly claim that Comrie's version of the current relevance theory is not able to account for. As a matter of fact, Comrie's major mistake is that he fails to note that the perfect verb form is predicated of the subject rather than of the object of the sentence, and as such is more likely to provide primarily some information about the subject rather than the object. The information about the object of the sentence, if there is an object at all, is the natural inference from the basic temporal meaning of the perfect and the information about the subject. Given the present study's version of CR theory of the perfect, the following Persian sentences (which are in practice the translation equivalent of the English examples 3.40. and 3.41.) will be analysed as denoting respectively: 'humans are (in a state of) having gazed in wonder at stars since the dawn of time' and 'I am (in a state of) having visited America three times in my life'. That is the states related to a past or some past actions by the perfect in these sentences are as follows: having gazed in wonder at stars since the dawn of time, and having visited America three times.

3.42. æz aqaz.e zæman, ensan ba heyræt be setare.g.an negæris.t.e æst.

3.43. mæn se bar æz amrica di.d.æn kær.d.e æm.

Similarly, Comrie's example would be analysed as denoting that the sentential subject is (at the moment of speech) having lost his penknife.

The definition proposed here for the Persian perfect, namely the sentence subject is in a state of having performed the action denoted by the past participle is further supported by the following types of evidence.

Firstly, as already pointed out, the verb phrase of a sentence in the present perfect like the verb phrase of a sentence in other tenses, e.g. the past tense, is a

predication about the subject rather than about other parts of the sentence. Thus, while the past tense predicates of the subject the performance of an action (which may or may not involve an object) prior to a given time point, the perfect predicates of the subject being at a given time point in a state of having performed an action (which may or may not involve a third party) at an earlier time. Furthermore, even where the object of the sentence is presented as new (e.g. by means of placing the main sentential stress on the exponent of the object) and the subject as given¹⁹, the verb phrase of the sentence in the perfect is still a predication about the grammatical subject, and for that matter a sentence like *mæn qælæm.æm ra gom kær.d.e æm* 'I have lost my *pen*' is interpretable as 'I am having lost my pen (not, for instance, my pencil²⁰), rather than as (it is) 'my' pen (not, for instance 'my' pencil which) is lost.

Secondly, there is no viable reason for drawing a distinction between the Persian perfect --which like the past perfect consists of a past participle that is essentially an adjective and the copula *bu.d.æn*-- and other stative constructions consisting of an adjective and the copula.

Thirdly, Salkie's characterization of the English perfect is very similar to the characterization suggested in the present study for the Persian perfect. He defines the invariant meaning of the English perfect as the view of a past situation as a present state:

"what the present perfect does, I claim, is view a past situation as a present state" (1983: 244).

"The present perfect is typically used in a context where a current state of affairs is being described" (1989: 11).

Finally, as the investigation of the other three major theories of the perfect will show, the definition offered in the present work, is, without having their shortcomings, consistent with the major theories of the perfect.

¹⁹For more information on the semantic organization of the sentences into given and new the reader is referred to Halliday (1985).

²⁰In Persian example under consideration, underlining is used to indicate the place of the sentential main stress. Similarly, in its English equivalent italicized word receives the main stress of the sentence.

The second theory of perfect reviewed by McCoard (1978) is the 'Indefinite past theory'. (CR theory will not be discussed further, since McCoard's case against it is powerful and comprehensive). McCoard's main argument against ID theory -- which sees the perfect as referring to an indefinite time in the past, while the simple past supposedly refers to a definite time-- is that sentences like *I have lived in London [continually] since 1972* refers to a perfectly definite period of time. He notes that the fact that it is impossible to say *in 1972* in this example, is not because this time adverbial is more "definite than *since 1972* ; the important question is whether the interval of time includes the present moment or not". The present writer, like Salkie (1983: 256), believes that this problem, and McCoard's other arguments refute ID theory conclusively.

McCoard's arguments against "Indefinite Past" theory should not however stop the linguist noticing that even in languages where the perfect may collocate with time adverbials referring to a specific point or period of time in the past, e.g. Persian, the collocation of the specific time adverbials with the perfect is marked in comparison with the collocation of these time adverbials with the simple past. The evidence for this is that the situation described by the past tense is in a sense more definite than locating a state at a given time point, namely the state of having performed an action at an earlier time. Therefore, it should be acknowledged that 'Current relevance' and 'Indefinite Past' theory "both contain partial insights, but neither of them is an adequate complete analysis" (Salkie; 1983: 256).

The third major treatment of the perfect is named by McCoard "Extended Now" theory. This theory sees the perfect as referring to a time period which extends backwards from and includes speech time, and the simple past as referring to a period of time in the past which does not include the present moment. McCoard himself opts for this analysis of the Perfect. Declerck's characterization of the English perfect is also a version of this theory. She defines the English perfect as "locating the situation as simultaneous with a [reference] time which does not wholly lie before the present moment but rather includes it" (1986: 311), and the past as "involving a time which

does not last up to the moment of speaking" (ibid.), i.e. a time which "is completely located before the point of speech" (ibid. : 313).

Salkie (1983: 257) notes that XN theory has gained considerable support in recent work. Dowty (1979: 341) adopts McCoard's view, and a closely related account is given (apparently independently) by Inoue (1978, 1979):

"A sentence in the present perfect describes a situation which obtained at some unspecified interval(s) of time from the past up to and including the present" (Inoue; 1979: 563).

A similar idea is proposed by Bennett & Partee (1972: 39) and by Palmer (1947: 36).

Although Salkie also once subscribed to the Extended Now theory (cf. Salkie; 1980a), he now no longer considers it as adequate. His main criticism is as follows:

". . . Extended Now theory is arbitrary. How come the present perfect and the simple past differ in this way? Why are they not the other way round, the past referring to 'extended now' and the perfect referring to a time wholly in the past. Extended Now theory does not answer these questions. In fact all the theory does is restate the observations about the co-occurrence of time adverbials with the present perfect and the simple past. But why do time adverbials behave in this way? Again no answer is provided. The theory can be seen as capturing an obvious generalization about the difference between the present perfect and the simple past; but it does not give us greater understanding of the problem" (1983: 257)²¹.

Salkie's arguments against XN theory are not, however, very convincing. The first question he raises could simply be answered as follows: The perfect differs from the simple past in the way the proponents of the XN theory claim to differ, mainly because while the simple past in many languages consists of a past form of the lexical verb, the perfect consists of the present tense of an auxiliary plus a past form of the lexical verb. Given this grammatical difference, it might not seem so unreasonable for the perfect to involve reference to a time which does not wholly lie before the present

²¹Further problems for Extended Now theory are discussed in Dinsmore (1981: 497-80). Dinsmore's main criticism is that XN theory does not generalize to the past perfect. Presumably, the analogue to extended now would be to treat the past perfect as "extended then" --that is, as referring to a period of time which stretches backwards from a point of time in the past and includes it. Now, this can handle the "past of a perfect" sense of the past perfect, but can not account for its "past of a past" sense (cf. ibid.).

moment, but rather includes it, and for the past to involve a time which lies wholly before the present moment.

Despite being defensible against some of Salkie's criticisms, the XN theory is, as far as the Persian perfect is concerned, an inadequate analysis. Since, as has been pointed out, the Persian perfect, unlike English perfect may collocate with time adverbials referring to a specific point or period of time in the past as well as with those which refer to a period of time extending from a time point in the past up to (and beyond) the present moment, as in *æz sal.e 1350 ta be.hal u ra næ.di.d.e æm* 'I haven't seen him since 1977'.

Despite the inadequacies noted in Dinsmore (1981), and the fact that XN theory does not account for the collocation of the perfect with specific time adverbials in Persian, there is still a genuine insight into Extended Now theory. Since even the Persian perfect involves, in a real sense, reference to a time span which does not wholly lie before the present moment. This is not, however, a part of the meaning of the Persian perfect which is a stative construction, but rather a natural inference from the general characteristic of states according to which "if a state is true at a point of time (e.g. the moment of speech), it must also have been true for a period of time preceding that instant, and it will go on being true for a period following that instant (cf. Vlach; 1981: 273).

The last theory of the perfect reviewed by McCoard is the "Embedded Past" theory. Dinsmore (1981) is an advocate of EB theory. This theory claims that a sentence in the present perfect "involves embedding the description of a past event in a clause in the present tense" (Dinsmore; 1980: 477), and that the simple past, on the other hand, does not consist of two clauses in this way. One of the supposed merits of the EB theory is that it can explain why the present perfect can co-occur with two time adverbials, as in:

3.44. Now George has slept for three hours.

The idea is that the adverb *now* characterizes the verb of the topmost clause which is in the present tense, and the other adverb *for three hours* characterizes the past tense verb in the embedded clause (Dinsmore: 1980: 477-8).

According to Salkie (1983), Dinsmore, although he does not say it explicitly, is assuming a Generative Semantics type of underlying structure throughout his paper: "The motivation for an underlying structure containing two clauses is not syntactic; it depends on the purely semantic assumption that each "independent tense selection" corresponds to a separate clause in underlying structure" (Salkie; 1983: 259). Palmer (1979: 12) also criticizes EB theory and asserts that this hypothesis comes to grief on sentences like (3.45.):

3.45. Yesterday John left tomorrow.

The second criticism which Salkie refers to is that Dinsmore does not give rules mapping his underlying structures into surface structure. Salkie notes that "such rules would have to include predicate raising, COMP deletion and pruning conventions, [i.e.] mechanisms which are now generally thought to be discredited" (1983: 260).

Finally, Salkie notes that "Embedded Past theory gives no reason why the [English] present perfect cannot co-occur with specific time adverbials like *last week*" (1983: 260). According to Salkie, Dinsmore's solution to this problem is no solution at all: "he produces out of nowhere a "Restriction on the past" (1981; 483) and a "Restriction on the perfect" (1981: 487) to make the required distinctions. These "restrictions are arbitrary stipulations. They have no independent motivation whatsoever, but are merely invented to handle refractory data about time adverbials" (Salkie; 1983: 260).

Having illustrated that none of the four major theories of the perfect has the explanatory power to account for the Persian (or English) perfect and having defined the Persian perfect as expressing that the grammatical subject is in a state of having performed the action denoted by the past participle at an earlier time, it is time to find out whether the Persian perfect has a single invariant meaning or more than one meaning. Comrie (1976: 56-61) distinguishes four types of perfect. It will be shown

in this study that such a distinction, as regards the Persian Perfect is unnecessary and misleading.

Comrie (1976: 60) contends that sentences like

3.46. John has lived in London since 1972.

are ambiguous between two possible senses. On one interpretation, which Comrie calls the *persistent situation* sense of the perfect, (3.46.) implies that John has lived in London without any break since 1972. On the other interpretation --Comrie's *experiential* sense of the perfect-- John lived in London either once or intermittently between 1972 and now. In other words, according to Comrie in sentences like (3.46.) the perfect is ambiguous between describing a "situation that started in the past but continues (persists) into the present" (1976: 60), and indicating "that a given situation has held at least once during some time in the past leading up to the present" (ibid. : 59).

The Persian perfect, unlike the English perfect, is not ambiguous between two senses. Thus, the Persian equivalent of the English example (3.46.), i.e. :

3.47. jan æz sal.e 1972 dær lændæn zendegi kær.d.e æst.

unequivocally indicates that John is in a state of having lived at least for some time in London between 1972 and now (experiential sense)²², and as such could be paraphrased as

3.48. John's having lived in London (at least for some time) since 1972 is currently a property of John.

The major reason for the unequivocality of the Persian sentence is that Persian like many other languages uses the present tense (i.e. the imperfective non-past) instead of the perfect, for the persistent situation sense, i.e. for describing a situation that started in the past but continues (persists) into the present. Thus, while the following English sentences (3.49. to 3.51.) are in the perfect tense, their Persian translation equivalents (3.52. to 3.54.) are in the present tense.

²²As Salkie (1989: 11) notices, the experiential sense of the perfect is always available regardless of the lexical properties of the other items in the sentence.

3.49. We've lived here for ten years.

3.50. I've shopped there for years.

3.51. I've been waiting for hours.

3.52. dæh sal æst ke ma in.ja zendegi mi.kon.im (ipfv. non-past)

It is ten years that we live here.

3.53. sal.ha æst ke mæn æz in.ja xær.id mi.kon.æm.

It is many years that I shop here.

3.54. sa'æt.ha æst ke montæzer.æm.

It is hours that I am waiting.

The Persian perfect may also be used in sentences which describe unambiguously persistent situations, i.e. situations that started in the past but continue into the present, as in:

3.55. pedær.e æli tæmam.e omr.æsh ra dær in shæhr

father. of Ali all. of life. his o.m. in this city

zendegi kær.d.e æst.

life do. pt. ptp. is

Ali's father has lived (for) all of his life in this city.

This, however, does not mean that the Persian perfect has at least two readings: a persistent situation and an experiential situation reading, rather than one single meaning. Since, in the sentence under consideration, as with other sentences in the perfect, all that the perfect means is that Ali's father is in a state of having lived in this city, or having lived in this city is currently a property of Ali's father; it is indeed the other linguistic elements present in the sentence, in particular, the time adverbial, which will determine whether the past situation has held at least once during some time in the past up to the present, or has continued, without a break, throughout the period of time specified by an earlier limit and the present moment, or the whole time up to the present moment.

The third use of the perfect discussed by Comrie is the perfect of result. Comrie contends that "in the perfect of result, a present state is referred to as being the result of some past situation (1976: 56). Thus, English *John has arrived* indicates persistence of the result of John's arrival, i.e. that he is still here.

Comrie's description of the perfect of result comes close to the present writer's account of what the Persian perfect always means, except that the notion of a result is not a part of the meaning of the Persian (non-past) perfect. The present writer's account of 3.56. (translation equivalent of the above English example):

3.56. jan ræs.id.e æst.

John arrive. pt. ptp. is

goes as follows: one obvious reason for wanting to predicate the state of having performed an action at an earlier time of the grammatical subject is that there are consequences of the past situation which the speaker wishes to draw attention to. Hence the implication from 3.56. that John is still here. But this is an implication, not part of the meaning of the Persian perfect²³ .

The fourth and the last use of the perfect, according to Comrie, is the recent past use (1976: 60) in examples like:

3.57. Bill has just (this) minute arrived.

3.58. I have recently learned that the match is to be postponed.

It has, however, been noted by a number of linguists (e.g. McCoard 1978: 32-35) that it is possible to use the simple past as well to refer to recent events, as in:

3.59. A fraction of a second ago a fly landed on your
head (ex. from Salkie; 1983).

"It is also possible to use the perfect to refer to huge stretches of time" (Salkie; 1983: 246).

3.60. Since the dawn of time, humans have gazed in wonder at stars.

Furthermore, the present writer holds the view that the attribution of the notion of

²³Salkie (1983: 245), similarly, treats the notion of result as an implication rather than as a part of the meaning of the English perfect.

recency to the perfect form in sentences like 3.57. and 3.58. is only possible at the expense and neglect of the meaning of adverbials like *just* and *recently*, and of Persian adverbs like *taze* 'just' in sentences like *pedær.æm taze amæ.d.e æst* 'my father has just come'. Given the above point, it would be unnecessary to set up a different sense of the present perfect to account for sentences like 3.57. and 3.58.

Having covered Comrie's four types of the perfect in a unified way, it is time to find out whether the definition suggested in this study for Modern Persian perfect is general enough to account for all uses of this verb form, or there are uses which are not actually subsumed. To do this, it would be necessary to consider first Comrie's characterization of the future perfect.

Comrie suggests that the future perfect is very similar to the pluperfect, "except that here the reference point is in the future rather than in the past" (1985: 69). Thus, he describes the future perfect as the temporal location of a given situation prior to a reference point in the future normally given either by a time adverbial or by the larger context. Comrie's evidence for claiming that the future perfect is semantically parallel to the pluperfect is two fold: firstly,

"just as with the pluperfect a time adverbial indicating a specific point or period of time co-occurring with the future perfect may indicate the reference point, but may equally indicate the time of the situation, so that *I will have left at six o'clock* receives two possible interpretations: one where *six o'clock* is the time of 'my departure', the other where *six o'clock* is the reference point in the future prior to which my departure is located" (1986: 69).

secondly, the meaning of the future perfect as that of the pluperfect only says that there must be a reference point (in the future), but does not say where the reference point is to be sought.

Given his definition of the future perfect as locating a situation prior to a reference point in the future, Comrie also notes that the future perfect "allows the situation to be located after the present moment, at the present moment or before the present moment" (ibid. : 70). Therefore, he disagrees with Hornstein's claim that the only representation for the future perfect is with the situation located between the present moment and the future reference point, and asserts that the absolute future

time reference of the situation referred to is at best an implicature which can be canceled by the context, rather than part of the meaning of the future perfect. Comrie's evidence for this is that the English question *will John have finished his manuscript by tomorrow?* can be replied to by *yes; in fact, he has already finished it* where the first part of the reply: *yes* indicates that the speaker maintains the truth of the proposition *John will have finished his manuscript by tomorrow*. Now if part of the meaning of this proposition were that John's finishing the manuscript is located between the time of speaking and tomorrow, the following part of the speaker's reply would be a contradiction. "However, it is not, whence the absolute future time reference can not be part of the meaning of the future perfect" (Comrie; 1985: 72).

Comrie's characterization of the future perfect as the location of the given situation in the past relative to a reference point in the future creates a special problem for the description proposed in the present section for Modern Persian perfect, namely the location of the state of having performed an action at a given time point. In Modern Persian, as it is pointed out quite correctly by a number of non-Iranian grammarians, e.g. Lambton (1960: 148), the perfect is used where the future perfect is used in English. Given this, it might appear that the Persian perfect should be described both as locating the state of having performed an action at a given time point and as locating a situation in the past with respect to a reference point in the future. However, it is the claim of the present study that Comrie's definition of the general linguistic category of the future perfect (and similarly his definition of the past perfect) is not very accurate, and the problem created by his definition of the future perfect for the Persian perfect should be tackled by attempting a more acceptable definition for the future perfect, rather than by postulating two different definitions for the Persian perfect. The reason for the inaccuracy of Comrie's definitions of the past and the future perfect is that despite the formal similarity between the present perfect, the past and the future perfect in many languages, in Comrie's framework, the present perfect is defined as relating a present state to a preceding situation (cf. 1976: 52), but the past and the future perfect are defined as locating a situation in the past relative to a

reference point (which is itself in the past relative to the present moment in the case of the past perfect, and in the future in the case of the future perfect). Comrie's major reason, as already pointed out, for giving a radically different definition for the present perfect is that while with the past and the future perfect a time adverbial may characterize either R or E, with the present perfect a time adverbial may refer to the present moment, or to a time span stretching from a time point in the past up to or beyond the present moment.

The difference noticed by Comrie can, however, be explained simply by the fact that whereas for the past and the future perfect E and R are both on one side of the moment of speech²⁴ (i.e. before and after the deictic centre), for the present perfect R is the moment of speech and E is prior to the moment of speech. Thus, while with the past and future perfect the time adverbial (which has past time reference where the verb form is the past perfect and future where the verb form is the future perfect) refers to R or E depending on the context, with the present perfect the time adverbial refers either to R (i.e. the moment of speech) (e.g. *now* in *I have now seen him five times*) or to a time span which includes both E and R (i.e. the moment of speech) (in languages like Persian where the perfect may co-occur with specification of the time of the past situation²⁵, the time adverbial may refer either to E or to R (i.e. the moment of speech) or include both E and R). Given the fact that the difference between the perfect, on the one hand, and the past and the future perfect on the other, pointed out by Comrie, can be accounted for on independent grounds, and the formal similarity between the perfect and other absolute-relative tenses, the present writer gives a uniform treatment for the present, the past, and the future perfect, and characterizes them as indicating that at a given time point the grammatical subject was, is or will be (in the state of) having performed an action at an earlier time, or as

²⁴As already pointed out Comrie (1985: 72) notes that in the case of the the future perfect E and R might also be on the different sides of the moment of speech (or the deictic centre).

²⁵Comrie (1985: 79) points out that "the collocation restriction against perfect with time adverbials referring to specific times in the past seems to be rather idiosyncratic to English".

indicating that an anterior situation, was, is, or will be a property of the grammatical subject at a given time point.

Having suggested a new characterization for the category of the future perfect in a way that its formal parallelism with the other perfect categories i.e. the perfect and the past perfect, is captured, it is time to go back to the question regarding the Persian perfect, namely whether this verb form should be characterized as having one single meaning or at least two separate meanings: present perfect time reference and the future perfect time reference. As already pointed out, the Persian language does not have a separate grammatical category of verb to encode the notion of future perfect time reference, and for that matter Persian speakers use the perfect where English speakers use the future perfect as in:

- 3.61. ta to bær.gærd.i, mæn name ra nevesh.t.e æm.
 by you re.turn. you, I letter o.m. write. pt. ptp. I
 By the time you come back, I will have written
 (lit. have written) the letter.

One implication of this would be that the Persian perfect has at least two meanings; (a) at the moment of speech, an anterior situation is a property of the grammatical subject, (b) at a future time reference point an anterior situation will be a property of the grammatical subject (the time location of the situation with respect to the time of speech would be at best an implicature). This is, of course, incompatible with the statement of the present work that each Persian verb form has one single meaning.

Nonetheless, the definition proposed earlier for the perfect, namely the grammatical subject is at the present moment in a state of having performed an action at an earlier time, can be generalized to subsume both the present and future time reference of the sequence past participle + non-past tense of *bu.d.æn* 'be'. The generalized description is as follows: the non-past perfect means that the grammatical subject is at a given time point (taken by the context of speech as the deictic centre) (in a state of) having performed an action at an earlier time. There are at least three distinct types of evidence for the accuracy of the context-independent description

proposed here. First, Persian tenses are relative, i.e. have absolute or relative time reference. Second, as has been noted on several occasions, Prior observes that a sharp distinction between the moment of speech and a point or points of reference is unnecessary and misleading. Finally, the future perfect and the present perfect time reference are both contextual meanings; the evidence for this is that in ex. 3.61. above if the temporal clause *ta to bær.gærd.i* 'by the time you come back' is omitted, the remaining, i.e. *name ra nevesh.t.e æm* 'I have written the letter' will be a main clause where the perfect verb form has present perfect time reference. In other words, depending on the absence versus the presence of temporal adverbials like *ta to bær.gærd.i* the perfect verb form has future perfect or present perfect time reference.

The last issue, to consider with respect to Modern Persian non-past perfect is the number of the reference points which this tense involves. If Prior's assertion that the moment of situation is a reference point like any other reference point is accepted, then in Comrie's framework, the present perfect would be taken as involving just one reference point, but two in Declerck's and Reichenbach's framework²⁶.

Given the description proposed in the present work for the perfect, this tense form can involve only one reference point (i.e. Declerck's and Reichenbach's analyses of the perfect in terms of two reference points are incompatible with the proposed description). The reference point is the moment of speech where the context does not take any other reference point as the deictic centre. In cases where a reference point other than the moment of speech is taken as the deictic centre, depending on the time location of the new deictic centre with respect to the moment of speech, two situations may be distinguished: first the new deictic centre is in the past relative to the time of speaking, this is an instance of historical present, as in *di.ruz in.ja neshæs.t.e æm (perf.) ke æli mi.æy.æd væ mi.gu.y.æd . . .* 'yesterday, I am sitting (lit. am sat) here when Ali comes and says . . .', second the deictic centre is in the future with

²⁶The difference between Reichenbach's and Declerck's formulation of the perfect is that in the former the second reference time is a point simultaneous with the first reference time (i.e. the moment of speech), but in the latter it is a period which "reaches from the past up to T.U. (time of utterance)" (Declerck; 1986: 347).

respect to the time of speech, this is an instance of the future perfect time reference, as in *ta to bær.gær.d.i æli ræf.t.e æst* (perf.) 'by the time you come back Ali will have gone' (lit. is gone). The difference in the time location of the reference point is however determined by the larger context and does not impinge on the context-independent meaning of the present perfect which like any other Persian present tense form simply locates the time of the situation (i.e. the stative situation of having performed an action) as simultaneous with a given reference point regardless of the relationship between that reference point and the time of speech (the time of speech can like any other reference point be itself the time point at which the stative situation denoted by the perfect is located).

The question which now arises is why the perfect is analysed as locating the state of having performed an action at the deictic centre of the context, but the past perfect as locating it at a time point which precedes the deictic centre. The reason for this is that while the auxiliary of the past perfect (i.e. *bu.d.æm* 'was. I', *bu.d.i* 'were. you', *bu.d.ø* 'was. he' etc.) contains the past tense marker /D/ (whose meaning is defined in the present study as expressing that there is a time point subsequent to the time of the situation), that of the perfect (i.e. *-æm* 'am', *-i* 'are' (*-)æst* 'is', etc.) does not. The present study holds the view that Modern Persian past perfect and past imperfective, by virtue of the presence of the past tense marker /D/, involve a reference point more than their non-past counterparts. Thus, while the imperfective past and the past perfect (the only Persian past verb forms which have non-past counterparts) locate respectively the time of the situation and the time of the state of having performed an action at a reference point which is in the past with respect to another time point that is the deictic centre of the context, the imperfective non-past and the non-past perfect locate them at a time point which is the deictic centre. The deictic centre is the moment of speaking where there is no time adverbial or temporal clause or main verb establishing a secondary deictic centre. Therefore, in the first member of the following pairs of sentences, the deictic centre is the present moment,

but a time point established by the time adverbial, the temporal clause, or the main verb in the second.

3.64. (a) æli be pedær.æsh name mi.nevis.æd.

Ali to father. his letter ipfv. write. he

Ali is writing a letter to his father.

(b) æli færda be pedær.æsh name mi.nevis.æd.

Ali is writing a letter to his father tomorrow.

3.63. (a) æli be pedær.æsh name nevesh.t.e æst.

Ali to father. his letter write. pt. ptp. is

Ali has written a letter to his father.

(b) ta to bær.gærd.i, Ali be pedær.æsh name nevesh.t.e æst.

By the time you come back, Ali will have written

(lit. is having written) a letter to his father.

3.64. (a) æli be pedær.æsh name mi.nevesh.t.ø ke dær zæ.d.ænd.

Ali to father. his letter ipfv. write. pt. he that door knock. pt. they

Ali was writing a letter when someone knocked at the door.

(b) be u mi.gu.y.i ke æli name mi.nevesh.t.ø ke dær zæ.d.ænd.

to he ipfv. tell. you

You will tell him that Ali was writing a letter when someone knocked at the door. (Note: the writing and knocking events have not necessarily happened in this example, the speaker may in fact be asking the addressee to give sham testimony).

3.65. (a) væqt.i to amæ.d.i æli ræf.t.e bu.d.ø

when you come. pt. you Ali go. pt. ptp. be. pt. he

When you came Ali had gone.

(b) be u mi.gu.y.i ke væqt.i to amæ.d.i æli ræf.t.e bu.d.ø.

You will tell him when you came Ali had gone (see note to example 3.64.(b)).

3.14.3. *The combination of the perfect with the imperfective aspect*

The Persian perfect, unlike the past perfect which almost never cooccurs with the imperfective marker *mi-*, may collocate with the imperfective aspect. However, as Windfuhr (1979) notes, the collocation of the perfect with the imperfective aspect in Modern Persian is in general confined to the third person.

Windfuhr (1979, 1987) and Madani (1984: 84-85) are almost the only contemporary scholars who acknowledge the occurrence of the perfect imperfective, traditionally called 'continuous perfect', as in *mi.xær.id.e æst* 'he has been buying' in Modern Persian: "the perfect continuous had already become obsolete at the time of Sæ'di [the celebrated Iranian poet], but made its appearance some 100 years ago" (Windfuhr; 1979: 84). According to Windfuhr (1987: 537), at the present stage of the Persian language the perfect imperfective is as frequent in the colloquial Persian as in the literary register.

Windfuhr (1987: 537) claims that the complex form *mi.ræf.t.e æst* 's/he has been going' (lit. is having been going) expresses remote past in the literary style, but the category of inference, i.e. "second hand knowledge, conclusion and reminiscence" in the colloquial language "without referring to remote past". He also states that in this the perfect imperfective "is joined by the perfect form *ræf.t.e æst* ['he has gone'] which also functions as the inferential aorist". Windfuhr does not offer any justification for considering the meaning of the perfect imperfective the expression of remote past in literary register and second hand information in colloquial style. For that matter his claim can be challenged in a number of ways. Firstly, as Comrie (1985: 24-25) points out, the perfect forms (including the perfect progressive (or more generally perfective imperfective)) link a present state to a past situation, and as such are more likely to be associated with the notion of 'recency' rather than 'remoteness'. Secondly, in the literary sequence which Windfuhr (1979) quotes from Ali Ashraf Sadeqi (Soxan 20. 1: 33) it is the time adverbial *dær zæman.e sasanian* ('at the time of Sasanians dynasty') which implies that the situation referred

to has been taking place in a remote past rather than the perfect continuous (i.e. perfect imperfective). The sequence in question is as follows:

- 3.66. dær bare.ye dæstur . . . mi.tævan tæsæv^vor kær.d ke . . . dær zæman.e
 sasanian dæstur.ha.i rædvin . . . ya tærjome sho.d.e bu.d.e æst,
 mosællæmæn motærjemini ke æz zæban.ha. ye sanskrit
 væ . . . tærjome mi.kær.d.e ænd (perf. ipfv.) be chonin dæstur.ha.i
 ehtiaj dash.t.e ænd.

With regard to grammar. . . it is possible to imagine that during the time of the Sasanians grammars were composed or translated, the translators who were translating from the Sanskrit (and other) languages certainly had need of such grammars.

Thirdly, the perfect imperfective may equally refer to very recent events,

- 3.67. bæ.che.ha bazi mi.kær.d.e ænd ke seda.ye.
 child. pl. play ipfv. do. pt. ptp. are that voice. of
 shoma ra næ.shen.id.e ænd (Madani; 1984: 87).
 you o.m. neg. hear. pt. ptp. are
 Children were playing, that is why they haven't heard you.

Fourthly, Windfuhr's major reason for suggesting that the basic function of the perfect imperfective (in colloquial speech) is to indicate that the speaker has not experienced himself what he is reporting, but rather has it from a secondary source, could be the observation that this tense is confined to the third person. However, as the following example exhibits the perfect imperfective is not always restricted to the third person, and as such can not be considered (on the ground that it is generally confined to third person) as invariably expressing the second-hand knowledge.

- 3.68. mæn hæmishe æz in.ke mesl.e digær.an
 I always from this. that like. of other. pl.
 bash.æm mi.tærs.id.e æm væ mi.tærs.æm. (SG 99)
 be. I ipfv. fear. pt. ptp. am and ipfv. fear. I
 I have always been and am afraid of being like others.

Finally, the inferential interpretation is at best an implicature of the perfect imperfective which can be canceled by the context, as can be seen in the following example where the inferential sense implied by the first part of the sentence is canceled by the second part.

- 3.69. *yæzdgerd televizion tæ'mir mi.kær.d.e (æst) ke u ra*
 Yazdgerd television repair ipfv. do. pt. ptp. (is) that he o.m.
bærq mi.gir.æd. dær vaqe mæn xod hazer bu.d.æm.
 electricity ipfv. get. he in fact, I self present be. pt. I
 Yazdgerd was repairing (lit. has been repairing) the
 T.V. when he got an electric shock . In fact, I was there.

Given the above objections to Windfuhr's analysis of the perfect imperfective, a more acceptable definition should be attempted. The description the present study proposes is in line with the ones proposed for other perfect forms. The perfect imperfective like the other perfect verb forms links a state at one time and a situation at an earlier time; the only difference is that with the perfect imperfective the past situation linked to a state at a later time, due to the presence of the imperfective marker *mi-*, is also viewed as continuous²⁷. Given this, example 3.67. can be paraphrased as:

- 3.70. The children are having been playing.

or as:

- 3.71. Having been playing is a property of the children at the moment of speech.

Windfuhr (1972: 102) and Madani (1984: 87) both note that the Persian perfect imperfective, e.g. *mi.xær.id.e æst* 'he has been buying', which relates a state at one time to a situation which was continuous at an earlier time, may combine with the progressive auxiliary *dash.t.æn* 'have' to produce the perfect progressive²⁸, as in

²⁷The definition offered by the present study for the perfect imperfective is superior to Windfuhr's in that it reflects the difference between the perfect and the perfect imperfective .

²⁸"At first sight, Comrie (1976: 62) notes, it may seem contradictory that a verb form can be both perfect and imperfective, or both perfect and progressive, but this apparent contradiction is once again due to the tendency to confuse perfect and perfective. The perfect links a present state to a past

3.72. yæzdgerd dash.t.e televizion tæ'mir mi.kær.d.e

Yazdgerd prog. pt. ptp. television repair ipfv. do. pt. ptp.

ke bærq u ra geref.t.e æst.

that electricity he o.m. get. pt. ptp. is

Yazdgerd got an electric shock, when he was repairing the T.V. .

The perfect progressive differs from the perfect imperfective in one major respect. The perfect progressive, unlike the perfect imperfective does not combine with stative verbs, hence the unacceptability of the following example.

3.73. *æli dash.t.e seda.ha.ye æjib.i mi.shen.id.e æst.

Ali prog. sound. pl. of. strange ipfv. hear. pt. ptp. is

*Ali has been hearing strange sounds.

Thus, while the perfect imperfective relates a state at one time to a situation viewed as continuous at an earlier time, the perfect progressive relates a state at one time to a situation viewed as progressive (i.e. as having different stages) at an earlier time²⁹. However, despite the difference just noted, since the perfect imperfective like the perfect progressive can collocate with the non-stative verbs, sentences such as 3.72. should also be paraphrased as :

3.74. Yazdgerd is (in a state of) having been repairing the T.V. .

3.14.4. *Subordinate (non-past) perfect*

The Persian verb form constructed from a past participle and the second non-past form of the copula *bu.d.æn* 'be', i.e. *bash.æm* 'be. I', *bash.i* 'be. you', *bash.æd* 'be. he', etc., is called by some traditional grammarians, e.g. Lambton (1963: 153), the 'subjunctive past', and is defined as "referring to an action or state in the past about which there is an element of doubt", e.g. *gæman mi.kon.æm ræf.t.e bash.æd* 'I think he may have gone'" (ibid.). Some other grammarians, e.g. Suttan (1963: 91) have nevertheless realized that the sequence past participle + *bash.æm*,

situation, whether this past situation was an individual event, or a state, or a process not yet completed, so that there is nothing in the definition of the perfect to preclude combination with the imperfective or progressive".

²⁹For the distinction between the terms 'continuous' and 'progressive' see Comrie (1976: 62) and also chapter four of the present work.

bash.i etc. is perfect, like other forms consisting of a past participle and the copula *bu.d.æn*, and have called it perfect subjunctive. Suttén (1963) notes that the perfect subjunctive is "mainly confined to subordinate clauses".

Suttén's observation --that the perfect subjunctive is mainly confined to the subordinate clauses-- is a clear indication of the fact that the function of the verb construction formed by combining a past participle and *bash.id.æn*³⁰ 'be', is not the expression of modal notions such as 'doubt', 'uncertainty', 'possibility', etc. The other evidence for this is that the subordinate perfect also occurs in contexts where there is no element of doubt about the occurrence of the situation denoted, as in the following mini-text:

3.75. - *chera æli em.shæb zood ræf.t.ø mænzel?*

why Ali this. night early go. pt. he home.

why did Ali go home soon tonight?

- *chon mæn be u gof.t.e bu.d.æm ta*

because I to he tell. pt. ptp. be. pt. I till

mæn bær.mi.gærd.æm ræf.t.e bash.æd.

I re. ipfv. turn. I go. pt. ptp. be. he.

Because I had told him to have gone by the time I come back.

The last evidence is that modal notions such as 'doubt', 'uncertainty', 'wish', etc. are primarily expressed by modal elements such as *gæman kær.d.æn* 'think' (in Lambton's example above), rather than by the subordinate perfect. In fact, the assignment of the expression of modal notions to subordinate perfect is equal to neglect of the meaning of modal elements such as *bay.æd* 'must', *shay.æd* 'perhaps', *kash* 'I wish', etc. which usually co-occur with the subordinate perfect. The following examples may shed some light on this point.

³⁰As Qarib et al (1952) note, some irregular verbs of Modern Persian have two infinitives. One is constructed from the affixation of the past tense archisegment /D/ and the infinitive marker *-æn* to the past root, and the other from the affixation of these morphemes to the non-past root. Thus, *bash.id.æn* is the second infinitive of the copula verb constructed from non-past root *bash*, the past tense marker *-id* and the infinitive marker *-æn*.

3.76. bay.æd (ke) ræf.t.e bash.æd.

must. (that) go. pt. ptp. be. he

He must have gone/be gone.

3.77. shay.æd (ke)ræf.t.e bash.æd.

He might have gone/be gone.

3.78. kash.(ke) ræf.t.e bash.æd.

I wish he were gone (lit. gone be).

Having established that the traditional characterization of the subordinate perfect as referring to a past action or state about which there is an element of doubt is inaccurate, a more acceptable description should be attempted. The meaning of the subordinate perfect is in fact the same as the meaning of the (non-past) perfect. I.e. they both have the function of locating the state of having performed an action at an earlier time at a time point established by a time adverbial or the larger context. The evidence for this is two fold, first the perfect and the subordinate perfect both consist of a past participle and the non-past form of copula *bu.d.æn*, second they are in complementary distribution; the former is mainly restricted to the main clauses, and the latter to the subordinate clauses, examples:

3.79. mi.tærs.æm (ke) u ræf.t.e bash.æd (Boyle; 1966: 69).

ipfv. fear. I (that) he go. pt. ptp. be. he

I fear he has gone (lit. is gone).

3.80. Ali sa'æt.e pænɟ ræf.t.e æst.

Ali will have gone (lit. is gone) at five o'clock.

In 3.79. the perfect subjunctive (more accurately the subordinate perfect) locates the state of having gone at the reference point established by the main verb (in this particular example, the reference point, by virtue of the fact that the time reference of the main verb is present, is simultaneous with the moment of speech), and in 3.80. the non-past perfect locates the same state at the reference point established by the time adverbial *sa'æt.e pænɟ* 'five o'clock'.

3.14.5. *Double perfect*

Double perfect is the term used by Windfuhr (1987) to denote the Persian sequence past participle of the main verb + past participle and non-past tense of copula *bu.d.æn*, as in

- 3.81. æz shær axund hæm keraye kær.d.e bu.d.e ænd. (SB: 17)
 from city clergy also hire do. pt. ptp. be. pt. ptp. are

They had also hired (lit. hired been are) a clergy-man from the city.

The grammar books compiled by Iranians call the verb form under consideration *mazi.e æb'æd* 'remotest past'. Windfuhr (1987: 537), perhaps under the influence of the traditional terminology, maintains that the double perfect which is strictly confined to the third person, expresses remote past, in the literary register but the category of inference in the colloquial language. The question would then arise why the same verb form should express remote past in one register and inference or second hand knowledge in the other, "without referring to remote past" (ibid.). Windfuhr (1987) gives the following example to illustrate the use of the double perfect in Standard Colloquial Persian.

- 3.82. zaheræn nevis.ænde, væqt.i an name ra mi.nevesh.t.e (æst), xod.æsh
 ra ba in ampul, ke ruz.e qæbl xær.id.e bu.d.e (æst), kosh.t.e æst.

Apparently, the writer killed (kosh.t.e æst) himself with this injection, which he had bought (xær.id.e bu.d.e æst) the day before, while he was writing (mi.nevesh.t.e æst) that letter.

Obviously, in this example, the double perfect (*xær.id.e bu.d.e æst*) can not be claimed to refer to an event as remote as the event referred to by the double perfect in the sequence taken from Ali Ashraf Sadeqi (cf. ex. 3.66.) (since, the speaker is talking about an event which has recently happened). This clearly demonstrates that, remoteness is not a part of the meaning of the double perfect, but rather is expressed by other linguistic elements present in the sentence, e.g. the time adverbial.

The meaning of the double perfect is not the expression of the category of inference either. The reason for this is that other verb forms, e.g. the present tense

may also be used, as in the narrative present, to recount past events which the speaker has not experienced himself. Thus, in the following extract the narrator uses the present tense (i.e. the non-past imperfective) to narrate past events which he has from a secondary source.

3.83. *yæ'ni pa.ye bæch.e mi.shekæn.æd væ bæ'd æmu
hosseinæli bæd jay.æsh mi.ændaz.æd.* (SB 16).

That is, the child breaks (*mi.shekæn.æd*) his leg
and then uncle Hossein-Ali fixes (*ja mi.ændaz.æd*) it badly.

As a matter of fact, the second hand information is at best an implicature deriving from the collocation restriction against the double perfect with first and second person and/or other features of the structure of the sentence, e.g. adverbs like *zaher.æn* 'apparently', *ehtemal.æn* 'probably', etc., rather than the meaning of the double perfect or any other verb form.

Having established that the meaning of the double perfect is neither the expression of the degree of remoteness nor the category of inference, it is time to attempt a more acceptable definition for this verb form. In order to arrive at a linguistically warranted definition for the double perfect, it would be necessary to compare this verb form, from a syntactic and semantic point of view, with other perfect forms. The two non-past perfect forms (disregarding the perfect imperfective and progressive), i.e. the perfect and the subordinate perfect, as already explained, are both constructed by combining a past participle and the non-past of the copula *bu.d.æn* 'be': the perfect combines the past participle with the inflecting form of the copula (i.e. *-æm, -i, æst, -im, -id, -ænd*), and the subordinate perfect combines it with the second non-past form of the copula (i.e. *bash.æm, bash.i, bash.æd*, etc.). These verb forms, as noted before, are tense forms and given the fact that their verbal element is a stative verb, are stative and locate the state of having performed an action at an earlier time at a given time point recognized by the context as the deictic centre. The past perfect, on the other hand, consists of a past participle and the past tense of the copula verb. The structure of the past perfect could be schematized as:

past participle + copula + /D/ (past tense marker)

Given the above schematic representation, the meaning of the past perfect could be conceived of as the sum total of the meaning of the (non-past) perfect and of the past tense morpheme /D/. As has been explained, the past tense morpheme /D/ means that there is a reference point subsequent to the time of the situation or the reference point at which the time of the situation is located. The reference point established by the past tense morpheme is the deictic centre of the context of communication. Given the meaning of the past tense marker, the meaning of the past perfect is the location of the state of having performed an action at the reference point which is prior to the deictic centre. Establishment of this reference point, of course has to be done by examining the context.

The double perfect, unlike the past perfect, is a non-past tense, since its verbal element is like those of the (non-past) perfect forms in the non-past tense. However, the double perfect also differs from the (non-past) perfect forms in that it has two past participles: the past participle of the lexical verb and the past participle of the auxiliary *bu.d.æn*. Given this difference, while the non-past perfect is characterized as relating a state at one time to a situation at an earlier time, the double perfect should be characterized as relating a state at one time to a state at an earlier time which is in turn related to a situation at an even earlier time. In other words, the meaning of the double perfect is as follows: the grammatical subject is at the moment of speech (where the context does not suggest any other reference point) in a state of having been at an earlier time in a state of having performed an action at an even earlier time.

The above definition is, admittedly, rather complicated, However, its complexity is justifiable by the fact that the double perfect is a rather complex verb form; it consists of two past participles and a copula. The other justification for the description proposed is that the double perfect is in practice the perfect of the past perfect and as such its definition should partake of both the definition of the perfect and of the past perfect.

The last point to note about the double perfect is that the function of this verb form is in practice to emphasize the meaning expressed by the past perfect. The past perfect, as already pointed out, is a stative structure and indicates that at a reference point in the past with respect to the deictic centre the grammatical subject was in a state of having performed an action at an earlier time. Now when someone is in a state of having performed an action, he will be in that state till the end of time. For this reason, the past perfect not only means that the subject was, at a time point prior to the deictic centre, in a state of having performed an action, but also that he is still in that state. This is exactly what the double perfect indicates, i.e. that at the deictic centre the grammatical subject is still in a state of having performed an action at an earlier time. The telling evidence for this is that the past perfect may almost always replace the double perfect. Thus, in ex 3.81. (which is repeated here below for ease of reference), if the past perfect *keraye kær.d.e bu.d.ænd* 'they had hired' is substituted for the double perfect *keraye kær.d.e bu.d.e ænd*, the information conveyed remains intact. As a matter of fact, in Modern Persian the past perfect has almost ousted the double perfect.

3.81. æz shær axund hæm keraye kær.d.e bu.d.e ænd. (SB: 17)

from city clergy also hire do. pt. ptp. be. pt. ptp. are

They had also hired (lit. hired been are) a clergy- man from the city.

3.14.6 *Future in the past*

Comrie (1985:75) notes that the future in the past is the other absolute-relative tense which is frequently seen in languages of the world. He notes that the major problem with future in the past verb forms is that they have modal as well as temporal values. "Thus, the English form *would leave* is probably more often than not used with modal meaning, whence its usual name 'conditional', but it can also be used temporally" (ibid.). According to Comrie, one set of examples where the English sequence would + simple form of the verb has temporal value, would seem to be indirect speech, as in *he said he would leave*, "where the time reference of *would leave* is to a situation located in the future relative to a contextually established

reference point in the past, here established by the tense of the verb of the main clause" (ibid.).

Modern Persian unlike English does not seem to have a separate verb form for referring to a situation held in the future relative to a past reference point. In indirect speech in Persian, the tense of the reported part remains the same as the tense of the direct speech, and does not accord with the tense of the reporting verb in the main clause, as may be seen from the following example.

3.84. (a) direct speech

æli gof.t.ø, "mæn færda be pedær.æm

Ali say. pt. he, I tomorrow to father. my

yek name mi.nevis.æm.

a letter ipfv. write. I

Ali said, "I will write a letter to my father tomorrow".

(b) indirect speech

æli gof.t.ø ke færda be pedær.æsh yek name mi.nevis.æd.

Ali say. pt. he that tomorrow to father. his a letter ipfv. write. he

Ali said that he would (lit. will) write a letter to his

father the following day (lit. tomorrow).

It might however be argued that in indirect speech in the above example, the imperfective non-past *mi.nevis.æd* 'is writing' has relative future time reference and as such locates the writing situation in the future with respect to the time location of the main verb *gof.t.ø* 'said. he'. This is obviously neither in line with the general theory of the present study, namely each verb form has one single general meaning, nor with the definition assigned to the imperfective non-past, i.e. location of the time of the situation referred to at a given time point which is taken by the context as the deictic centre. Nonetheless, as already noted (relative) future time reference, i.e. the information that the time of the situation is subsequent to a given reference point, is implied not just by the imperfective non-past verb form, but rather by the interaction between the meaning of the imperfective non-past and other linguistic and extra-

linguistic elements present in the sentence. Of other linguistic elements, time adverbials with future time reference, e.g. *færda* 'tomorrow' will be the most important in deciding whether the time of the situation is subsequent to another time point or not. Some other syntactic features of the structure of the sentence also play a significant role in determining whether the situation referred to is located at a time point which is in the future with respect to another time point. Thus, in indirect speech, the relative future time location of the situation is expressed by this syntactic fact that the imperfective non-past is the verbal element of a clause which is subordinate to a main clause with a past time verb form, e.g. *gof.t.∅* 'said. s/he'.

According to Comrie, the other instances where the future in the past verb form is believed to have purely temporal values, are those where there is a basic narrative sequence in the past, but some situation is then described which falls outside this narrative sequence by being further in the future, e.g. *John left for the front: he would never return*. In Persian in similar instances the imperfective past may be used to refer to the situation which falls outside the narrative sequence by being further in the future, as in *æli ræf.t.∅ be jebhe, u hægez bæ r ne.mi.gæsh.t.∅* 'Ali went to the front, he would never return (lit he was never returning)'.

Again, it is clear that the future in the past time reference is a contextual meaning which is not expressed by the imperfective past alone, but rather is worked out on the basis of the interaction between the meaning of the imperfective past and other features of the structure of the sentence, namely the fact that there is a sequence of verb forms, and the situation described by the imperfective past was not in process at the time location of the first verb *ræf.t.∅* 'went'. The position taken here is supported by the fact that in its most unmarked use, i.e. in sentences like *væqti amæ.d.æm, æli name mi.nevesh.t.∅* 'when I came, Ali was writing a letter' the imperfective past locates the time of the situation at (i.e. as simultaneous with) the reference point established by the verb of the temporal clause. These sentences are considered in the present work the most unmarked context for the imperfective past due to the fact that the clause containing the imperfective past despite being a main clause is still in need

of a time adverbial or a temporal clause specifying the time point at which the situation described by the imperfective was continuing (see also chapter 4).

In highly literary texts of Persian one may come across a peculiar periphrastic construction formed from the past tense of the auxiliary *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish' and the short infinitive of the main verb, as in *xas.t.i mor.d* 'would die'. This verb form could be used in literary texts to refer to a situation in the future relative to a reference point in the past, as in *sali.ke dær bæhar.æsh xas.t.i mor.d.∅, sæ'di be shiraz moraje'æt kær.d.∅* 'the year in spring of which he died, Sæ'di (the celebrated Iranian poet) returned to Shiraz'. In this narrative sequence the periphrastic construction *xas.t.i mor.d* 'wanted die' locates the death of Sæ'di after his returning to Shiraz. However, since this form does not occur in standard colloquial dialect, the correct analysis would be to say that Modern Persian does not have a separate verb form that can be used exclusively for locating a situation in the future relative to a past reference point.

3.14.7 *Future perfect in the past*

As might be expected from what was said about the condition of the future in the past in Persian, this language does not have any verb form corresponding to the English future perfect in the past. Comrie (1985: 76) uses the following example to define the meaning of the English future perfect in the past (alternatively conditional perfect): *John left for the front; by the time he should return, the fields would have been burnt to stubble* . The verb form of the final clause in this narrative sequence in fact locates a situation, namely the fields burning to stubble, in the past relative to a reference point which is itself located in the future not with respect to the moment of speech, but rather with respect to another reference point which is in the past relative to the moment of speech. Comrie notes that this narrative sequence actually corroborates that it is possible to build up more complex tenses with a chain of reference points, even if very few of these logical possibilities are grammaticalized in languages.

As it was mentioned before, Persian does not have an independent grammatical form corresponding to the English [[past in the future] in the past] (or future perfect in the past). This, however, does not mean that the above English sentence is not translatable into Persian. In fact, the pluperfect can readily be used as the translation equivalent of the English future perfect in the past:

3. 85. Jan ræf.t.∅ be jebhe, ta bær.mi.gæsh.t.∅: mæzær e'ha
xoshk sho.d.e bu.d.ænd (past perfect)

John left for the front, by the time he should return:

the fields would have dried (lit. were having dried).

Nevertheless, future perfect in the past time reference is, by no means, the secondary meaning of the Persian past perfect. Indeed, in the above example, all that the past perfect indicates is that the grammatical subject was having (been) dried at the past reference point established by the imperfective past *bær.mi.gæsh.t.∅* 'was returning', and the information that there is another time point prior to the time point established by the verb form *bær.mi.gæsh.t.∅* comes from the larger context, namely a preceding past verb form *ræf.t.∅* 'went away'.

3.15. Tense neutralization

Comrie (1985) notes that "In several languages, there is a rule whereby within what would otherwise be a sequence of like tenses within a sentence, only the first verb shows the expected tense, while all subsequent verbs are in a single tense category, irrespective of the first verb (and thus the time reference of the later verbs)" (ibid. : 102). Modern Persian, as the following example demonstrates, seems to be one of these languages.

- 3.86. (a) mæryæm qæza ra mi.pæz.ænd, zærf.ha ra
Maryam meal o.m. ipfv. cook. she dish. pl. o.m.
mi.shu.y.ænd, sepæs be mædrese mi.ræv.ænd.
ipfv. wash. she, then to school ipfv. go. she
Maryam cooks/ will cook the meal, washes/will
wash the dishes, and then goes/ will go to school.

(b) mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.e, zærf.ha ra shos.t.e be
mædrese mi.ræv.æd.

Having cooked the meal, having washed the dishes,

Maryam goes/ will go to school.

In example 3.86.(b), above the neutralized tense verb forms have overtly the form of the past participle, whereas the last verb is in the non-past tense. Furthermore, as the following example exhibits, in Persian even a sequence of past tense verb forms within a sentence can be rewritten in the form of a sentence containing a series of clauses, where only the last verb remains in the past tense and other preceding verb forms are all past participles.

3.87. (a) mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.∅, zærf.ha ra
Maryam meal o.m. cook.pt. she, dish. pl. o.m.

shos.t.∅, bæ'd be mædrese ræf.t.∅.

wash. pt. she, then to school go. pt. she

Maryam cooked the meal, washed the dishes,
and then went to school.

(b) mæryæm qæza ra pox.t.e zærf.ha ra shos.t.e be mædrese ræf.t.∅.

Having cooked the meal, having washed the dishes,

Maryam went to school.

The examples considered in this section clearly show that in Modern Persian there is a tense neutralization rule which might operate optionally and neutralize a sequence of like tenses within a sentence but one. The neutralized tense verb forms in question have invariably the form of the past participle. The examples also show that the Persian past participle is a relative tense form which locates the time of the situation in the past with respect to the reference point established by the last verb which shows the expected tense of the sentence as a whole, rather than with respect to the moment of speech. The main evidence for this is that while the time locations of the situations denoted by the past participles in ex. 3.86.(b) may be past or future with respect to the moment of speech (depending on whether Maryam has already cooked

the meal and washed the dishes or is going to do so, in ex. 3.87.(b) they are undoubtedly past, since the tensed verb form overtly has the form of the past.

3.16. Sequence of tenses

According to Comrie, in some languages there is a syntactic rule whereby within a sequence of tenses the tense of the first verb determines the tense of the following verb(s). Thus, in Spanish the tense of the verb expressing the content of the command varies not in terms of its own independent time reference, but rather in accordance with the tense of the reporting verb. In this language, the content of an indirect command is generally indicated by subjunctive form of the verb; the past subjunctive is used when the main verb is in one of the past tenses, and the present subjunctive is used when the main verb is in one of the non-past tenses, as in the following examples: *dije que Juan se fuese* (past subj.) 'I told Juan to go away' (lit. 'I said that Juan go-away'), *digo (siempre) que Juan se vaya* (pres. subj.) 'I (always) tell Juan to go away', *dire/voy a decir que Juan se vaya* 'I will tell Juan to go away'³¹. Comrie (1985: 105) notes that in the above examples the present and past subjunctive do not alternate with each other in terms of their own independent time reference, and it makes no sense to ask about the difference in their time reference. In fact, they could even have the same time reference, as in the pair of sentences: *dije que Juan se fuese mañana* 'I told Juan to leave tomorrow', *voy a decir que Juan se vaya mañana* 'I will tell Juan to leave tomorrow'; where the time reference of Juan's leaving is tomorrow in both sentences. What is actually different is the time of at which 'I' issue the instruction, and this determines the different tenses of the subjunctive. Therefore, it can be concluded that "the only way in which the different uses of the two tenses of the subjunctive can be accounted for in indirect commands is by a rule of a sequence of tenses, which overrides other considerations of time reference" (Comrie; 1985: 106).

³¹The information on indirect command in Spanish and the Spanish examples are from Comrie (1985: 105)

The sequence of tense rule operating in Spanish does not operate in Persian. As far as indirect commands (i.e. commands expressed in indirect speech) are concerned, a rule of sequence of tense similar to that operating in English operates in Persian. In English, in indirect command, such as *I told John to go away* or *I will tell John to go away* the form expressing the content of the command is always infinitive irrespective of the tense of the main verb, as "the time reference of the verb contained within the command (e.g. *go* in these examples) is invariably future relative to the time reference of the main verb" (Comrie; 1985: 105). Similarly, in Persian in an indirect command such as *be æli gof.t.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd* 'I told Ali to go away' (lit. (that) he go), or *be æli mi.gu.y.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd* 'I will tell Ali to go away', the form expressing the command is always the non-past subjunctive regardless of the tense of the reporting verb. The reason for this is that the time reference of the verb contained in the command (i.e. *be.ræv.æd* 'go. he') is invariably future with respect to the time reference of the main verb.

The above Persian examples and similarly sentences like:

- 3.88. *be æli gof.t.e bu.d.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd*
 to Ali say. pt. ptp. be. pt. I (that) pfv. go. he
 I had told (lit. was having told) Ali to go.

once again confirms the present study's claim that the Persian non-past subjunctive (more accurately subordinate perfective) is a relative tense which is normally used to locate a situation in the future with respect to the reference point established by the verb in the main clause, regardless of the absolute time reference of the reference point in the question. I.e. the reference point established by the main verb can be in the past (relative to the moment of speech), as in *be æli gof.t.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd* 'I told Ali to go', in the future, as in *be æli mi.gu.y.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd* 'I will tell Ali to go away', or the present moment as in *(dar.æm) be æli mi.gu.y.æm (ke) be.ræv.æd* 'I am telling Ali to go away'. The claim that the subordinate perfective is a relative tense is further supported by the fact that it is not always possible to determine the absolute time reference (i.e. its relation to the moment of speech) of this verb form. Thus, in

the first example above, the speaker's intention may have been that Ali should have gone before the moment of speech, or he might have even intended to leave it quite open when he should go away.

3.17. Indirect speech in Modern Persian

The purpose of this section is two-fold, firstly, to study briefly the rules for indirect speech in Persian, secondly, to determine the nature of the time reference of the tense form in the reported part of the indirect speech.

Even though in Modern Persian, indirect reported speech is not very common³², and statements are more often than not reported with exactly the same wording, one can still make a distinction between direct and indirect speech. In direct speech, the speaker reproduces the exact words of the original speaker, without any change whatsoever, as in *æli di.ruz gof.t.ø*, "*(mæn) færda mi.ræv.æm shiraz*". 'Ali said yesterday, "I will go to Shiraz tomorrow"'. It should be noted that, in this example the pronoun *mæn* 'I' and the personal ending *-æm* 'I' refer to the original speaker, i.e. Ali; and the adverb *færda* 'tomorrow' is interpreted from the view point of the original speaker's deictic centre, i.e. the time reference of *færda* is the day after the day including Ali's utterance. In indirect speech, on the other hand, the original speaker's words undergo two obvious changes. The first which is in fact optional, is that the reporter may change the original speaker's wording so far as the semantic content expressed in the original utterance remains intact. In the above example, for instance, the reporter may substitute *(mæn) in.ja ra færda be mæqsæd.e shiraz tærk mi.kon.æm* 'I leave here tomorrow for Shiraz' for *(mæn) færda mi.ræv.æm shiraz* 'I will go to Shiraz tomorrow'. The second change is the shift in deictic centre. Purkhosrow (1981: 90) claims that "in Persian . . . the process of putting direct speech structures into their corresponding indirect forms, except for the pronoun adjustment, does not require other changes: Even the particle *ke* 'that' does not

³²Phillott (1919: 64) notes that "the use of the indirect speech appears to be increasing in Modern Persian. [Thus] He is not the man he say he is, can in Modern Persian, be either direct or indirect narration as 3.11. Ps. *u ke mi.gu.y.æd folan shæxsæm nist*. 3.12. Ps *u ke mi.gu.y.æd folan shæxs æst nist*".

exclusively signal either direct or indirect speech, and hence it proves to be an optional linguistic element". In other words, he claims that in Persian even time adverbials in indirect speech remain the same as in the corresponding direct speech. The present writer disagrees with him. In fact, his native speaker intuitions strongly suggest that in Persian, as in English, in shifting from direct to indirect speech, time adverbials are generally changed to correspond to the deictic centre of the person reporting the utterance, and if they are not changed, they are interpreted from the point of view of his deictic centre. Thus, when putting the following Persian example into indirect form, *færda* 'tomorrow' should be replaced by *em.ruz* 'today' (lit. this day) which is sensitive to the reporter's rather than to the original speaker's deictic centre. It may, however, remain unchanged if and only if the day of reporting happens to be the same as the day of the original utterance. I.e. under any circumstances the time adverbials in indirect speech are sensitive to the reporter's here-and-now.

3.89. (a) æli di.ruz gof.t.∅, "færda mi.ræv.æm shiraz".

(b) æli di.ruz gof.t.∅ (ke) em.ruz mi.ræv.æd shiraz.

Yesterday Ali said that he would go (lit. is going) to Shiraz today.

Nevertheless, Purkhosrow's assertion holds for the tense of the verb in indirect speech. As a matter of fact, there exists a crucial difference between English and Persian indirect speech, and this concerns precisely the tense of the verb in indirect speech. Thus, while "in English, clearly there is a (possible) change in the tense of the verb in the shift from direct to indirect speech" (Comrie; 1985: 109), in Persian, the verb in indirect speech remains the same as in the corresponding direct speech; i.e. there is no shift whatsoever. This means that tenses in indirect speech in Persian, unlike other deictic elements, e.g. time adverbials, spatial adverbials, pronouns, etc., are interpreted not from the viewpoint of the deictic centre of the here-and-now, but rather from the view point of the deictic centre of the original speaker. That is, tenses in indirect speech in this language have relative rather than absolute time reference.

To recapitulate the rules for indirect speech, in Modern Persian in the shift from direct to indirect speech apart from tense, all other elements sensitive in the speaker's

original utterance to his deictic centre are shifted to correspond to the deictic centre of the person reporting the utterance. The verb in the reported part, on the other hand, remains in the same tense as in the corresponding direct speech. In other words, the verb in the reported part remains sensitive to the deictic centre of the original speaker, and for that reason has relative rather than absolute time reference. Lack of change in the tense of the verb in the shift from direct to indirect speech is not however restricted to Persian. In some other languages, e.g. Russian, the verb in indirect speech also remains in the same tense as in the corresponding direct speech, and as such has relative rather than absolute time reference (cf. Comrie; 1985: 109).

3.18. Conclusion

The present chapter has studied the tense subsystem of Modern Persian. The study illustrated that:

(a) The various tense forms of Modern Persian do not simply function independently, but rather there is a systematic relationship among them.

(b) The Persian finite verb forms, except the subordinate perfective and the subordinate perfect which only have relative time reference, have absolute as well as relative time reference: they normally have absolute time reference in main clauses, but relative time reference in subordinate clauses.

(c) The Persian non-finite verb forms, i.e. the non-past and past participle only have relative time reference.

(d) The Persian perfect forms: the perfect, the past perfect, the subjunctive perfect, etc. are primarily tense categories, and simply mean that the surface structure subject is (was in the case of the past perfect), at a given time point, having performed the action denoted by the past participle.

(e) Different meanings traditionally assigned to a given tense form, except one which is the general meaning, can be worked out on the basis of the interaction between the meaning of the form in question and the meaning of other linguistic elements present in the sentence, e.g. time adverbials, plural subject, generic subject, etc. I.e. they are contextual meanings.

(f) Any linguistic element, grammatical or lexical, has a meaning and as such contributes to the overall meaning of the sentence under consideration.

Given the above mentioned results, and Prior's observation that a sharp distinction between point or points of reference and the point of speech is unnecessary and misleading, the present chapter has proposed a context-independent meaning for each of Modern Persian tense-aspect forms. The Persian tense-aspect forms, as it has been pointed out, divide into two groups of past and non-past (or anterior and non-anterior) depending on the presence vs. absence of the past tense marker /D/. The tense distinction of past vs. non-past interacts with the three way aspectual distinction: perfective vs. imperfective vs. progressive, and thus there is in both tenses an aspectual opposition between the perfective form, the imperfective form and the progressive form. The only considerations would be that (a) the perfective aspect in the perfective non-past is marked by the perfective marker *be-* rather than by the absence of the imperfective marker *mi-*, (b) while the other finite verb forms may occur in a main or a subordinate clause, the perfective non-past is restricted to subordinate clauses. The perfective non-past, traditionally called the present subjunctive, like the subjunctive perfect, always occurs in subordinate clauses, e.g. *ægær be.ræv.i u ra mi.bin.i* 'If you go (now), you will see him'. In fact, even where perfective non-past is preceded by a modal verb like *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish', *bayes.t.æn* 'be necessary', etc., as in *mi.xah.æm be.ræv.æm* 'I want to go', the complementiser *ke* 'that' is understood but optionally not inserted between the main verb (i.e. the modal verb) and the subordinate clause, *mæn mi.xah.æm ke be.ræv.æm* 'I want that I go'.

Given the fact that the past tense verb forms are morphologically identical to their non-past counterparts, except for the presence of the past tense marker /D/, the present study has defined the meaning of the past tense verb forms on the basis of the combination of the meaning of their non-past counterparts with the meaning of the past tense marker /D/ which means that there is a time point subsequent to the time of the situation referred to. Thus, for instance, while the imperfective non-past is

described as locating the time of the situation at (i.e. as simultaneous with) a given time point which is practically recognized by the context as the deictic centre, the imperfective past is characterized as locating the time of the situation at a reference point which is prior to the deictic centre of the context.

Finally, on the basis of results of the study of the tense subsystem of Modern Persian (the aspect subsystem, the meaning of the aspectual markers, and their interactions with other elements of the verb will be investigated in the next chapter) the following formal representations could be suggested.

perfective non-past	E after D.C.
imperfective non-past	E simul D.C.
progressive non-past	E simul D.C.
perfective past	E before D.C.
imperfective past	E simul R before D.C.
progressive past	E simul R before D.C.

In the above schematic representations of Modern Persian tense-aspect verb forms, E is the time of the situation, D.C. is the deictic centre, and R is the reference point related to D.C. The perfect verb forms are not assigned separate formulations, since they are essentially tense categories which locate the stative situation of having performed an action at a given time point, and for that reason the schematic representations of imperfective non-past and imperfective past would also capture the semantic function of non-past and past perfect forms respectively. It should be noted that the double perfect is also a non-past perfect form, and its semantic function can therefore be captured by the schematic representation of the imperfective non-past.

CHAPTER 4

Aspect system of Modern Persian

4.0. Introduction

The present chapter has a two-fold objective. Firstly, to give an outline of the aspectual structure of Modern Persian verb system, secondly, to justify the argument that Persian aspectual markers, i.e. *mi-*, *be-*, and \emptyset -, each have one single core meaning which is independent of context of use¹. But, prior to embarking on the consideration of the main issues, it is necessary to verify that aspect² is indeed relevant in Persian grammar. Thus, section 4.1. addresses the question of the status of the grammatical category of aspect in Persian system.

The other prerequisite is the provision of a theoretical frame work which could act as a background for the study of Modern Persian aspect subsystem. This can be achieved through the review of the General Linguistic theories of aspect. Therefore, sections 4.2. to 4.6. review the influential treatments of aspect as a General Linguistic category. The theories surveyed belong to Allen (1966), Vendler (1967), Comrie (1976), Lyons (1977), Smith (1983), Dahl (1985), and Bache (1985). Having provided for these prerequisites, in the remaining sections an attempt will be made to describe the formal expression of aspectual distinctions in Persian.

4.1. The status of aspect in Modern Persian system

The traditional grammarians, in general, assume that the Modern Persian system is basically a tense system consisting of a present, a preterite, a present perfect and a past perfect tense. Windfuhr, on the other hand, argues that while the traditional

¹The present writer admits that it is not always possible to stick to the monosemantic strategy adopted in this study. I.e. he acknowledges that while it is illuminating to postulate that Persian tense and aspect markers each have one core meaning, it would be difficult to isolate a core meaning for a polysemous lexical item like *shir* which has three different meanings in Tehrani dialect of Persian: 'lion', 'milk', and 'water tap'.

²The term 'aspect' is commonly used by linguists as the English, French, and German translation equivalent of the Russian term 'vid' (which is employed in Russian to refer to the opposition of perfective and imperfective in the Slavonic languages) to designate the opposition between the progressive and the non-progressive forms in English, the opposition between the simple past and the imperfect in literary French, the opposition between the progressive and aorist forms in Turkish, and comparable oppositions in other languages.

grammarians' assumption is not entirely wrong, "the major distinguishing feature of the Persian system probably is aspect and not tense" (1979: 86). That is, he contends that the difference between Persian *xan.d.φ* 'read he' and *mi.xan.d.φ* 'was reading/used to read he' is one of aspect, even though the traditional grammarians consider it as one of tense and call the above verb forms simple past and imperfect respectively.

However, despite the fact that the difference between the past tense forms such as *xan.d.φ* 'read he' and *mi.xan.d.φ* 'was reading/used to read he' is definitely one of aspect, one can not on the basis of this aspectual distinction in the past tense claim that "aspect [and not tense] is the major distinctive factor of the contemporary verb system of Persian, distinguishing non-perfective and perfective" (Windfuhr; 1979: 87); particularly, in Persian unlike in Russian --which is to many linguists a typical example of an aspect language-- the perfective/imperfective opposition is almost restricted to the past tense, and there exist a non-past and a past perfect tense.

Windfuhr's argument for the primary status of aspect and the secondary status of tense in Modern Persian is chiefly based on his claim that in Standard Colloquial Persian the perfective past cuts across the tense distinction: past vs. non-past and is used to refer to a literally future situation where that situation is conceived of as a single complete whole. In other words, Windfuhr argues that in Modern Persian the perfective past fills the gap created by the absence of the perfective non-past in the system, and the aspectual opposition perfective versus imperfective is not restricted to the past tense. That is, he claims that in Modern Persian as in Russian there is an aspectual opposition between the perfective and the imperfective forms both in the past and non-past tense, with the only difference that in Persian the perfective past is the perfective member of the aspectual opposition both in the past and in the non-past tense. The following are the examples that Windfuhr presents as evidence for his standpoint.

- 4.1. hæsæn, bia! - bæle, umæ.dæm (pfv. pt.).
Hasan, come! - O.K., I am coming/on my way.
- 4.2. xub, ma dige ræf.t.im (pfv. pt.) (the remark of the visitor, still sitting)
Well, I am going/will go now.
- 4.3. mæn pær.id.æm. to hæm be.Pær. yek, do, se!
I'll jump now. You jump too. 1, 2, 3!

Windfuhr's claim regarding the perfective past being the general form for definite future in standard colloquial dialect (1978: 90) is nonetheless unacceptable by virtue of the fact that in the above examples the perfective past does not denote future events whose occurrences are definite, but rather events whose occurrences either immediately precede or follow the moment of speech. Thus, in 4.1. Hasan might be on his way as he is saying "*bæle umæ.d.æm*" or start off immediately after he has said it, in 4.2., the guest might stand up immediately after he has said "*ma dige ræf.t.im*", and finally in 4.3. 'the wife' might have already jumped by the time she finishes her utterance: *mæn pær.id.æm*. The evidence for this is that even the addition of a future time adverbial like *chænd dæqiqe.ye digær* 'a few minutes later' to any of the above examples, even where the occurrence of the designated event is definite and in formal speech the speaker may use the so-called 'definite future'³ (i.e. perfective non-past of *xas.t.æn* plus short infinitive of the main verb) to refer to it, renders it ungrammatical.

- 4.4. hæsæn, bia! - *bæle, chænd dæqiqe.ye digær
umæ.d.æm.
- 4.5. xub, *ma chænd dæqiqe.ye digær ræf.t.im.
- 4.6. *mæn chænd dæqiqe.ye digær pær.id.æm.

³In a note on his tentative chart of the system of Contemporary Persian Windfuhr suggests that the colloquial dialect counterpart of the contemporary Persian verb form for definite future is the perfective past. This suggestion is definitely inaccurate in that firstly while there is a restriction on the co-occurrence of the perfective past and the future time adverbials, there is no restriction on the collocation of the so-called definite future of the Contemporary Literary Persian with future time adverbial, secondly the perfective past is not the general form for the definite future in the Standard Colloquial Dialect of Persian.

The above sentences clearly indicate that contrary to Windfuhr's contention, the general form for definite future, i.e. for reference to events whose occurrences are certain from the speaker's point of view is the present tense (i.e. the imperfective non-past), as in *chænd dæqiqe.ye digær mi.ay.æm* 'I'll come in a few minutes', and the perfective past may be used to designate a future event only when the given situation immediately occurs after the moment of speech, and as such may be conceived of as an experience of the past time sphere. This can further be supported by the restriction on the collocation of the perfective past and the future time adverbials like *færda* 'tomorrow', *sal.e ayænde* 'next year', etc.

Windfuhr's second reason for maintaining that aspect is the major distinctive factor in Modern Persian system runs as follows:

The aspectual distinction is found in the non-indicative as well. So far, no explanation has been suggested for the fact that there are only two subjunctives and only two conditionals, i.e., 'present' subjunctive like *be.ræv.æm* 'that I may go' and 'perfect' subjunctive *ræf.t.e bash.æm* '(that) I may have/be gone'; conditional 'imperfect' *mi.ræf.t.æm* 'I would go' and conditional 'past perfect' *ræf.t.e bu.d.æm* 'I would go/would have gone.' . . . The explanation suggested here is that both the subjunctive and the conditional are distinguished by aspect, i.e. imperfective vs. perfective. (Windfuhr; 1978: 88).

Windfuhr's second argument for the primary role of aspect and consequently secondary role of tense in Persian is also unacceptable. First, as it was explained in chapter 1, the perfect forms, e.g. the non-past perfect, the past perfect, the subjunctive perfect, etc. should not be identified with the perfective forms (cf. § 1.7.4.4.). Second, the non-past subjunctive is a perfective and not an imperfective form (cf. § 1.6.4): thus, the opposition between the two subjunctive forms of Persian (i.e. the non-past and perfect subjunctive) is one of perfective vs. perfect rather than one of perfective vs. imperfective. Third, contrary to Windfuhr's claim Persian has more than two conditionals⁴. Finally, the distinction between (conditional) imperfective and

⁴The other verb forms which may appear in the protasis clause of a conditional sentence of Persian are the non-past subjunctive, perfective past, and the imperfective non-past as in the following sentences.

- 1) *ægær æl'an be.ræv.i* (non-past subj.), *be moqe mi.res.i.*
If you go now, you will get (there) on time.
- 2) *ægær pasox ra mi.dan.i* (ipfv. non-past), *be.gu digær.*

(conditional) past perfect is a distinction between an imperfective and a perfect form and not between an imperfective and a perfective form.

Despite the above arguments against Windfuhr's assumption, it cannot however be denied that aspect is a category of Modern Persian. This is evident from the following facts. First, the difference between the past tense verb forms *xan.d.æm* 'I read' and *mi.xan.d.æm*⁵ 'I was reading, used to read' is not one of tense but one of aspect, since they both refer to the same past situation but in different ways: the former views the given situation as a single whole, and the latter views it as extended in time. Second, in Persian like in Russian (which is generally accepted as a typical aspect language) the aspectual distinction perfective/imperfective is marked morphologically by the presence versus absence of affixes. Third, even though in Persian the imperfective non-past normally replaces the perfective non-past, there are, at least for the modal verb *xas.t.æn* 'to want, wish' as in *mæn xah.æm ræf.t* 'I will go', and in *mæn mi.xah.æm be.ræv.æm* 'I want to go', and the copula *bu.d.æn* 'to be' as in *u dær xan.e æst* 'he is at home' and in *u dær xan.e mi.bash.æd* 'he is at home' (the latter being the stylistic counterpart of the former) two forms, a perfective and an imperfective in the non-past tense. And finally, the so-called non-past subjunctive is in practice a non-past perfective verb form which is restricted to the dependent clauses and usually refers to a future situation⁶.

The above characteristic features of Persian verb system do not however support Windfuhr's claim that "the *major* distinction in the verb system is between imperfective and perfective aspect in indicative and non-indicative" (1979: 91) (emphasis is from the present writer), but rather simply indicate that aspect is relevant

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- 3) If you know the answer, tell it.
 ægær ræf.t.æm (pfv. past), to ra hæm ba xod mi.bær.æm.
 If I go, I'll take you with me.

⁵According to Comrie (1976), a difference like that between Persian *xan.d.æm* and *mi.xan.d.æm* is an aspectual difference and is an indication of the fact that aspect is a category in this language. This is further supported by the fact that Comrie calls the Persian verbal prefix *mi-* an imperfective marker (ibid: 88).

⁶The restriction of the non-past subjunctive to future time reference is predictable from the fact that the perfective constructions are generally incompatible with present time reference.

in Persian grammar. As a matter of fact as it was illustrated in the previous chapter the tense distinction anterior vs. non-anterior is also a distinctive factor of the Persian verb system, with the anterior and non-anterior verb forms normally referring respectively to events prior and subsequent to the primary reference point (i.e. the moment of speech) or a contextually established time reference point. For that matter the best thing that can be said about the category of aspect in Persian is that aspect is as relevant in Persian grammar as the category of tense.

4.2. Allen's theory of aspect

In his *The Verb System of Present Day American English* Allen is mainly concerned with aspect as a category of English language rather than as of general linguistics. However, his discussion of (English) aspect is here surveyed, since it provides significant insight into the study of aspect as a universal category.

Allen's approach to the English verb system is generally based on the theory of one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning. As regards the aspectual system of English, he believes that the major aspectual opposition in this language is between the perfective aspect and the imperfective aspect, expressed respectively with the simple form of the verb, and one of the forms of the auxiliary BE plus the *ing* form of the verb. Indeed, he argues that "If aspect is defined as a speaker's way of "looking at" a Predication, it will be seen that English has only two aspects: INCLUSIVE ASPECT and INTRUSIVE ASPECT (or, to give the two aspects their more customary nouns, perfective aspect and imperfective aspect)" (Allen; 1966: 219). Thus, to Allen, aspect is basically the formal expression of the speaker's subjective attitude to a given action in the real world. Nevertheless, he is quite aware of the fact that this should not be taken to mean that the speaker always has a free choice as to whether to view a given situation inclusively (perfectively) or intrusively (imperfectively); rather, in certain contexts, the choice of aspect is to a considerable extent determined by objective facts of meaning, syntax, and expressional emphasis. Along this line of argument, he defines the meaning or function of the perfective

aspect as "that of signaling inclusive reference" (ibid: 184), where inclusive reference means reference to the whole of an event, rather than to part of it.

While Allen is fairly certain about the significance of the perfective aspect signaled by the non-progressive forms in English, he seems not to be so certain about the primary meaning or function of the imperfective aspect. At first he describes the essential function of the imperfective aspect as reference to "part of an action": "he [Henry Sweet] seems to support the claim of the present writer that an expanded verb cluster shows "part of an action"" (ibid: 33). But later he notices that, according to Goedsche, even an expanded form "may express under certain circumstances the *action as a whole* " (1932: 469-470), as in a sentence like *I'm telling you the truth*, where the expanded form is not used to present the action as 'going on' but rather as a whole.

Having noticed that under certain circumstances, even the progressive form may represent an action as a whole, Allen modifies his original characterisation of the English progressive aspect and argues that since in the opposition "Inclusive"/"Intrusive" (i.e. perfective/imperfective) the former has the marked meaning, the latter, i.e. the Intrusive has no basic meaning, and for that matter where the non-progressive represents an Event as a single whole, the progressive forms are often neutral to this meaning, and as such "non-committal with respect to completion or non-completion" (ibid: 219). Therefore, according to Allen the progressive verb forms do not primarily express the notion of "incompleteness", "limited duration" or any other notions, but rather are often neutral to the marked meaning of "inclusive reference" signaled by non-progressive verb forms⁷.

⁷Allen's characterization of the English progressive ("intrusive" in his terminology) aspect, despite being formally the marked member, as the unmarked category of the opposition progressive/non-progressive, is as he himself admits, influenced by the fact that in Russian the imperfective aspect is the unmarked term of the two-term aspect system perfective/imperfective: "Inclusive aspect is the marked member of the opposition "inclusive"/"intrusive" in English, as it seems also to be in Russian" (1966: 219). The problem with this analogy is that while in Russian it is the imperfective aspect which is formally unmarked, ("[in Russian] perfective forms are typically formed from imperfective *base* forms by way of prefixation. there are more than twenty different prefixes available for perfectivization, e.g. *s-*, *na-*, *vy-*, *po-*, etc." (Bache; 1985: 35), in English it is the perfective (i.e. non-progressive) aspect which is formally unmarked.

Allen's latter description of the English progressive aspect, despite being an improvement of the former, is not however so much accurate; since it is hard to believe that in the aspectual opposition progressive/non-progressive, from a semantic point of view, the former category which is syntactically marked is the unmarked member, and the latter which is syntactically unmarked is the marked member. This criticism is further supported by the fact that Reichenbach quite correctly unlike Allen ascribes a positive meaning to the English progressive marker *be ... +ing* and contends that "The English language uses the present participle to indicate that the event covers a certain stretch of time" (1947: 290), and similarly by the fact that Lyons (1977) also maintains that the progressive term is the marked member of the aspectual opposition progressive/non-progressive: "... in [the] two-term system of aspect [English] grammaticalizes the distinction between a marked progressive and an unmarked non-progressive." (ibid: 708) (Lyons unfortunately does not specify the positive meaning of either of the member of the opposition). Nevertheless, Allen's second characterization of the English imperfective aspect is better than many others available in the literature, in that it emphasizes that the essential meaning of the progressive aspect is neither "incompleteness" nor "limited duration".

Allen's other contributions to aspectual studies derive from his valuable comments on the classification of lexical verbs and/or verb predications into different classes. Although he does not use the term *Aktionsart*, Allen is quite aware of the fact that the study of lexical verbs in terms of types of action they designate, should be carried out independently of the study of the semantics of morphological or syntactic markers of aspectual oppositions such as perfective vs. imperfective, progressive vs. non-progressive, etc.

The first important thing that Allen notices concerning the typology of verbs, is that most verb classifications are primarily intended to capture the linguistic fact that certain verbs of English resist collocation with marker of progressive aspect, i.e.

be ... + ing. In order to distinguish these verbs from all other verbs, Joos calls them PRIVATE VERBS, and other linguists call them stative verbs.

The second point he notices is the problems that the scholars encounter in defining the term 'stative' or 'private', i.e. the cover term for verbs which are normally immune to progressive modification, and in figuring out the covert feature which makes them incompatible with progressivity. These problems are evident from the fact that one usually faces the following circular reasoning: Stative verbs are those which do not occur in "durative formulas" (i.e. in progressive forms); verbs which resist expansion are stative verbs.

The last two points that Allen mentions with respect to verb types prior to presenting his own classification are: (a) "almost any one of stative verbs [i.e. verbs that resist occurrence in progressive form] may be expanded under special circumstances" (1966: 78-9), (b) verbs *lie* and *flow* which do not normally resist collocation with the progressive marker be + ing, do resist progressive modification in these sentences:

4.7. Hamadan *lies* at the foot of Mt. Alvand.

4.8. The Rhine *flows* past Coblenz. (Allen; 1966: 75)

Having mentioned the above facts about the typology of verbs, and the difficulties of establishing the common semantic component(s) of the verbs which do not normally collocate with progressive marker, Allen hypothesizes that "it may not be so much the verbs themselves that resist expansion as the sentences or verb predications --in which they occur" (1966: 79), and offers a verb categorization scheme as follows:

Allen classifies the verb predications in which the lexical verbs occur into two subclasses of 'suffusive' and 'profusive'. Suffusive predications refer to events that spread out through the period of time referred to, whatever that may be. When no period of time is mentioned, the events referred to extend in both directions (into the past and also into the future) indefinitely (Allen; 1966: 223). If any time period is

mentioned or implied, a suffusive predication is assumed to refer to all of it. For this reason, suffusive events are necessarily non-bounded, i.e. "non-committal about the boundaries or terminal points of the Events referred to" (Allen; 1966: 223), and as such are always expressed in English by predications containing a non-expanded verb cluster, i.e. by perfective or simple verb form. The following are examples that Allen gives of this type of predications.

4.9. Hamadan lies at the foot of Mt. Alvand.

4.10. Irish buses run late.

4.11. We have a Volkswagen.

The situations referred to in these sentences are presented "as the usual (and unchanging) state of affairs" (Allen; 1966: 224), and the statements are implied to hold true for an indefinite extent of time stretching out both into the past and into the future (ibid.) For this reason, the given predicates do not permit the expansion of their verb clusters.

Profusive predicates, on the other hand, are bounded predicates which "suggest a change or development or "flow" of activity" (Allen; 1966: 226), and as such their verb clusters are in progressive form. Thus, in the following pair of sentences, the first predication is profusive, since it suggests an unfolding of the activity, a "flowing towards the future", but the second is a suffusive predication, since it does not imply that there will be any difference in the state of affairs ten minutes from now or that there was any ten minutes ago.

4.12. That pail is leaking.

4.13. That pail leaks. (Allen; 1966: 225)

While Allen's specification of suffusive predications is more or less acceptable, his description of profusive predications is not absolutely flawless. Whereas suffusive predications are generally unbounded or atelic the profusive predications, i.e. the predications in progressive form, are not, contrary to his claim, always bounded⁸ ; but

⁸Interestingly enough, while Allen contends that the use of the progressive aspect renders unbounded events bounded and considers the English sentence *My hat is lying on the table in the hall* as

rather may or may not be bounded. This is evident from the fact that the following sentences despite being both in progressive form are expressing a bounded and an unbounded situation respectively, in that the former designates "an action tending towards a goal" (Garey; 1957: 106), and the latter an action which "does not have to wait for a goal for its realization, but is realized as soon as it begins" (ibid).

4.14. They are playing a rubber of bridge.

4.15. They are playing bridge.

By the same token, Allen's example *My hat is lying on the table in the hall* refers, contrary to Allen's contention, to an unbounded situation, since the situation of "my" hat's lying on the table, does not tend towards a goal, and is realized as soon as it begins, and as such may extend indefinitely in time.

Apart from that Allen's classification of verb predications (rather than verbs) into two subclasses of suffusive and profusive is superior to the classification of lexical verbs into two groups of state and dynamic, in that it is based on the recognition of the fact that a given lexical verb does not always invariably denote a state or a dynamic situation, but rather it may refer to a stative situation (i.e. to a condition that simply exists rather than happens) in one context, and a dynamic one in the other. Thus, the Persian verb *shenax.t.æn* 'to recognize' in collocation with the perfective marker / \emptyset -/, refers to a dynamic situation, i.e. to a mental activity, but to a stative situation in collocation with the imperfective marker *mi*-, as illustrated by the following sentences.

4.16. æli foræn u ra shenax.t.∅ (pfv.).

Ali immediately s/he o.m. recognize .pt. he

Ali recognized him/her immediately.

4.17. æli u ra mi.shenax.t.∅ (ipfv.).

bounded, i.e. as referring to an event which has boundaries or terminal point (Allen; 1966: 223), Declerck (1979) hypothesizes that "the use of the imperfective progressive form renders bounded processes unbounded" (ibid.: 767). The present writer, however, maintains that these two linguists both are wrong, in that they fail to realize that the progressive aspect and the telic/atelic distinction do not interact systematically, and for that matter a telic predication remains telic even where the progressive marker is added to it.

Ali s/he o.m. ipfv.recognize. pt. he.

Ali knew/used to know him/her.

Similarly, according to Allen, the English verb 'run' designates a stative situation (i.e. refers to an unchanging state of affairs) in 4.18. below, but to a dynamic situation in 4.19. and 4.20. .

4.18. Irish buses run late.

4.19. John is running now.

4.20. John is running home now.

In sum, Allen's observations on the grammaticalization and lexicalization of aspectual oppositions in English provide new insights into the study of aspect both as a category of English and as of the general linguistics, and for that matter should be taken into account in the study of the aspect system of a particular language.

4.3. Vendler's typology of verbs

Vendler's article "Verbs and Times" primarily deals with the temporal characteristics of verbs as lexical items, and as such it is not directly related to the study of aspect as the grammaticalization of the semantic opposition perfective-imperfective. Nevertheless, his observations on the relationships between the verb and time are investigated here, since the categories of Aktionsart and aspect normally interact with one another in a number of ways; for instance, the stative verbs in English usually do not co-occur with the imperfective progressive aspect.

Vendler's verb typology is fairly simple. In his framework, verbs are classified into four categories of activity, accomplishment, achievement, and state. Vendler uses semantic as well as grammatical criteria for deciding to which of the four categories a verb belongs. Activity verbs are defined by Vendler as those which refer to activities which "go on in time in a homogeneous way, have no set terminal point, and any part of the process is of the same nature as the whole" (1967: 101), like running, writing, pushing a cart, etc. Accomplishment verbs designate processes which also go on in time, but unlike processes denoted by activity verbs "they proceed toward a terminus,

which is logically necessary to their being what they are" (Vendler, 1967: 101), and as such consist of phases which succeed one another in time, like running a mile, drawing a circle, spotting or recognizing something, etc. Achievement verbs, on the other hand refer to events that occur at a single moment, and can be conceived of as having no duration, like reaching the hilltop, winning a race, etc. Finally, state verbs describe states that exist or last for a short or long period, like knowing, believing, loving, etc.

Vendler also offers a couple of syntactic tests for establishing to which of the four categories a given verb belongs. Thus, lack of continuous tenses, indicates that the verb in question is either an achievement or a state term, and the felicity of co-occurrence with the time determination (How long . . . ? For such and such a period) determines that it is a state and not an achievement term. The possession of continuous tenses, on the other hand, is an indication of the fact that a verb is either an activity or an accomplishment verb, and the possibility of collocation with the time determination (How long did (does) it take to . . . ?) is the indication of its being an accomplishment rather than an activity verb.

The two major problems with Vendler's four-fold verb classification are as follows. First, even those verbs which normally do not occur in progressive form, in certain contexts do so; second, accomplishment seems to be the category of predicates, i.e. constructions consisting of a verb and an object or complement, rather than of verbs as such. That is, his four-fold distinction among verbs seems to involve factors like the presence or absence of an object, conditions, intended states of affairs as well as temporal differences. To put it in another way, as Mourelatos (1981) quite correctly points out, verbs like 'know', and 'understand' in spite of their special affinity with state contexts, "given the possibilities of semantic transposition provided by the aspectual system, . . . can function quite aptly in a performance⁹ context or for

⁹Mourelatos uses the term 'performance' in the sense defined in Kenny (1963) where verb category 'performance' subsumes Vendler's categories of achievement and accomplishment. I.e. in Kenny (1963) achievements and accomplishments are not recognized as separate types of verbs, and as a

that matter in an activity context: *I'm undertsanding more about quantum mechanics as each day goes by*¹⁰ (1981: 196). In other words, a given state verb may be used "to name different kinds of situations" (Brinton; 1987: 204). . Thus, in the following sentences, the verb 'see' refers to a stative situation in 4.21., to an activity or process in 4.22., to an achievement in 4.23., and to an accomplishment in 4.24. (examples are from Brinton; 1987: 204).

4.21. I see well in the dark (state).

4.22. I am seeing stars (activity or process).

4.23. Then I saw the bear (achievement).

4.24. I saw him for an hour yesterday (accomplishment).

Similarly, the Persian stative verb *danes.t.æn* 'to know' has an insight sense in 4.25. and for that matter is an achievement verb, but in 4.26. refers to a state and is a stative verb.

4.25. for.æn danes.t.æm ke mæriz æst
immediately know. pt. I that ill is
I immediately knew that he was ill (lit is ill).

4.26. mi.dan.æm (ke) mæriz æst
ipfv. know. I (that) ill is
I know that he is ill.

In an earlier section, it was explained that Allen's solution to these problems was to classify predicates rather than verbs into different semantic types. Similarly, some other linguists "when they operate in the territory of phenomena explored by Vendler and Kenny, speak not of types of verbs but of types or categories of verb predication" (Mourelatos; 1981: 196).

However, a brief reflexion reveals that in order to solve the problems of

consequence verbs like *discover*, *find*, and *convince*, which clearly are achievements in Vendler (1967) count as performances along with such clear Vendler-scheme accomplishments as *grow up* and *build a house*.

¹⁰Mourelatos specifies that this example is from Comrie (1976: 36)

Vendler's verb scheme, one need not speak of categories of verb predications instead of categories or types of verbs. In other words, these problems may be dealt with in a much simpler way. The evidence for this is that first, as it can easily be understood from Vendler's accomplishment examples: *run a mile, paint a picture, recover from illness, make a chair*, etc., the category of accomplishment is the only category which is primarily a category of verb predicates rather than of lexical verbs. Thus, scholars like Comrie (1976) and Allen (1966) speak of telic¹¹ predications or even of telic sentences¹² rather than of telic verbs. This is further supported by the fact that while for the other three categories examples can easily be provided from the lexicon:

<u>states</u>	<u>activities</u>	<u>achievements</u>
dominate	run	recognize
desire	walk	find
want	swim	win (the race)
love	push	start/stop/resume
hate	write	be born/die

as well as from the class of verb predications, for the category of accomplishment examples are generally provided from the class of predications or sentences. That is, lexical verbs out of context of use can generally be identified, in terms of the temporal distinction punctual vs. durational and reference to a situation which simply exists or an event which occurs in time, as activities, achievements (punctuals), or states, but not as accomplishments, since accomplishments are basically predications consisting of a verb and a complement. Thus, Vendler's category 'accomplishment' should be restricted to verb predications. This solves at least one of the problems of verb classification: i.e. the problem that it is not so much the lexical verbs that are categorizable as accomplishments as it is verb predications.

¹¹"The term 'telic' corresponds to the term 'accomplishment' used, for instance, by Vendler (1967: 102). The term 'telic' was apparently introduced by Garey (1957)" (Comrie; 1976: footnote 1 page 44).

¹²Comrie defines a telic sentence as that which denotes a telic situation, i.e. the situation "that has built into it a terminal point, namely that point at which [the situation] is complete" (1976: 44)

Second, of the three verb categories: state verbs, activity verbs, and achievement verbs, it is only the states which have (to use Mourelatos' term) a multivalent character and can be used both dynamically and non-dynamically (cf. examples 4.22. to 4.26. above). That is, the other two categories --activity verbs and achievement verbs-- almost always refer to activities and achievements, i.e. to dynamic situations. Thus, even habits which have commonly been considered in general studies of the verb, and of the verb in English in particular, as kinds of states can not be regarded as examples of the use of dynamic verbs in reference to non-dynamic or stative situations. Since, "despite notional and formal similarities between habits and states and their incompatibilities with the progressive form, they name different situations (Aktionsarten): states are non-agentive, non-dynamic, and continuous, whereas habits are agentive, dynamic, and iterative" (Briton; 1987: 210).

A major corollary of the above points is that it is unnecessary to speak of types of verb predications rather than of types or categories of verbs, only because one of the three types of verbs, i.e. state verbs, may in some cases be more appropriately classified as dynamic verbs. This means that a solution better than that of scholars like Allen should be presented. In fact, Poutsma (1926) had already presented a more satisfactory solution to the problems of verb classification schemes like that of Vendler. Poutsma, unlike Allen and those linguists of whom Mourelatos speaks, did not tackle the problems which verb classifications similar to that of Vendler encounter by substituting verb predication classification for verb classification. Rather, he argued that "the normal aspect of a verb [i.e. its characterization as a state or a dynamic verb] is often modified or even utterly changed by the context" (ibid. 291). In other words, he categorized lexical verbs into subclasses of states, activities and punctuals (achievements), at the same time, allowing for their change of class membership in certain contexts. Poutsma's solution is preferable in that it requires only the classification of lexical verbs into different categories rather than that of lexical verbs and verb predications, and is consistent with the intuition that verbs as

lexical items independent of the context of use may be categorized into three types of state, activity and achievement (or punctual).

The present writer thus opts for Poutsma's solution to the problems of verb schemes similar to that of Vendler. This is because he maintains that the recognition of the fact that state verbs may refer to a state or a dynamic situation brings about better results than classification of predications into different groups.

4.4. Lyons' account of aspect

Lyons's discussion of aspect as a general linguistic category is primarily concerned with the introduction of the "aspectual distinctions that are grammaticalized in languages" (Lyons; 1977: 705) in contrast with those which are lexicalized. To introduce the grammaticalizable aspectual distinctions, Lyons first attempts a fairly elaborate classification of situations or more generally of verbs as the linguistic expression of types of real-world situations as follows:

According to Lyons, on a first order level, situations can be divided into static and dynamic situations:

"A static situation (or state-of-affairs, or state) is one that is conceived of as existing, rather than happening, and as being homogeneous, continuous and unchanging throughout its duration. A dynamic situation, on the other hand, is something that happens (or occurs, or takes place): it may be momentary or enduring; it is not necessarily either homogeneous or continuous, but may have any of several temporal contours; and most important of all, it may or may not be under the control of an agent" (ibid.: 483).

Dynamic situations are further classifiable into subgroups, depending on whether they are durational or punctual¹³ and whether they are agent-controlled or not. Lyons calls dynamic durational situations (i.e. situations that are extended in time) that are also under the control of an agent 'activities', and those agent controlled dynamic situations which are momentary 'acts'. But he calls those momentary and durational dynamic situations that are not under the control of an agent 'events' and 'processes' respectively.

¹³The criterion of homogeneity is not relevant to punctual situations, since these situations are conceived of as taking place at single moments, and as such are not analyzable into subparts, which are either all of the same nature as the whole or of different nature.

Lyons also points out that, within the class of processes (including activities, i.e. agent controlled processes) there is a subclass which may be called, after Vendler, accomplishments. Accomplishments (alternatively telic situations) are situations which "proceed towards a climax, or natural terminal point" (1977: 711). Furthermore, like Quirk et al (1985: 208), he notes that process verbs when combined with a direct object or an adverbial of destination describe accomplishments. This supports further the present study's claim that 'accomplishment' is not so much a category of verbs as it is that of predications or sentences¹⁴.

Lyons' situation classification is more elaborate than the one proposed by Vendler, in that it involves the notion of agency. An even more elaborate classification is that of Quirk et al (1985). Like Lyons, Quirk et al first draw a broad distinction between stative and dynamic situations, and then categorize each of the two situation types into subtypes. Quirk et al classify stative situation types into QUALITIES and STATES (Qualities being "relatively permanent and inalienable properties of the subject referent" (ibid.: 200), and within the class of dynamic situations they distinguish eight types according to three binary oppositions as follows: DURATIVE/PUNCTUAL, AGENTIVE/NONAGENTIVE, and CONCLUSIVE/NONCONCLUSIVE. "The CONCLUSIVE/NONCONCLUSIVE [telic/atelic] draws a line between those situations which result in a change of state and those which do not" (ibid.: 207). Quirk et al's classification of situations will not be discussed in further detail in this study. This is because the practical purposes of the present chapter do not call for an elaborate classification of Modern Persian verbs and verb predications on the basis of Quirk et al's classification of English verbs and verb predications.

Having categorized situations into subclasses of states, processes, events, acts and activities, acts and activities being agent-controlled events and processes,

¹⁴Comrie (1976) points out that even the telic predications may be rendered atelic depending on the nature of the subject of the sentence. Thus, "the addition of an indefinitely plural subject, means that the whole situation is not telic, as in *some children eat their food up*" (1976: f.n. 1: p 47). For the very same reason he even prefers to speak of telic vs. atelic sentences rather than of telic vs. atelic verb predications.

respectively, Lyons is ready to embark on enumerating the immediate consequences of his verb classification and on listing the possible aspectual distinctions that may either be grammaticalized or lexicalized in individual languages. But prior to that he requires to specify the senses of the terms 'aspect' and 'Aktionsart'.

Lyons notes that the term 'aspect' has a narrow and a broad sense. In its narrow sense this term is conventionally used by some linguists as the translational equivalent of the Russian word 'vid' to refer to the opposition of perfective and imperfective in the Slavonic languages. But, in its broad sense, the term 'aspect' is usually, though not invariably, extended "to cover a variety of other oppositions, in so far as they are grammaticalized in the structure of particular languages --oppositions based on the notion of duration, instantaneity, frequency, initiation, completion, etc." (Lyons; 1977: 705). Lyons employs the broad sense of 'aspect' to refer to

"oppositions between progressive and non-progressive forms in English, (cf. *he is writing* vs. *he writes*), the opposition between the simple past and the imperfect in literary French (*il écrivit* vs. *il écrivait*), the opposition between the progressive and the aorist forms in Turkish (*okuyor*, 'he is writing', vs. *okur* 'he writes regularly/habitually') and comparable grammaticalized oppositions in other languages" (1977: 705).

As far as the function of the term 'Aktionsart' in the description of the verb system of the individual languages is concerned, Lyons has a position similar to that of Comrie (1976). That is, even though he basically finds the distinction between aspect and Aktionsart a useful theoretical tool, he does not however find the German term 'Aktionsart' (which, in origin meant nothing more than "kind of action") a particularly appropriate term for reference to those semantic properties of lexical verbs whereby they denote one kind of situation rather than another. Lyons' arguments against the specialized employment of the term 'Aktionsart' are as follows: (a) the use of the term 'Aktionsart' rests upon the distinction between grammaticalization and lexicalization or between inflexion and derivation, but neither is a clear cut distinction, (b) "'Aktionsart' is more naturally applied to the denotata of verbs, rather than to some

semantic properties of verbs themselves", (c) the term 'action' (traditional though it is in this sense) is too narrow" (Lyons; 1977: 706).

Having presented the above points against the use of the term 'Aktionsart' for designating those features of the verb which make it refer to one type of situation than the other, Lyons proposes the term 'aspectual character' and defines it in the following manner: "The aspectual character of a verb, or simply its character, will be that part of its meaning whereby it (normally) denotes one kind of situation than another" (ibid.). Nonetheless, Lyons' term is not a particularly successful one either. First, its employment also rests upon the distinction between grammaticalization and lexicalization; i.e. 'aspectual character' exactly like 'Aktionsart' is used to cover aspectual distinctions which are not grammaticalized in individual languages: "Stativity . . . is lexicalized, rather than grammaticalized, in English: [thus] it is part of the aspectual character of particular verbs" (ibid.: 707). Second, Aktionsart is far more commonly used in the literature on aspect by linguists to designate those aspectual distinctions which are not grammaticalized in specific languages. For the very same reasons the present study prefers the term 'Aktionsart' to Lyons' term 'aspectual character' or to Comrie's term 'inherent meaning' (Comrie; 1976).

After the specification of the senses of the terms 'aspect' and 'aspectual character', Lyons begins the discussion of the consequences of his classification of verbs into verb types and of the linguistic expression of the potential aspectual oppositions in individual languages.

One of the consequences of the categorization of situations into states, processes, events, acts and activities, Lyons points out, is the incompatibility of stativity with progressivity. In English, for instance, stative verbs like *know*, *have*, *belong*, *live*, *contain*, etc. do not normally occur in the progressive aspect. Similarly in Persian the stative verbs *danes.t.æn* 'know', *dash.t.æn* 'have' and *bu.d.æn* 'be' never occur in the progressive form. This is an indication of the fact that in these

languages stativity is lexicalized rather than grammaticalized, i.e. it is part of the aspectual character of particular verbs.

The other consequence, according to Lyons, "is the possibility of grouping states and processes together, in contrast with events, in terms of the notion of duration" (1977: 708). This gives rise to another two-term semantic distinction, i.e. to the distinction between durative vs. non-durative situations, with durative situations subsuming states and processes (including activities). Furthermore, Lyons notes that if one takes the notion of markedness into account, four more distinctions besides the two basic distinctions: stative vs. dynamic, and durative vs. non-durative, will be possible. The six possibilities are as follows:

- (i) stative vs. non-stative
- (ii) dynamic vs. non-dynamic
- (iii) stative vs. dynamic
- (iv) durative vs. non-durative
- (v) punctual vs. non-punctual
- (vi) durative vs. punctual

There is still another aspectual opposition: progressive vs. non-progressive, that is grammaticalized in a number of languages such as English and Persian. This aspectual opposition raises the number of the potential aspectual oppositions to seven.

- (vii) progressive vs. non-progressive

After listing the potential aspectual oppositions between real-world situations, Lyons goes into the issue of their formal expressions in specific languages. His hypothesis is that natural languages select from the above inventory of aspectual oppositions and either grammaticalize them or lexicalize them. At first blush, his hypothesis might appear to be wide of the mark, in that it seems rather unlikely for instance that the distinctions between stativity and dynamicity, and between punctuality and durativity are on a par with the one between imperfectivity and perfectivity which is normally grammaticalized rather than lexicalized in some

languages of the world. Probably, that is why Bache (1982) accuses Lyons of conflating aspect and Aktionsart (aspectual character in Lyons' terminology) into one broad category of aspect, and asserts that ". . . stativity is said [by Lyons] to be lexicalized in English and thus 'part of the aspectual character of particular verbs' (1977: 707), but at the same time stativity is one of the aspects in three of the possible general metalinguistic oppositions [(i) to (iii) above] described by Lyons" (ibid. : 63). Nonetheless, a somewhat random set of examples from different language families indicates that Lyons' postulation that any of the seven potential aspectual oppositions may be grammaticalized, or lexicalized depending on the aspectual structure of the language under consideration, is linguistically warranted. Thus, Smith (1983) notes that Statives are often signaled morphologically in a number of languages of the world: "Quichean languages have different paradigms for actives and statives; Navajo has a special conjugation for statives; Lalana Chinantecan has morphemes that make a verb stative; Afar (Cushitic) has a class of verbs with special forms and constraints that correspond to the stative" (Smith; 1983: f.n. 2: 481).

Lyons should not be criticized for conflating aspect and Aktionsart into one broad category of aspect and for substituting the term 'aspectual character' for 'Aktionsart', since, first, as he correctly notices, "aspect on the one hand, and Aktionsart or its equivalent on the other ultimately refer to semantic distinctions of the same kind, the only difference being the language-specific formal expression of these distinctions" (1982: 64). Second, he is absolutely right to claim that aspect and Aktionsart are of the same nature, since, despite having been defined somewhat differently in the literature as the speaker/writer's view of the situation described, and as that part of the meaning of the verb whereby it denotes one kind of situation rather than another, aspect and Aktionsart are very similar in that they both involve an element of subjectivity, and are both based on non-deictic temporal notions such as duration, instantaneity, completion, etc (Lyons; 1977: 705); the only difference being that the former covers grammaticalized aspectual oppositions and the latter lexicalized

one. And that is why the only reasons the present writer has for preferring the term 'Aktionsart' to Lyons' term 'aspectual character' are first, Aktionsart is far more commonly used, second Aktionsart is used in the literature more or less in the same sense as 'aspectual character' or other equivalent terms.

Lyons' other valuable insights into the study of aspect as a general linguistic category are as follows.

a) As it can be discerned from the quotation below, Lyons like many other scholars describes aspect as the speaker/writer's way of looking at the action he observes in the real world. This is also incidentally the description adopted in the present study.

"What is, both objectively and as perceived by the speaker, the same situation may be represented as either a process or an event according to whether the speaker is concerned with its internal temporal structure or not" (1977: 709).

b) Whereas "the [Russian] perfective/imperfective opposition is often explained in terms of completion of the action or situation referred to, the perfective denoting *completion* and the imperfective denoting *incompletion*" (Bache; 1985: 6), Lyons quite correctly explains it in terms of the presentation of a situation as an event or as a process: "Russian exemplifies (v) [i.e. the distinction: punctual vs. non-punctual] in that the so-called perfective positively represents a situation as an event, whereas the corresponding imperfective, being the unmarked term, only negatively, as it were, has anything to do with durativity" (1977: 708).

The evidence for the accuracy of Lyons' characterization of Russian perfective/imperfective distinction in contrast with those which explain this distinction in terms of the notion of completion is that in Russian as in other aspect languages, perfective and imperfective aspect may be used to describe what is objectively the same situation. Further evidence for the accuracy of Lyons' comment on Russian perfective/imperfective opposition is that the primary meaning of the English progressive aspect cannot be the expression of the notion of incompletion, since

according to Goedsche (1932: 469) the English progressive may under certain circumstances express the action as a whole.

Later on in the present chapter it will be exemplified that the expression of incompleteness is not by any means a part of the meaning of Persian imperfective aspect either, but rather at best an implicature arising from the collocation of this aspect with point time events, such as coughing, sneezing, arriving, etc.

c) Lyons contends that in the English two-term aspect system, the progressive is the marked and the non-progressive is the unmarked member of the opposition (1977: 708). This is exactly opposite to Allen's counterintuitive claim that in the English aspectual opposition between the progressive and the non-progressive, the unmarked term is the progressive and as such is non-committal as to the completion or non-completion of the situation referred to. Allen's claim is, as already explained, counterintuitive in that it disregards the fact that it is the progressive aspect which is syntactically marked, and as such is more likely to denote a marked meaning rather than an unmarked meaning.

d) Finally, Lyons quite correctly points out that stative progressive sentences such as "*She is having a headache* (or *She is having one of her headaches*) . . . must necessarily be construed as describing a dynamic, rather than a static situation" (1977: 707). Thus, in the present study, following Lyons, sentences which materialize the combination of stativity and progressivity will be taken as describing a dynamic, rather than a static situation.

4.5. Smith's theory of aspect

Smith's account of aspect¹⁵ is not significantly different from its predecessors. First, Smith like many other scholars describes aspect as the speaker/writer's way of viewing a real-world situation: "sentential aspect presents a situation (event, state, etc.) from a particular point of view: it represents the speaker's

¹⁵Smith's unified account of aspect despite being primarily concerned with English aspect can be generalized to account for aspectual structure of other languages: "although, I concentrate on English, the approach can be generalized" (Smith; 1983: 480).

choice of perspective on the situation" (1983: 470). Second, she like Lyons (1977), Comrie (1976), and Brinton (1987) draws a distinction between Aktionsart and aspect; she calls them "Situational Aspect" and "Viewpoint Aspect" respectively. Situation aspect involves classification of situations into activities, achievements, accomplishments, and states, viewpoint aspect involves different ways of presenting a given situation. Third, she also characterizes the perfective and imperfective aspect in terms of the notions of 'a single whole' 'incompletion' 'endpoints', etc. Finally, she agrees with the other linguists on the number of aspect, i.e. she contends that there are only two aspects: the perfective and the imperfective. Thus, English which is the object language of her theoretical analysis, has only two aspects: Simple Aspect (perfective aspect) and Progressive Aspect (imperfective aspect).

The above similarities between Smith's account of aspect on the one hand, and those of other linguists such as Comrie, Lyons, and Allen, on the other hand, should not however be taken to mean that Smith has nothing new to say about the grammatical category of aspect. On the contrary, she has the following crucially important new comments to make on the nature of aspect both as a general linguistic category and as a language specific category.

First, she notices that the four main types of situation: achievement, accomplishment, activity, and state, should not only be considered in terms of the semantic notions of agency, duration, and dynamicity but also in terms of their endpoint properties, since the meaning of the aspectual categories of perfective and imperfective correlates with endpoint properties of the situation referred to in certain ways. Thus, she notes that achievements and accomplishments are events¹⁶ with NATURAL endpoints, since they have different stages, from beginning to completion, and the beginnings and the endings are intrinsic to them, but activities are events with ARBITRARY endpoints, because they are homogeneous, their stages do not differ, and as such can begin or end arbitrarily at any stage (Smith; 1983: 481).

¹⁶Smith refers to achievements, activities, and accomplishments collectively as EVENTS, since they all involve, unlike states, change of state.

By the same token, she points out that the endpoints of states in contradistinction with the endpoints of events (i.e. of activities, achievements, and of accomplishments) cannot be part of the states themselves, since beginnings and endings involve change of state, and by definition states do not involve change of state.

Second, she remarks that the interpretation or meaning of English Simple Aspect (more generally perfective aspect) varies to some extent with the type of the event sentence involved. "The variation results from the fact that activities do not have natural endpoints, whereas other types of events do" (Smith; 1983: 482). Thus, while activity sentences like *Mary swam in the pond* indicate that the event in question was terminated, accomplishment sentences like *Mary climbed a tree* indicate that the event was completed.

Third, Smith points out that "the statives [stative sentences] with the simple verb form do not have the same aspectual interpretation as non-statives" (1983: 480)¹⁷. To exemplify this Smith compares the interpretation of stative predications with that of non-stative predications in linguistic contexts involving more than one sentence, and in situations that are temporally related. First, she studies the aspectual interpretation of stative and non-stative predications in temporal clauses with *before* and *after* (i.e. with connectives that locate situations successively relative to each other), and points out that while in the temporal clauses with *after* and *before* statives are understood as indicating endpoints of states ("they may be taken to indicate the beginning or end of a state"¹⁸, depending on the sort of situation involved" (Smith; 1983: 485)), event sentences with simple aspect¹⁹ are understood to indicate a situation with both initial

¹⁷Smith's main objective in considering the stative predications in different contexts is to demonstrate that stative predications unlike their event counterparts have flexible aspectual meaning, and as such in contexts requiring an interpretation of successive situations, statives are taken to indicate the beginning or end of a state, but in those requiring continuing situations, they are taken to indicate a continuing state. According to Smith these interpretations can easily be explained, if statives are defined as indicating simply a moment or a series of moments, and their time as neither initial nor final (Smith; 1983: 491).

¹⁸Stative sentences in these contexts indicate endpoints not by linguistic reference, but by inference. I.e. "although statives allow an inceptive interpretation in some contexts, they make no linguistic reference to inceptive" (Smith; 1983: 485).

¹⁹As already noted (cf. § 4.1. above), event sentences in the temporal clauses cannot have progressive aspect, i.e. imperfective aspect (see also Smith; 1983: 485).

and final endpoints. Second, she studies the conjunction of both event sentences and stative sentences with simple aspect, with an assertion of continuation, and remarks that while event sentences with simple aspect cannot felicitously be conjoined with an assertion of continuation, the conjunction of stative sentences with this assertion is acceptable (hence, the ungrammaticality of sentences like **They built a cabin last summer, and they haven't finished yet*, but the grammaticality of sentences such as *Mary lived in London last year, and she may still live there.*). Finally, she considers the aspectual interpretation of both the event sentences and stative sentences with simple aspect in the main clauses of compound sentences with temporal *when* clauses, and demonstrates that "Event sentences with simple aspect [in this context] may be taken to indicate successive or simultaneous situations" (ibid: 486), as in

4.27. John ran for the shelter when he heard the alarm

4.28. Mary stopped walking when John stopped walking

but statives in these sentences either have a durative reading or indicate the beginning of the situation, as in

4.29. John was angry when Mary dropped the brandy snifter.

Sentences like 4.29. above, on the durative interpretation, "indicate that the state has obtained before the event of the *when* clause . . . [but on the inceptive reading] they indicate that the state began simultaneously with or immediately after the event of the *when* clause" (Smith; 1983: 487).

Fourth, Smith quite correctly suggests a unified account of the English progressive aspect as presenting "an interior perspective, from which the endpoints are ignored" (ibid.: 482). In other words, she maintains that "the progressive indicates a moment or interval of an event that is neither initial nor final" . . . [i.e.] the progressive aspect makes linguistic reference to a time that is not an endpoint" (ibid.). Smith's justification for holding this view derives from her observation that progressive sentences in the context of temporal *when* clauses have a durative interpretation, but if the context requires, they can be taken to indicate final endpoints:

an indication which "results from an inference as to what happens just after the time indicated by the progressive" (ibid. : 487), rather than from the linguistic reference by the progressive to final endpoints. Thus, in another understanding of sentences like the following the main-clause event terminates with the advent of when-clause event. In 4.30. a-c such an understanding is possible but in 4.30. d it is the only conceivable one.

- 4.30. a) Mary was laughing when she saw John.
 b) Mary was laughing when she saw the accident.
 c) John was drawing a cat when the bell rang for recession.
 d) Erica was watching television when she fell asleep.
 (examples from Smith; 1983)

Finally, Smith notes that progressive aspect is available only for event sentences. In her point of view this is quite natural; since "the essential notion of a progressive is that it indicates a time that is neither initial nor final" (Smith; 1983: 490), and as such cannot co-occur with states for which such a time is not simply available. Thus, she disagrees with those scholars who maintain that the progressive stative sentences like any other sentences with progressive aspect designate events rather than states, and claims that progressive stative sentences "do talk about stative [rather than dynamic] situations, but . . . they do so in a non-standard way". In other words, she claims that the shift from the simple aspect to the progressive aspect does not change the aspectual character of the situation in question²⁰, hence the following two sentences would be referring to exactly the same situation.

²⁰Smith's analysis of progressive stative sentences presented here, is definitely not accurate. The evidence for this is that in sentences like the following (as Smith herself notes), reference is made not to situations that are homogeneous, stable and unchanging (i.e. to stative situations), but rather to situations that have internal structure consisting of differing stages (i.e. to dynamic situations). "[In these sentences] the stages are located on a continuum of some kind, most often of intensity or frequency. The degree of frequency involved changes from one stage to another" (Smith; 1983: 498). For this reason, they are event sentences and differ crucially from their non-progressive counterparts.

1. a) John is knowing the answer more and more often this semester.
 b) The students are understanding Professor Throckmorton less and less these days.
 c) Mary is resembling her mother more and more.
 d) These examples are gradually seeming less and less unacceptable.
 (Examples except (d) which is from Neil Smith are from Smith herself)

4.31. She liked the play.

4.32. She was liking the play. (Examples from Smith; 1983)

Despite the differences between the aspectual interpretation of the stative sentences and that of event sentences with simple view point, explored under paragraphs (c) to (e) above, Smith postulates that a unified account of Simple viewpoint aspect, which is available equally for stative and event sentences, is possible. Thus, she proposes that "the invariant contribution of [simple] viewpoint aspect is the perspective of a situation as a whole" (1983: 492) and assumes further that "this perspective is understood differently according to situation" (ibid.). In other words, Smith contends that the simple form of the verb in English like the progressive form has an invariant meaning which "does not depend on context and cannot be changed by it" (ibid.: 482).

In sum, Smith's theory of aspect can be seen as an attempt to bridge the existing gap between the analyses of the aspects formulated on the basis of the theory of one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning, and those formulated on the basis of one-to-many correspondence between form and meaning. To do this, she assigns one single invariant meaning to each of the aspectual forms of a given language, and analyses the different interpretations of each aspectual form in terms of the interaction between its meaning and the type of the situation involved: "Interpretation of simple aspect [i.e. the perfective aspect] varies to some extent with the type of situation involved . . . The variation results from the fact that activities do not have natural endpoints, whereas other types of events do" (1983: 482). In other words, she distinguishes two components of sentential aspect: SITUATION ASPECT which involves type of situation, e.g. event or state; and VIEWPOINT ASPECT which involves type of perspective, e.g. perfective or imperfective, and construes the so-called secondary meanings of the perfective and the imperfective aspect as resulting from the interaction between viewpoint aspect and the situation aspect. Derived from Smith's proposal is the idea of the present research that the so-called secondary

meanings of Modern Persian aspectual forms should be considered as resulting from the interaction between the invariant meanings of the aspect markers and the meanings of other categories associated with the verb, i.e. tense and Aktionsart, or from the interaction between the meaning of the verb form as a whole and the meanings of other linguistic elements present in the sentence, e.g. temporal adverbials, the plural subject, etc. This view is further supported by the fact that even Lyons (who maintains that "it would be foolish to suggest that a particular aspect cannot have more than one meaning" (1977: 713) admits that "to a very considerable extent . . . the more specific aspectual meaning that a verb-form has can be seen as the product of the central, or basic, function of its aspect and its character [i.e. its Aktionsart]" (ibid.).

4.6. Comrie's general linguistic theory of aspect.

Comrie's *Aspect* (1976) is not concerned with aspect of any particular language, but rather with aspect "as a part of general linguistic theory" (1976: vii), and as such aims at definitions and aspectual theories which are general enough to account for the aspectual structure of any particular language.

Comrie's analysis is similar to Allen's in that both scholars define aspect as the speaker/writer's way of looking at a given real world situation, and perfective aspect as the presentation of an event as a whole, and is dissimilar to it in that while Allen's account of aspect is generally based on the theory of one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning, Comrie's is based on that of one-to-many correspondence between form and meaning. A brief survey of Comrie's account of the general linguistic category of aspect highlights these similarities and dissimilarities further.

Comrie takes the formulation: "aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (1976: 3) as the general definition of aspect²¹, and defines the perfective and the imperfective aspect respectively as: the presentation

²¹Comrie himself acknowledges that his definition of aspect is based on Holt's definition: "les manieres diverses de concevoir l'ecoulement du proces meme" (Holt; 1943: 6). However, his definition is more general than that of Holt, in that "it does not refer solely to processes, but also, to states"(ibid: 3). (In Comrie's theoretical framework the term situation is a cover term for 'state', 'event' and 'process').

of a situation as a single unanalysable whole, without distinguishing the various separate phases that make up that situation, and as paying essential attention to the internal structure of the situation. The above descriptions may seem to indicate that Comrie's theory of aspect is based on a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning. In practice, this is not however the case. One piece of evidence for this is that Comrie actually speaks of the possibility of a given category having more than one meaning, and argues that where a form has more than one meaning "it is often the case that one of these meanings seems more central, more typical than the others. In such cases, it is usual to speak of this central meaning as the basic meaning and of other meanings as secondary meanings" (1976: 11). In this regard, Comrie's approach to the relation between form and meaning is similar to that of Lyons who maintains that "it would be foolish to suggest that . . . a particular aspect cannot have more than one meaning" (1977: 713)²² .

The other evidence for Comrie's theory of aspect being, unlike that of Allen, based on a one-to-many rather than a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning, comes from his characterisation of the imperfective and the perfective aspect. As already noticed, Comrie characterises the perfective aspect as denoting "a complete situation with beginning, middle, and end rolled into one" (ibid. : 18). However, he also allows for this aspect having other (secondary) meanings as well. Thus, in the framework of Comrie's aspectual theory, the indication of the end of a situation and that of the beginning of a situation are the other possible meanings of the perfective aspect:

"Indicating the end of a situation is at best only one of the possible *meanings* (the emphasis is from the present writer) of a perfective form, certainly not its defining feature" (Comrie; 1976: 19)

"In many languages that have a distinction between perfective and imperfective forms, the perfective forms of some verbs, in particular of

²²Comrie's approach to the relation between grammatical form and meaning is not however exactly identical to that of Lyons; since despite allowing for a given category having two or more meanings --with one of the meanings being more typical more usual than the others-- Comrie does not exclude the possibility that "subsequent work may show that these various meanings [of the grammatical form] are in fact different manifestations of one general meaning" (1976: 11)

some stative verbs, can in fact be used to indicate the beginning of a situation (ingressive meaning)" (ibid.)

Similarly, although Comrie defines the basic function of the imperfective aspect as the indication of "a situation in progress" (ibid.), he allows the imperfective aspect, as its secondary meaning to refer to habitual situations.

Having established that Comrie's theory of aspect as a general linguistic category is based on the theory of one-to-many correspondence between form and meaning, it is time to mention the major contributions of his account to the general linguistic theory of aspect.

One of Comrie's significant contributions to aspect studies is the illustration of the fact that many of traditional definitions of perfective aspect are simply inaccurate. In other words, by drawing upon examples from individual languages where both perfective and imperfective forms are used to refer to the same length of time, e.g. French *il regna* (Past Definite²³) *trente ans* and *il regnait* (Imperfect) *trente ans* 'he reigned for thirty years', he demonstrates that the claim that the perfective forms indicate situations of short duration is unacceptable. Using the same method, he verifies that characterisation of the perfective forms as describing a situation with limited (as opposed to unlimited) duration, or as indicating a punctual or momentary situation, is linguistically unwarranted. Nevertheless, Comrie acknowledges that "while it is incorrect to say that the basic function of the perfective is to represent an event as momentary or punctual" (1976: 17), there is some truth in the view that perfective has the effect of reducing the situation referred to to a single point. An interesting support for this effect of the perfective aspect is the compatibility of certain time adverbials with perfective aspect in Persian regardless of the objective duration of the situation referred to, as in *dær yek cheshm be hæm zæ.d.æn sham.æsh ra xor.d.ø* (pfv.) 'in a split second (lit. in an eye blink), he ate his supper'.

The second advantage of Comrie's account of aspect is that it points out that the perfective forms of some stative verbs, e.g. Spanish *ver* 'see', *conocer* 'know' (i.e. to

²³Comrie (1976) uses initial capital letter to designate language-specific categories.

be acquainted with), *saber* 'know' (for instance, know a fact) indicate the beginning of a situation, i.e. have ingressive meaning. Comrie's analysis of the ingressive meaning of the perfective forms of these verbs is that "such verbs can in general be either stative or ingressive, i.e. can in general refer to the state or to entry into that state" (1976: 20). Now, since entrance into a state unlike being in a state involves change and as such is a dynamic event, Comrie should be here taken to imply that certain verbs can either refer to a stative or to a dynamic situation. However, such a possibility, i.e. reference to a stative or to a dynamic situation should not be interpreted as the characteristic feature of some stative verbs (as Comrie seems to be implying), but rather as the result of the combination of these verbs with imperfective and perfective aspect respectively. Support for this is provided by Persian where the perfective forms of certain verbs particularly verbs of mental activity such as *danes.t.æn* 'know' (for instance, know a fact), *shenax.t.æn* 'know' (i.e. 'be acquainted with') *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand', invariably have a dynamic reading, whereas their imperfective counterparts have stative sense, as the following pairs of sentences illustrate.

4.33. a) foræn fæhm.id.æm che mi.guy.æd.

immediately understand. pt. I what. ipfv. say. he

I immediately understood what he was talking (lit. is talking) about.

b) mi.fæhm.æm che mi.guy.i

ipfv. understand. I what ipfv. say. you

I understand what you are saying.

4.34. a) foræn u ra shenax.t.æm

immediately he o.m. recognize. pt. I

I recognized him immediately

b) u ra xub mi.shenas.æm

he o.m. good ipfv. know. I

I know him (very) well.

4.35. a) foræn danes.t.æm ke bay.æd be.ræv.æm

immediately know. pt. I that must. it. pfv. go.

I immediately knew that I had to go.

b) mi.dan.æm ke bay.æd be.ræv.æm

ipfv. know. I that must. it pfv. go. I

I know that I have to go.

Considering the ingressive sense of the perfective forms of some stative verbs as the characteristic feature of these verbs, rather than as the outcome of the combination of the perfective aspect and such verbs, does not however reduce the significance of Comrie's recognition of the fact that certain verbs in some contexts have stative, and in some others have achievement, (or more generally) dynamic sense. The significance of this recognition becomes even more evident when it is recalled that some scholars like Smith (1983: 483-4) inaccurately maintain that pairs of sentences like 4.36 (a) and (b) below "do talk about the [same] stative situations" (ibid.). (Smith holds the view that the second sentence in these pair of sentences like the first one does talk about a stative situation "but in a non-standard way" (ibid.))²⁴.

4.36. a) Mary hates her little brother.

b) Mary is hating her little brother.

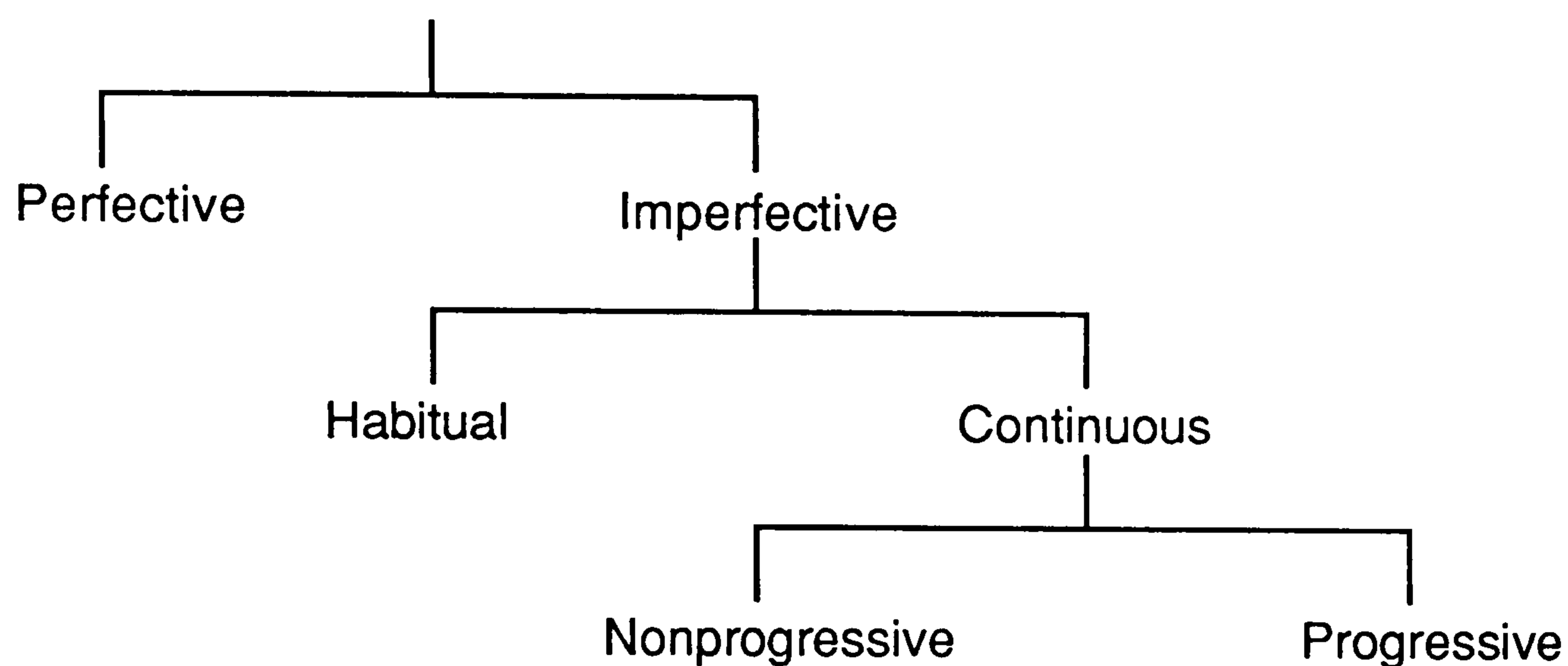
The third strength of Comrie's analysis of aspect is that it does not, unlike Freidrich (1974) identify the progressive aspect with the imperfective aspect. To put it in another way, in Comrie's theoretical framework, despite the fact that in languages with both a progressive and an imperfective aspect, the imperfective aspect does not normally exclude the progressive meaning, the progressive and the imperfective aspect are quite rightly distinguished as two separate categories.

Comrie's comment on the habitual, unlike his observation on progressivity is not so accurate. Comrie contends that habituality like progressivity and imperfectivity

²⁴Ironically, in the final section of the same monograph, i.e. Smith (1983), Smith admits that the situations presented in sentences like 4.36 (b) above, "have internal structure, a succession of stages. The stages are located on a continuum of some kind, most often of intensity or frequency. The degree of frequency involves changes from one stage to another" (ibid.: 498).

is an aspectual category, and as such is either designated by a separate aspectual form, as in English where there is a separate habitual aspect²⁵, though only in the past tense, e.g. *John used to work here*, or by the same form as progressivity, i.e. by imperfective form. This view of Comrie is clearly indicated in his aspectual hierarchy, reproduced below in Table 4.37.

Table 4.37. *Comrie's Classification of Aspectual Opposition*



Brinton (1987) also argues for the aspectual status of the habitual. His reason for this argument is that many languages use the imperfective forms to express habituality (cf. Brinton; 1987: 209). However, he admits that exclusive habitual markers are rare, and as a result languages use either imperfective or perfective forms to indicate the habitual meaning. Unlike Comrie and Brinton, Bache (1982) argues for the Aktionsart status of the habitual. He contends that the opposition semalfactive vs. iterative is an Aktionsart opposition.

As to which of these two theories of habituality is linguistically warranted, the present writer maintains that (at least as far as the Persian language is concerned) the habitual is neither an aspectual nor an Aktionsart category. In other words, he holds the view that habituality, i.e. "the successive occurrence of several instances of the given situation" (Comrie; 1976: 26) is neither indicated by the inherent aspectual

²⁵Brinton (1987) notes that "in English, in fact, all verb forms, the simple form, the progressive, and the perfect, permit habitual readings" (ibid.: 210). Interestingly enough, similarly in Persian, as it will be noted later, the perfective (primarily the perfective of the stative verbs), the imperfective, the progressive, and the perfect permit habitual readings.

meaning of the verb as a lexical item, i.e. by Aktionsart, nor by the semantics of the verb form, i.e. by aspectual form, but rather by other elements of the sentence, particularly by time adverbials. Thus, in the following pair of sentences, while the (a) example (because of the time adverbial *hær.ruz* 'everyday') refers to a habitual situation, the (b) example (by virtue of the time adverbial *færda* 'tomorrow'), with the same verb form, denotes a semelfactive situation, i.e. a situation which takes place once and only once.

- 4.38. a) *æli hær.ruz be mædrese mi.ræv.æd.*
 Ali everyday to school ipfv. go. he.
 Ali goes to school everyday.
- b) *æli færda be mædrese mi.ræv.æd.*
 Ali tomorrow to school goes
 Ali goes to school tomorrow.

This contention is further supported by the fact that in a given language the imperfective is not the only verb form which can be used in the habitual contexts. Thus, in English and in Persian, almost all verb forms: the simple form, the progressive, and the perfect may be used in sentences referring to a habitual event, and in Russian where there are, with a few exception, two forms for each verb, a perfective and an imperfective, "it is possible to use the Perfective with habitual meaning [i.e. in sentences referring to habitual situations] "particularly where the rest of the context indicates habituality" (Comrie; 1976: 37).

The other strength of Comrie's account of aspect which is worth mentioning is the accurate characterisation of the punctual situations, i.e. of the punctual verbs. Comrie notes that the great majority of punctual situations are not punctual at all, but rather situations of very short duration which are conceived of as punctual, and for the same reason could be conceived of as durative, i.e. "as lasting in time, as consisting of several successive phases" (Comrie; 1976: 26) under special circumstances involving modern technology, e.g. slow motion films. This observation is particularly

significant in that it explains the collocation of certain punctual verbs with the imperfective aspect in aspectual languages. Comrie's analysis of aspect has other advantages which lack of sufficient space does not allow to be mentioned.

The above mentioned strengths should not however be taken to mean that Comrie's approach to aspect has no weaknesses. In fact, it may be suggested that his approach has at least two major flaws. First, as already noted, and as it can be worked out from the phrase ". . . the situation is viewed . . . as" in his definition of habituality

"The feature that is common to all habituales . . . is that they describe a situation which is characteristic of an extended period of time, so extended in fact that the situation referred to is viewed not as an incidental property of the moment but, precisely, as a characteristic feature of a whole period" (1976: 27-8)

Comrie describes habituality as an aspectual category; whereas due to what has just been said about the habitual meaning and due to the fact that either a situation is habitual or not, and the speaker is never left with a choice to view a situation once as habitual, and once as non-habitual, it can be claimed that habituality is definitely not an aspectual category. Second, Comrie defines the imperfective aspect as "Paying essential attention to the internal structure of the situation" (ibid. : 16). This characterisation is not, however, very satisfactory, since considering the Persian sentence *u qæza mi.xor.æd* (ipfv) 'he is eating food', it is not clear in what way such an attention is paid to the internal structure of the eating situation (see also Dahl 1985).

Despite these two weaknesses, Comrie's discussion of aspect as a general linguistic category and related theoretical problems remains highly valuable. The present research has particularly benefited from his description of the perfective aspect and his observation that most 'punctual' situations are, strictly speaking, not punctual at all, but rather situations of very short duration which are normally conceived of as punctual.

4.7. Dahl's perspective on aspect

Dahl's analysis of aspect as a metalinguistic category is in one respect

similar to that of Comrie, namely in that it also rejects the idea of a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning, and postulates that a grammatical form has more than one meaning, i.e. a primary meaning and a series of secondary ones. Dahl defines the distinction between the primary and secondary meanings in terms of the notion of 'prototype' or the 'best exemplar' of a concept or category. In fact, he argues for an approach in which some of the meaning components of the prototype is more dominant than others, and the secondary meanings are normally those meaning components of the prototype that are not dominant.

Comrie's and Dahl's treatment of aspect also differ from one another in certain respects. One major difference is that while Comrie considers the notion of 'totality' as crucial to the characterisation of the perfective/imperfective opposition, "Dahl claims that the key feature is 'boundedness'" (Salkie; 1987: 88). and modifies Comrie's definition of the perfective to read as follows:

A PFV²⁶ verb will typically denote a single event, seen as an unanalysed whole, with a well-defined result or end-state, located in the past. More often than not, the event will be punctual, or at least, it will be seen as a single transition from one state to its opposite, the duration of which can be disregarded. (Dahl; 1985: 78)

Dahl's evidence for the claim that the notion of 'totality' is not adequate enough to characterise perfectivity as a general linguistic category derives from his observation that in Russian where the predication denotes an unbounded activity, i.e. where the object is not delimited in any way, "a perfective verb can not be used" (1985: 75), and if it is used it delimits the activity quantitatively, as in

4.39. Vcera posle obeda my tancevali/potancevali

(What did you do yesterday after dinner?) We danced/danced a little.

The present writer, however, disagrees with Dahl as regards the delimiting effect of the perfective aspect and the substitution of the notion 'boundedness' for the notion 'totality' in the description of the cross-linguistic category of perfective. Two reasons could be offered as support for this disagreement. First, according to Dahl's

²⁶Dahl uses upper case denomination, e.g. PERFECTIVE (PFV), for cross-linguistic categories and following Comrie (1976) initial capitalization for language specific categories.

own extensive research, the Slavic, or rather the Russian aspectual system, despite being "often taken as a paradigm for what an aspectual system should look like, is in fact rather idiosyncratic in many ways" (ibid.: 69). Second, the perfective verb forms of Persian, e.g. *ræqs.id.im* 'we danced' in similar contexts do not imply that the activity in question went on for a short or for a long time, but rather simply indicate that it terminated at some time in the past prior to the moment of speech or any other time point established by the context as the reference time point²⁷. In other words, Persian perfective verb forms do not delimit activities quantitatively, but rather denote their termination.

Salkie (1987) criticises Dahl's definition of the perfective aspect on the ground that it is proposed on the basis of the assumption that 'past' is a secondary feature of this aspect. Salkie's major reason for his criticism of Dahl's definition of the perfective aspect is that there might be languages where perfective does not have this feature.

The other difference between Dahl's and Comrie's characterisations of aspect is revealed where Dahl discusses Comrie's description of the imperfective aspect as "paying attention to the internal structure of the situation". Dahl describes Comrie's definition of imperfective aspect as "a rather cryptic formulation which may be understood in various ways" (1985: 76), and asserts that in a typical case of imperfectivity, e.g. example (4.40) below, it is not at all clear in what way it could be said that any attention is paid to the internal structure of the situation involved.

4.40. John was sitting in a chair.

In other words, he maintains that in example (4.40.), reference is in fact made to a part of the sitting process that is neither initial nor final rather than to the whole of it, and that such a reference should not be taken to mean that "the whole process --and a fortiori its internal structure-- is relevant" to the interpretation of the utterance in question.

²⁷It should be noted that, the notion of 'pastness' or more generally 'anteriority' derives from the anteriority morpheme /D/ rather than from the perfective marker, i.e. zero morpheme /ø- /.

Given his justifiable criticism of Comrie's characterisation of the imperfective aspect, one would expect Dahl to offer his own formulation of this category. Nonetheless, this expectation is not met. Dahl nowhere presents his own characterisation of the imperfective aspect. He defines the progressive aspect, however, as involving "what could be labelled an 'on-going activity'" (Dahl; 1985: 91), and since he considers the PROGRESSIVE of those languages with a perfective-imperfective distinction as typical cases of imperfectivity: "In languages with a perfective-imperfective distinction, the prototypical PROG contexts would be imperfective" (ibid. : 92), it might be suggested that according to Dahl the basic meaning of imperfectivity is the indication of an on-going activity.

Dahl also fails to offer any characterisation of his own for the grammatical category of aspect. This may be due either to the fact that he finds Comrie's definition of aspect as different ways of looking at a given situation --which is in turn based on the definition given by Holt (1943: 6)-- as acceptable, or to the fact that the primary objective of his analysis of aspect is to test the hypothesis that the aspectual categories that occur in different languages of the world can be reduced to a small set of cross-linguistic aspectual category types.

In sum, Dahl's analysis of aspect is not very different from those carried out by Allen, Comrie, Friedrich (1974), etc.. Firstly his definition of perfectivity (except for the inclusion of the feature of 'boundedness') is more or less identical to that of Comrie. Secondly, his characterisation of PROG as indicating that the activity denoted by the verb is on-going is not very novel, as it has been offered before by other scholars. Nevertheless, his observation that Comrie's formulation of imperfective aspect is ambiguous is extremely valuable, as it calls for a more acceptable characterisation for the category of imperfective. The other useful information provided by Dahl (1985), which is particularly relevant to the present study, is the corroboration of the fact that the Standard Colloquial Dialect of Modern Persian does have a progressive as well as an imperfective category. Dahl's data on Modern

Persian verb system collected by means of giving TMA (tense, mood, aspect) questionnaires to a limited number of Persian informants (Dahl does not specify the number of informants and their level of education; however, Informants' ability to read and understand English being a major prerequisite to the whole data collecting process, it is safe to assume that they were all well educated), indicate that Modern Persian is one of those languages where progressive aspect occurs. In fact, his inventory of languages with progressive aspect in descending order of statistical correlation between the cross-linguistic and the language particular category of progressive indicates that Persian holds the sixth rank as far as the instantiation of the cross-linguistic category of progressive by the particular-language category of PROG in predicted contexts is concerned.

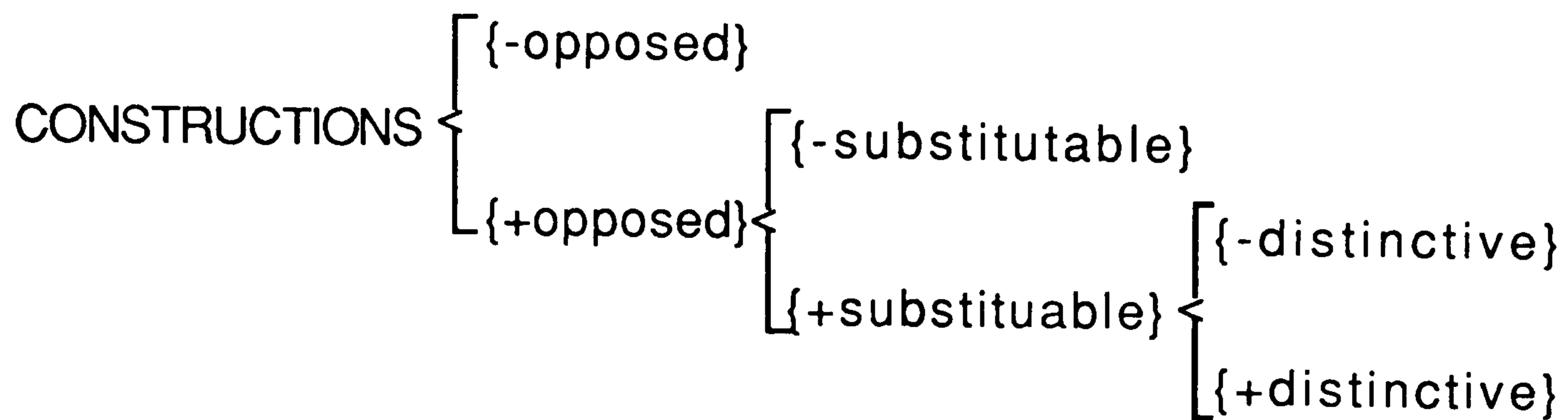
4.8. Bache's theory of aspect

Bache's theory of verbal aspect which is based on the aspect system of Russian is the last aspect theory which is investigated in the present work. Bache's approach to aspect differs significantly from those of Allen, Comrie, Dahl, and Lyons, in that it is based neither on the theory of a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning, nor on the theory of a one-to-many correspondence between form and meaning; but it is to some extent similar to that of Smith, as it is based on "two levels of meanings (of grammatical categories like aspect): a *definition* level and a *function* level" (Bache; 1985: 145).

Bache's general theory of aspect is in practice based on two major assumptions: (a) neither the theory of a one-to-many correspondence between form and meaning nor that of a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning is tenable as far as the aspectual systems of individual languages are concerned, (b) tense, aspect, and Aktionsart despite their strong ties with one another are autonomous categories.

In order to formulate acceptable specifications for the perfective and imperfective aspect, Bache first distinguishes four different types of constructions involving

aspect, corresponding to the terminal nodes of the following three-member feature hierarchy.



The features all relate to a replacement procedure aimed at constructing minimal pairs by systematically changing the aspect of a corpus of Russian sentences. [-opposed] constructions are those where the replacement procedure cannot be carried out by virtue of the fact that a perfective verb simply does not have an imperfective counterpart, for example *ruxnut'* 'to collapse', *zaplakat'* 'to start to weep'. The majority of Russian verbs do form aspectual pairs: they are [+opposed]. [-substitutable] constructions are those where a replacement in aspect is possible, but leads to ungrammaticality. An example is:

4.41. (a) *Kazdyj den' budu pokupat' xleb v etom magazine*

I shall buy (ipfv.) bread in this shop every day.

(b) **Kazdyj den' kuplju xleb v etom magazine*

I shall buy (pfv.) bread in this shop every day.

[+substitutable] constructions, i.e. constructions where a change in aspect does not lead to ungrammaticality are then divided by Bache into [+distinctive] and [-distinctive] constructions. [+distinctive] constructions are constructions where the shift of aspect brings about a shift in tense or Aktionsart, and [-distinctive] constructions are those where such a shift leads to no change of meaning involving tense and Aktionsart. Bache quotes the following Russian sentences as examples of [+distinctive] and [-distinctive] constructions respectively.

4.42. *Marina (sejchas) ubiraet komnatu.*

Marina is (now) tidying (ipfv.) her room.

4.43. Sneg postepenno zametal dorogu.

The snow gradually blocked up (pfv.) the road.

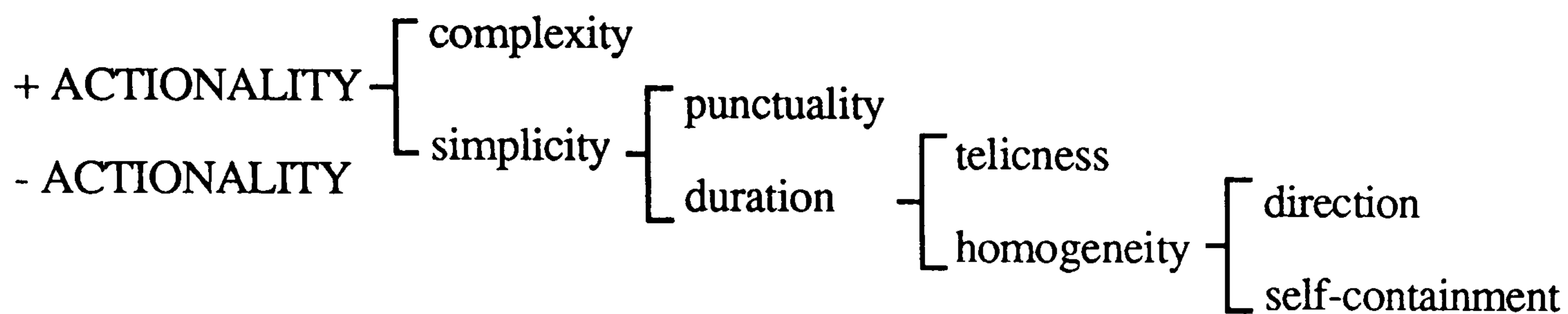
In example 4.42. the substitution of the perfective form *uberet* for the imperfective form *ubiraet*, given that the present perfective in Russian normally has future time reference, brings about a difference in tense. But, the replacement of the perfective form *zametal* by the imperfective form *zamel* in example 4.43. does not result in such a difference in tense or Aktionsart.

Bache proposes that the 'basic meanings' of the aspects should be defined on the basis of the analysis of [-distinctive] constructions, i.e. on the basis of constructions where the perfective-imperfective opposition appears in its purest. Bache calls the 'basic meanings' of the aspects resulted from the study of [-distinctive] constructions, the 'definition level of meaning, and their derived meanings resulted from their categorial interplay, i.e. their interaction, with the members of tense and Aktionsart categories instantiated in the other three types of constructions, the 'function level of meaning'. Salkie (1987) is really impressed by the way Bache approaches the question of whether or not the aspectual categories are monosemantic: "this is an elegant way of approaching the problem of whether the aspects are monosemantic or not" (ibid.: 132).

Now, Bache's analysis is definitely contingent on satisfactory characterisation of the general linguistic categories of tense, aspect, and Aktionsart. Bache calls the semantic values of these three categories temporality, aspectuality, and actionality respectively. He defines temporality as "the chronological location of a situation referred to relative to the time context recognized as "the present" at the moment of communication" (Bache; 1985: 102), actionality as "the procedural characteristics of a situation referred to" (ibid. : 109), and finally aspectuality as the "situational focus with which situations are represented" (ibid.: 145).

Bache's definitions of actionality and aspectuality clearly indicate that he holds the view that aspect and Aktionsart are two separate categories. Further evidence for

this is his more specific characterisation of actionality as involving "the organisation of the phases making up the situation, [namely] the beginning, the middle, the end, and subsituations of another more comprehensive situation" (ibid.: 109). This characterization gives rise to six types of situations, corresponding to the terminal nodes of the following five-member feature hierarchy.



Bache applies the features present in the above feature hierarchy equally to verbal constructions and to situations denoted by them. A verbal construction is assigned the feature [+actional] if its referent is 'situationally tangible', i.e. if it can be conceived of as something happening or taking place, otherwise it is [-actional]. The distinction between [+actional] and [-actional] situations corresponds to Comrie's between dynamic and stative situations. Bache considers [-actional] situations (alternatively stative situations) simply as outside the category of Aktionsart altogether.

Moving down the feature hierarchy, a verbal construction is marked as *complex* if it refers to a situation comprising of a specific and limited number of subsituations (e.g. *Zelyonin knocked twice and without waiting for an invitation, walked in*), or expresses more than just a single occurrence of an act, activity, event or process (e.g. *u hær.ruz be pedær.æsh yek name mi.nevesh.t.ø* 'He wrote a letter to his father everyday'), but is marked as *simple* if it expresses a single occurrence of a situation.

Simple constructions divide into *punctual*, "without internal phasal structure"²⁸ (ibid.: 111) and *durative*, "conceived of as having extension in time". The latter

²⁸Bache uses the term 'phase' in the same sense as used in Comrie (1976) and in Lyons (1977).

subdivide into *telic* and *homogeneous* constructions. *Telic* constructions denote situations whose terminal phases are conceived of as more important than the other phases, and *homogeneous* constructions denote situations terminal phases of which are not highlighted. *Homogeneous* constructions branch into *Directed* which designate situations tending towards "a critical point or goal outside the referential scope of the construction" (ibid. : 113), and *self-contained* which refer to situations where there is no such critical point. Bache gives the following two Russian sentences as examples of *directed* and *self-contained* situations respectively.

4.45. Oni ne ugovorili ee ujtj s nimi, xotja *ugovarivali*.

They didn't succeed in persuading her to go away with them, although they *spent a long time trying to* .

4.46. Vchera on dolgo *chital*.

Yesterday he read for a long time.

Bache's discussion of actionality, i.e. his category of Aktionsart has been described here in some detail for two reasons. Firstly, because it has gained some credit; Salkie (1987) admires it and thinks of it as "an enormous advance on previous work" (ibid.: 177). Secondly, because the present writer appears to have noticed some major defects in the arguments related to it. These defects will be pointed out after Bache's characterisations of the 'basic meanings' of the perfective and imperfective aspect have been reviewed.

As it may be recalled, Bache proposes to describe aspects primarily on the basis of the study of [-distinctive] constructions where the change of aspect does not result in a difference in tense and/or Aktionsart. Thus, he investigates the shift of meaning caused by the shift of aspect in sentences like 4.42. above and concludes that while the basic meaning of the perfective aspect is "focus on the situation as a unified entity" (ibid.: 126), that of the imperfective aspect is "focus on the situation as an internally complex entity" (ibid.). More specifically, Bache defines perfectivity as "focus on the boundaries of the situation without explicit reference to the progression of the

situation" (ibid.: 128), and imperfectivity as "focus on the progression of the situation" (ibid.)-- "that is focus on the middle of the situation" (Salkie; 1987: 134).

Having established the basic meanings of the perfective and the imperfective aspect, which are not drastically different from the basic meanings proposed by Comrie (1976), Bache turns his attention to meanings derived from the categorial interplay between aspect, tense, and Aktionsart, i.e. to functional level of meaning, where derived aspectual meanings are defined on the basis of the other three types of constructions ([-opposed], [-substitutable], and [+distinctive]). First, he proposes a number of formulae to account for the cases where a feature of tense or Aktionsart is incompatible with one of the two aspects, as in Russian where present time meaning -- what Bache calls [+simultaneous] temporality-- is incompatible with perfectivity, and as such determines [-perfective] aspect. Then, he gives the following formulae (where 'x \rightarrow y' is to be read as 'if x is chosen then y must be chosen too) to account for the interaction between Aktionsart and aspect.

4.47. (a) - ACTIONALITY \rightarrow - ASPECTUALITY

(b) + complexity \rightarrow imperfectivity

(c) + punctuality \rightarrow perfectivity

(d) + telicness \rightarrow perfectivity

(e) + direction \rightarrow imperfectivity

(f) - direction \rightarrow perfectivity or imperfectivity

The first formula asserts that states --i.e. the situations marked as [-actionality] in Bache's aspectual framework-- are naturally presented without any "situational focus", so they select the unmarked member of the aspectual opposition perfective-imperfective, which could be the perfective or the imperfective depending on which of the two aspects is the unmarked member in the specific language under investigation. Formula (4.47. b to e) indicate that [+punctual] situations which have no internal structure, and [+telic] situations where emphasis is on the terminal phase, normally select the perfective aspect, but [+directed] situations as well as [+complex]

ones usually go with the imperfective aspect. Finally, formula (4.47. f) refers to the fact that [-directed] situations may select either of the two aspects.

Bache also looks at the interaction of aspect with tense and Aktionsart in [+distinctive] and [-substitutable] constructions. This completes his metalinguistic characterisation of aspect. The most important statements he makes in this respect are as follows: (a) If a perfective verb form in a [+telic] construction is replaced by its imperfective counterpart, the construction becomes either [+complex] or [+directed]. (b) A [+punctual] construction changes in the same way. (c) A [+directed] or [+complex] construction with the imperfective form becomes either [+telic] or [+punctual] if the perfective verb form is substituted.

Bache's general linguistic theory of aspect, as already pointed out, like the other theories surveyed in the present work, has some weaknesses. The first flaw is that the metalinguistic categories and relations are proposed "on the basis of Russian" (Bache; 1985: 1) which is, despite being generally considered as the aspect language par excellence, rather idiosyncratic in many ways (cf. Dahl; 1985: 69).

The second flaw is that the schematic representation of the interactions between aspect, tense, and Aktionsart (formulas like 4.47. a to f) are considered as identical to the secondary meanings or uses of the perfective and the imperfective aspect ("my approach thus involves *two* levels of aspectual meanings: a *definition* level and a *function* level (where derived aspectual meanings are defined . . . ; i.e. where the intercategoryal relations of the basic meanings are established" (ibid. : 125)). This raises the question why these interactions are considered as the function level of meaning or as the derived meanings of the aspect categories and not for instance as the derived meanings of the other verbal categories, e.g. past tense, non-past tense, punctuality, etc.

The third shortcoming is that Bache does not discuss the ingressive meaning which some scholars, e.g. Comrie (1976) describe as the secondary meaning of the perfective aspect.

The last defect which should be mentioned is that in the five-member feature hierarchy features which characterise the inherent aspectual meaning, i.e. Aktionsart of the lexical verbs and the different types of situations are lumped together with features which solely characterise situations, under the same category called 'Aktionsart' or 'actionality'. Thus, while depending on their inherent aspectual meaning, i.e. their Aktionsart, lexical verbs may be categorised into 'punctual', 'durative', 'telic' and 'atelic' verbs, not even a single lexical verb can be classified as 'complex' or 'simple'. Since, as already noted, it is the time adverbials or extralinguistic situational context which determine whether a single occurrence of an event or the successive occurrence of several instances of it is at issue. The problem which this shortcoming gives rise to is that it is not clear whether Bache's feature hierarchy of actionality is a representation of different types of situations or of different classes of lexical verbs.

The above mentioned shortcomings in Bache's theory of aspect should not however prevent the reader from appreciating its two major achievements. First, Bache specifies that the habitual is not an aspect category, and for that matter it would be wrong to postulate that a given situation could be viewed either as habitual ("as characteristic of an extended time", to use Comrie's description of habituality) or as non-habitual. Second, Bache proposes that the meanings characterised as the secondary meanings of the aspects should be considered as the outcome of the interactions of these categories with the members of the other two verbal categories, namely tense and Aktionsart.

4.9. Summary and evaluation

The Aspect theories reviewed in sections 4.2. to 4.8. of the present chapter all define aspect as the speaker/writer's way of looking at a given situation, the perfective as the view of the situation as a single 'complete' (alternatively 'unanalysed', or 'unified') whole or entity, and the imperfective as the focus on the middle 'phase(s)' (alternatively 'part(s)') of a situation. In spite of that, depending on

their analysis of the relationship between aspectual forms and semantic aspectual oppositions, they may be classified into three major groups. Group 1 comprises those accounts of aspect which are based on a one-to-one correspondence between aspectual markers and aspectual meanings. Allen's analysis of (English) aspect belongs to this group. Group 2 consists of aspectual analyses which postulate that aspectual forms have more than one meaning, of which one is more central, more typical than the others. Within the frame work of these approaches, the more central meaning is often called the basic or primary meaning and others are called secondary meanings. Comrie's and Lyons's theory of aspect fit into this group. Finally, group 3 contains the analyses which take as their basis the assumption that what are traditionally called the secondary meanings of the perfective and imperfective aspects are in fact characterisable as the interactions between these aspects and other categories generally associated with the verb, i.e. tense and Aktionsart. In other words, they assume two levels of meaning: a definition level and a function level. Smith's and Bache's formulation of aspectual meaning belong to this group. The association of these scholars' aspect theories with the third group is evident in the following quotations. (Quotations also indicate a wide range of similarity between the two approaches).

"The proposed analysis depends on the interaction between the two types of aspect [SITUATION ASPECT and VIEWPOINT ASPECT] distinguished in this paper. Viewpoint is interpreted according to the relevant properties of situation types" (Smith; 1983: 492).

"My approach thus involves *two* levels of aspectual meanings: a *definition* level (where the basic meanings of aspect and its members are defined on the basis of a restricted area of my replacement system) and a *function* level (where derived aspectual meanings are defined on the basis of the other areas of my replacement system; i.e. where the intercategoryal relations of the basic meanings are established)" (Bache; 1985: 125).

The present study's stand on the relation between aspectual forms and semantic aspectual oppositions in Modern Persian is to some extent similar to those of Bache and Smith. The common thing between the method of analysis adopted in the present research and the ones taken by Smith and Bache is the attempt to interpret the meanings ascribed to aspects by other scholars as their secondary meanings in terms

of other linguistic parameters, e.g. the interactions between categories generally associated with verbs. But the difference is that while within the theoretical frameworks of Bache and Smith these so-called secondary meanings of aspects are assigned to the interactions between tense, aspect, and Aktionsart categories, within the theoretical framework of the present study, these secondary meanings are not only assigned to the categorial interplay between tense, aspect, and Aktionsart (particularly between aspect and Aktionsart) but also to other linguistic elements present in the sentence, especially to time adverbials and verbal arguments (subject and object(s)). To give an example, while in aspect theories like that of Comrie the habitual meaning is construed as the secondary meaning of one of the aspectual forms (depending on the language under investigation), in the present study this is taken as the meaning deriving from the time adverbial present in the sentence (or from extralinguistic factors beyond the meaning of the aspectual markers), and as such is not considered as bearing on the meaning of the aspectual markers. In other words, the present writer hypothesizes that in sentences like the following, the imperfective form of the verb invariably focuses on the continuation of the situation referred to, and more than one occurrence of the situation as opposed to its single occurrence obtains from the temporal adverbial and is immaterial to the meaning of the imperfective marker.

4.48. æli hæ.ruz be mædrese mi.ræv.æd.

Ali every. day to school ipfv. go. he

Ali goes to school every day.

4.49. hæ.r sal anja mi.ræf.t.æm. (Lambton; 1960: 147)

every year there ipfv. go. pt. I

Every year I went there.

The comparison of the meaning theory of the present study with that of Smith and Bache practically ends the review of the general linguistic literature on aspect whose chief objective was to provide the theoretical background prerequisite to the

study of the aspect subsystem of Modern Persian. Having established the theoretical background essential to the study of Modern Persian aspects, the rest of the present chapter may now embark on the characterisation of the invariant meanings of Modern Persian aspectual forms and on the discussion of the related theoretical problems.

4.10. Stative/dynamic verb opposition in Modern Persian

4.10.1 *Stative verbs*

Given the interactions between aspect and Aktionsart, i.e. between aspect and inherent meaning of verbs, it is necessary to establish, prior to the discussion of the semantics of Modern Persian aspectual markers, the criteria that determine the classification of lexical verbs into types of verbs.

Although the characterisation of stative verbs as referring to situations which are stable and homogeneous, and as such do not involve change and lack internal structure, seems at first glance sufficient to determine whether a given verb is stative or not, sometimes, as Dowty (1979) emphasises, one may not be able to decide the typology of the verb present in the sentence under investigation, i.e. to decide just what sort of situation obtains. This explains why scholars have also studied syntactic properties which would normally distinguish stative verbs from non-stative verbs, i.e. from dynamic verbs. The following syntactic properties are frequently used for the purpose of deciding whether a given English verb is stative or non-stative.

I- Stative verbs do not normally occur in the progressive form, hence the unacceptability of (4.50) versus the acceptability of (4.51) and (4.52)²⁹.

4.50. *John is knowing the answer.

4.51. John is running

4.52. John is building a house.

II- "Only non-statives occur as complements of *force* and *persuade*" (Dowty; 1972: 21).

4.53. *John forced Harry to know the answer.

²⁹Examples 4.51 to 4.60 are from Dowty (1972: 21)

4.54. John persuaded Harry to build a house.

III- "Only non-statives can occur as imperatives" (ibid.).

4.55. *Know the answer

4.56. Run.

IV- "Only non-statives co-occur with the adverbs *deliberately, carefully* " (ibid.).

4.57. *John deliberately knew the answer.

4.58. John ran carefully.

V- "Only non-statives appear in pseudo-cleft constructions" (ibid.)³⁰.

4.59. *What John did was know the answer.

4.60. What John did was run.

These tests collectively distinguish the following Persian verbs as statives:

a) VERBS OF BODILY SENSATION: *dærd kær.d.æn*³¹ 'ache', as in *del.æm dar.e dærd mi.kon.e* 'my stomach aches' (lit. is aching), *ehsas kær.d.æn* 'feel', as in *dar.æm ehsas.e qæribi mi.kon.æm* 'I feel like a stranger' (lit. I am feeling like a stranger), *xar.id.æn* 'itch', as in *sær.æm mi.xar.æd* 'my head itches' (lit. is itching), etc.

b) VERBS OF INNER PERCEPTION AND COGNITION: *nefræt dash.t.æn* 'abhor' (lit. 'hate have'), *sotu.d.æn* 'adore', *mote'æjeb kær.d.æn* 'astonish', *arezu kær.d.æn* 'desire', *e'teqad/bavær dash.t.æn* 'believe' *shæk kær.d.æn* 'doubt', *ehsas kær.d.æn* 'feel', *bæxsh.id.æn* 'forgive', *hæds zæ.d.æn* 'guess', *shæn.id.æn* 'hear', *tæsævvor kær.d.æn* 'imagine', *mote'æsser kær.d.æn* 'impress', *qæsd*

³⁰ Quirk et al. (1972) offer a further test for determining whether a verb is stative or non-stative, namely *for . . . sake* construction. Quirk et al. (ibid. : 94) note that while there is a restriction on the collocation of this construction with stative verbs, their co-occurrence with non-stative verbs is quite felicitous:

(a) I learned the language for my fiancée's sake.

(b) *I knew the language for my fiancée's sake.

³¹ The verb constructions consisting of a preverb and *kær.d.æn* 'do, make' given that *kær.d.æn* is a dynamic verb, can occur in progressive form, even where the situation designated by the verb construction is a stative one. This further supports the fact the so-called compound verbs of Modern Persian syntactically behave like any other object-verb constructions, and as such should not be considered as one syntactic unit.

dash.t.æn 'intend' (lit. intention have), *danes.t.æn* 'know', *dust dash.t.æn* 'like' (lit. 'hold dear'), *asheq bu.d.æn* 'love' (lit. 'lover be'), *mænzur dash.t.æn* 'mean', *æhæmiat da.d.æn* 'mind', *dærk kær.d.æn* 'perceive', *xoshhal kær.d.æn* 'please', *tærjih da.d.æn* 'prefer', *razi kær.d.æn* 'satisfy', *di.d.æn* 'see', *bu da.d.æn* 'smell' (lit. smell give), *færz kær.d.æn* 'suppose', *mæze da.d.æn* 'taste', *fekr kær.d.æn* 'think', *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand' *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish', etc.

c) RELATIONAL VERBS: *shamel sho.d.æn* 'apply to (everyone)', *mærbut sho.d.æn* 'concern', *moteshækkel bu.d.æn æz* 'consist of' (lit. be consisted of), *havy bu.d.æn* 'contain', *ærz.id.æn* 'cost', *bæstegi dash.t.æn be* 'depend on', *sezavar bu.d.æn* 'deserve' *mosavi/bærabær bu.d.æn* 'equal' (lit. 'be equal'), *dash.t.æn* 'have', *kæm(bu.d.) dash.t.æn* 'lack', *mohem bu.d.æn* 'matter', *ehtiaj dash.t.æn* 'need', *be.deh.kar bu.d.æn* 'owe', *malek bu.d.æn* 'own, possess' (lit. be owner), (*mojærræd*) *man.d.æn* 'remain (a bachelor)', *niyaz dash.t.æn* 'require', *shebahæt dash.t.æn/shæbih bu.d.æn* 'resemble' *benæzær res.id.æn* 'seem', *kafi bu.d.æn* 'suffice', *mayel bu.d.æn* 'tend', etc.

The term 'collectively' is here intended to imply that none of the proposed tests on its own singles out all the Persian verbs listed above as statives. In other words, each test identifies only a subgroup of the above verbs as statives. The next point to consider in relation to the application of Dowty's tests to Persian verbs is that the results of these tests do not complement one another, but rather certain verbs distinguished by one test as statives are identified as non-statives by other tests. For example while test I differentiates *bu.d.æn* 'be' (and all predications involving this verb), *dash.t.æn* 'have' (and all verbal constructions consisting of this verb, in the sense of possession rather than causality, and a preverb), and *danes.t.æn* 'know' as stative; by virtue of the fact that they do not have a progressive form, hence the ungrammaticality of **dar.æd æhmæq mi.bash.æd* 'he is being silly', **dar.æd u ra dust mi.dar.æd* 'he is liking him', **dar.æd passox ra mi.dan.æd* '*he is knowing the answer', etc. test II, i.e. imperative test, distinguishes *bu.d.æn* (and predications

consisting of *bu.d.æn* and adjectives referring on occasion to transitory conditions of behaviour or activity such as *aqel* 'wise', *movazeb* 'careful, watchful/vigilant', etc.), *danes.t.æn* 'know', *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand' and many other verbs as non-statives, hence the grammaticality of sentences like *aqel bash* 'be wise', *be.dan* 'beware' (lit. *know), *be.fæhm* 'understand', etc. Similarly, the results of the imperative test is inconsistent with that of *force* and *persuade* test. Thus, while the former test introduces *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand', *dærk kær.d.æn* 'perceive', *di.d.æn* 'see', *shæn.id.æn* 'hear' and some other verbs as dynamic, since they have imperative forms, the latter represents them as stative, since they cannot occur as complements of *mæjbur kær.d.æn* 'force' or *motæqa'ed kær.d.æn* 'persuade' (cf. unacceptability of sentences like **mæjbur.æsh kær.d.æm be.fæhm.æd* (pfv.) '*I persuaded him to understand').

The inconsistency just noted in the results of the application of Dowty's tests to Persian verbs supports the position taken in the present study namely, the best criteria for the distinction of the stative verbs are the semantic criteria. Given the semantic criteria, the compatibility of the majority of the stative verbs with the progressive aspect would be accounted for by the fact that the stative verbs can have both stative and dynamic uses.

In dynamic constructions, stative verbs do not denote situations which simply exist and do not involve the notion of change, but rather situational processes which "vary with respect to intensity and subtlety" (Bache; 1985: 120). In other words, sentences like *Mary is resembling her mother more and more* does not designate the same situation as its non-progressive counterpart: *Mary resembles her mother* ; but rather a dynamic situation which has internal structure and as such consists of a succession of stages which are located on a continuum of intensity. To put it in another way, progressive sentences like the above differ from their non-progressive counterparts in that while their non-progressive counterparts assert that a stative situation with a certain level of intensity obtains, they indicate that the situation

involved is progressing towards a certain degree or level of intensity but has not reached it yet, and as such involve change from one stage to another. One type of evidence for the semantic difference between the members of pairs of sentences like *Mary is resembling her mother more and more* and *Mary resembles her mother*, derives from the fact that they do not translate identically in Persian but rather each sentence of the pairs has its own translation:

- 4.61. mary dar.æd bish.tær væ bish.tær shæbih.e
 Mary prog. more and more similar.of
 madær.æsh mi.shæv.æd.
 mother.her ipfv. become. she
 Mary is resembling her mother more and more.
 (lit. is getting more and more like her mother).

- 4.62. mary shæbih.e madær.æsh æst.
 Mary similar.of mother.her is
 Mary resembles (looks like) her mother.

In stative sentences, as opposed to stative progressive sentences which represent the combination of a stative verb and the progressive marker³², stative verbs simply imply that a homogeneous situation (i.e. a situation whose different phases do not differ from one another and as such does not involve change) obtains at a certain time point or period, as in *æli mæryæm ra dust dar.æd* 'Ali likes Maryam'.

The last point to note about the Persian stative verbs is that, contrary to what Comrie (1976) calls "the naturalness of the combination of stativity and imperfectivity" (ibid.: 51), the Persian stative verbs *bu.d.æn* 'be', and *dash.t.æn* 'have' do not generally combine with the imperfective marker *mi-*, even where they have imperfective meaning, e.g. *dash.t.æn* 'have'.

³²The phrase 'which represent the combination of a stative verb and the progressive marker' is meant to express the present writer's view that the notion of 'progress towards a certain degree of intensity or subtlety' which involve changes from one stage to another derive from the presence of the progressive marker rather than from the inherent semantic feature of the given stative verb.

Persian stative verbs in general differ from the stative verbs of other languages, e.g. Russian, as far as their syntactic features are concerned. Bache (1985), for instance, notes that some Russian stative verbs only have imperfective forms. He calls these the unpaired imperfective verb forms. In Persian, on the other hand, all stative verbs with the exception of the primary stative verbs *bu.d.æn* 'be' and *dash.t.æn* 'have' have, at least in the past tense where there is an opposition between the perfective and the imperfective, both the perfective and the imperfective forms.

The point noted in the previous paragraph about the Persian stative verbs is a further support for the claim that the components of the so-called compound verbs of Persian are both syntactically and semantically independent linguistic items. As it may be recalled, some grammarians of Persian, particularly traditional grammarians, consider verbal constructions such as *bavær dash.t.æn* 'believe' (lit. 'belief have'), *qæsd dash.t.æn* 'intend' (lit. 'intention have'), *tærjih da.d.æn* 'prefer' (lit. 'preference give'), *dærk kær.d.æn* 'perceive' (lit. 'perception make'), *ehsas kær.d.æn* 'feel' (lit. 'felt make'), etc. as compound verbs, i.e. as syntactico-semantic units. One type of evidence against this stand is that these verbal constructions regardless of the stative situation they denote have both perfective and imperfective forms or have only perfective forms if and only if their verbal elements do so (stative verbs are suggested by Comrie and Bache to have only imperfective forms rather than perfective forms). Thus, while all the verbal phrases whose verbal component is *dash.t.æn* in the sense of possession only have perfective forms, all verbal phrases whose verbal components as simple verbs have imperfective as well as perfective forms possess both perfective and imperfective forms regardless of the type of situation denoted.

4.10.2 *Dynamic verbs*

Having established that stative verbs are best recognised on the basis of their semantic rather than their syntactic features, it is time to discuss different subgroups of dynamic verbs depending on the time schemata they presuppose.

Dynamic verbs, i.e. verbs which designate situations that happen, or occur, or take place, are generally classified on the basis of their Aktionsarten³³ into punctual and durational verbs.

Punctual verbs are by definition verbs which refer to situations that do not last in time, i.e. to situations that take place momentarily, have no duration, not even duration of a very short period, and as a consequence have no internal structure (cf. Comrie; 1976: 42). The question which would then arise is whether or not there exist situations which are, strictly speaking, punctual. In an interesting section on punctuality, Comrie (1976: 42-43) concludes that the great majority of punctual situations are not punctual at all, but rather situations of very short duration, which are normally conceived of as punctual (e.g. *ætse kær.d.æn* 'sneeze', *sorfe kær.d.æn* 'cough', *dær zæ.d.æn* 'knock', etc., referring to a single sneeze, cough, knock, etc. rather than a series of sneeze, cough, knock etc.); and as such can be conceived of as durative whenever there is a need for such a conception, as under special circumstances involving modern technology, e.g. slow motion films. Given this, it would be more appropriate to characterise punctual verbs as referring to situations conceived of as punctual; in other words, it would be more appropriate to consider Aktionsart as basically a psychological or subjective rather than as an objective category (see also Bache; 1982: 67).

Durational verbs are those which refer to situations that "last for a certain period of time" (Comrie; 1976: 41). Durational verbs divide into telic and atelic verbs³⁴. A telic (or bounded) verb expresses "an action tending towards a goal" (Garey; 1957: 106), and an atelic (or unbounded) verb denotes an action which "does not have to

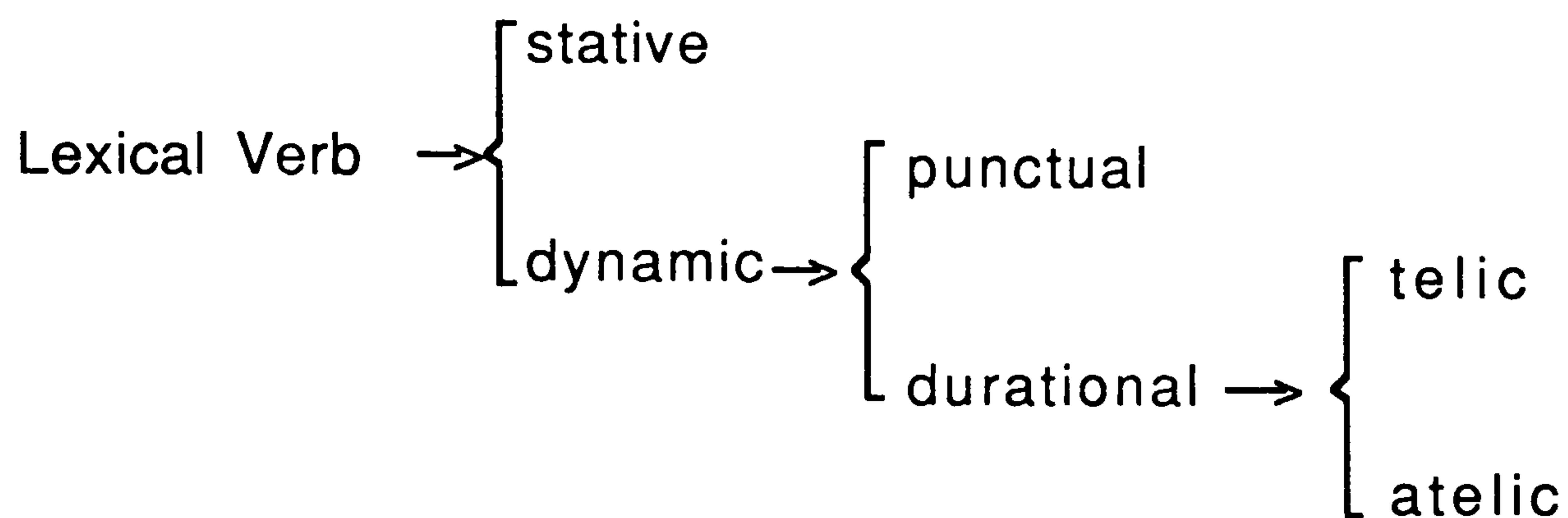
³³The term 'Aktionsart' is assigned in this study a sense different from the one assigned to it in Bache (1985). Therefore, whereas Bache defines 'Aktionsart' as "the procedural characteristics of a situation referred to" (ibid.: 109), the present writer following Dahl (1985) defines it as the "inherent aspectual meaning of verbs" (ibid.: 9), i.e. as that part of the meaning of the verbs whereby they denote one kind of situation rather than another. In other words, in the present work, Aktionsart is characterised as concerning directly the lexical difference between for instance *run* and *swim*, rather than "difference in type of action or situation" (Bache; 1985: 11).

³⁴The terms 'telic' and 'atelic' correspond respectively to the terms 'accomplishment' and 'activity', used by Vendler (1967: 102).

wait for a goal for its realization, but is realized as soon as it begins" (ibid.). To put it in another way, a telic verb is a verb which "has built into it a terminal point" (Comrie; 1976: 44), and an atelic verb is a verb which names a situation which does not have a well-defined result or end-state, and "can be protracted indefinitely or broken off at any point" (ibid.). Kenny (1963) observes that the telic nature of a verb can often be tested in the following manner: if \emptyset is a telic verb "A is (now) \emptyset ing" implies that "A has not (yet) \emptyset ed, but if \emptyset is an atelic verb, then "A is (now) \emptyset ing entails "A has \emptyset ed".

The verb categories discussed in this section may give rise to the following interrelated binary oppositions of Aktionsart.

4.63.



The major difference between the Aktionsarten hierarchy presented here and the one proposed in Bache (1985) (cf. § 4.8.) is that while the features used in this hierarchy can all be assigned either to verbs as lexical items, or to verbal phrases, or to the denotata of these, i.e. situations, only some of the features used in Bache's Aktionsarten hierarchy can be assigned to verbs as lexical items. For instance, the features: complexity and simplicity in Bache's hierarchy (corresponding to iterativity and semalfactive) can be used as features of the situations designated, but cannot be assigned to verbs as such. The reason is that, as already pointed out, there is nothing in the semantics of the verb as a lexical item whereby it denotes a semalfactive or an iterative situation. Rather, it is the other elements present in the sentence, e.g. time adverbial, plural subject, plural direct or indirect object, which determine the complexity or iterativity of the situation as opposed to its simplicity. Thus, in pairs of

sentences like 4.64. (a) and (b) below, the first sentence refers to a single action of writing but the second to its indefinite repetition over a period of time extending from a time point in the past to the moment of speech and probably beyond it³⁵, only because in the second sentence but not in the first one there exists the time adverbial *hær.ruz* 'everyday'. Similarly, (a) and (b) sentences in 4.65. involve respectively a single and a limited number of crossing events by virtue of the fact that (a) has a singular subject but (b) has a plural one. (4.65.(a) can also involve a limited number of crossing events by singular subject referent *særbaz* 'soldier' provided that an adverbial specifying the number of crossing events, e.g. *se bar* 'three times' is added to the sentence, or situational contextual features specify that more than one crossing event are involved).

4.64. (a) *æli di.ruz be pedær.æsh yek name mi.nevesh.t.ø.*

Ali yesterday to father. his one letter ipfv. write. pt. he

Ali was writing a letter to his father yesterday.

4.64. (b) *æli hær.ruz be pedær.æsh yek name mi.nevesh.t.ø.*

Ali every. day to father. his one letter ipfv. write. pt. he.

Ali wrote a letter to his father everyday.

4.65. (a) *særbaz æz ærz.e xiaban obur kær.d.ø.*

soldier from width.of road passage made

The soldier crossed the road.

4.65. (b) *særbaz.an æz ærz.e. xiaban obur kær.d.ænd.*

The soldiers from width.of road passage made.

The soldiers crossed the road.

The above examples clearly indicate that Bache's five-member feature hierarchy is primarily a representation of types of situations, whereas the three-member feature hierarchy proposed here is primarily concerned with types of lexical verbs. This

³⁵For an interesting discussion of the past habitual situations and the illustration of the fact that their continuation up to and beyond the moment of speech is not incompatible with the meaning of habitual see Comrie (1976).

difference arises basically from the difference in the characterisation of the category of 'Aktionsart'. It may be recalled that Aktionsart is interpreted in the present study as involving the inherent aspectual meaning of verb lexemes, while in Bache (1985) as concerning "the phasal constituency of an action or situation" (ibid.: 11).

Linguistic items such as subject, object, time adverbial, etc. not only determine the iterative or semelfactive nature of the given situation, but also whether it is telic or atelic. Thus, Comrie (1976) notes that the question as to whether a telic verb describes a telic situation or not, depends on the nature of its arguments (subject and objects). Therefore, "although *John is singing* describes an atelic situation, the sentence *John is singing a song* describes a telic situation, since this situation has a well-defined terminal point, namely when John comes to the end of the song in question" (Comrie; 1976: 45).

This observation once again raises the question whether one should speak of types or categories of verb predications (or even of sentences) instead of types of verbs, or not. The view held in the present study is that despite Comrie's observation and similar observations made by other linguists one still needs to speak of types of verbs as well as types of verb predications and of situations, particularly where one is solely concerned with verbs as lexical items rather than with verb predications or sentences.

4.10.3 *Stative compound verbs*

The last point to be discussed in relation to the classification of verbs in Modern Persian pertains to the so-called 'compound verbs' listed as stative verbs. These verbal constructions may be divided into two groups depending on whether their verbal elements as simple verbs are dynamic e.g. *ehsas kær.d.æn* 'feel' (lit. feeling make), *tæ'sir kær.d.æn* 'affect' (lit. affect make). *hæds zæ.d.æn* 'guess' (lit. guess hit), etc.. or stative, e.g. *arezu dash.t.æn* 'desire' (lit. desire have), *bavær dash.t.æn* 'believe' (lit. belief have), *asheq bu.d.æn* 'love' (lit. lover be), *be.deh.kar bu.d.æn* 'owe' (lit. indebted be), etc. Those with dynamic verbal component behave,

irrespective of the nature of the situation in question, like dynamic verbs, (for instance they normally collocate with the progressive form), and those with stative verbal component like stative verbs (they do not for instance occur in progressive form). This, as already noted, provides further support for the claim that the verb phrases traditionally considered as compound verbs, should be treated as ordinary verb-object combinations.

4.11. Persian imperfective aspect

It has already been pointed out a couple of times in this chapter that aspects interact in certain ways with other categories associated with the verb, e.g. tense and Aktionsart. Moreover, it is clear that these interactions should be taken into consideration in the semantic analysis of the aspect category of a given language and the members attached to it. Given the significance of the role of the categorial interactions between aspect and other verbal categories, the present section begins with the analysis of a set of Persian data which illustrate these interactions.

4.66. chænd.ta moshtæri.e sær.e rahi in.ja væ an.ja neshæst.e

few customer head.of way here and there sitting

væ nashtaie mi.xor.ænd. (MH 150)

and breakfast ipfv.eat.they

A few travelling customers are sitting here and there and
are eating breakfast.

4.67) tuy.e qæhve.xane gærm æst, boxari

inside.of coffee.house warm is, heater

færængi mi.suz.ænd. (MH 132)

foreign ipfv. burn.it

Inside the coffee shop it is warm, the foreign heater is on.

4.68. qolam bi.hal æst, ætse mi.kon.ænd,

Qolam without.mood is, sneeze ipfv. make he,

ab.e bini ra bala mi.kesh.ænd. (MH 147)

water.of nose o.m. up ipfv. draw. he

Qolam feels sick, sneezes, snuffles.

4.69. xub mi.dan.æm ke jævab da.d.æn

well ipfv. know.I that response give.pt. inf.

fayede nædaræd. (MH 331)

use neg. has. it

I know it well that responding is not useful.

4.70. zemnæn bonyad æz pasox be tæqazaha.ye

in the meantime foundation from reply to applications. of

telephoni mæ'zur mi.bash.æd. (KH no. 825)

telephone exempted ipfv. is. it

In the meantime the foundation is exempted from replying to the applications made on the phone.

The above sentences represent the combination of the imperfective aspect with non-past tense and different Aktionsarten, i.e. different types of lexical verbs. 4.66. has a telic verb phrase: *nashtaie mi.xor.ænd* 'they are having breakfast', which refers to a situation which comes of necessity to an end when the breakfast eating action is completed. 4.67. on the other hand, has an atelic verb *mi.suz.æd* 'is burning' which refers to an atelic situation, i.e. to a situation which does not have any well-defined terminal point and as such can be stopped at any point or be prolonged indefinitely. Despite the semantic difference just noted, sentences 4.66. and 4.67. both can be used as the basis of the characterisation of the imperfective marker *mi-*. Sentences like 4.66. and 4.67. denote situations which begin at a time point prior to the moment of speech and continue for some time after the moment of speech, and as such define the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* as the indication of the situation in question as continuous³⁶. The logical conclusion that derives from this characterization is that the imperfective verb form is "non-committal with respect to completion or non-

³⁶The reason for describing the imperfective marker *mi-* as the expression of the situation as continuous rather than as in progress will be discussed later in the present section.

completion" (Allen; 1966: 219) of the situation designated. Thus, the situation referred to in sentences like 4.66. and 4.67. above may continue for some time after the moment of speech, i.e. be protracted indefinitely, or may complete or terminate immediately after the utterance of the sentence.

Given the above description of the imperfective marker *mi-* on the basis of sentences 4.66. and 4.67., and given the fact that the present study holds the view that each grammatical form has only one single meaning, the task that now faces the present section is to illustrate that in the rest of the Persian data given at the beginning of the section, the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* is consistently the indication of the situation as continuous.

Example 4.68. represents the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* with the non-past tense and a punctual verb *ætse kær.d.æn* 'sneeze', i.e. with a verb which refers to a situation normally conceived of as taking place momentarily. Comrie (1976: 43) notes that the imperfective form of punctual verbs normally have iterative meaning. Given Comrie's observation, the imperfective non-past form *ætse mi.kon.æd* 'he is sneezing' in ex. 4.68. should be taken as denoting several instances of sneezing rather than just one single act of sneezing. In fact, under normal circumstances this is the case, and the verb forms similar to the one under consideration may be taken to have iterative meaning. Despite this, iterativity should not be considered as a part of the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* or as one of its secondary meanings, but rather as the interaction of the imperfective meaning and punctuality. There are two types of evidence for this: first, if the punctual verb is replaced by a durational verb, the resulting verb phrase, particularly where there does not exist a time adverbial indicating a habitual reading, designates the continuation of a single instance of the given situation, as in *æli name mi.nevis.æd* 'Ali is writing a letter/letters'; second, even the imperfective non-past of punctual verbs may under special circumstances, e.g. the commentary use of the non-past tense, refer to a single

instance of the act or event concerned; i.e. *hæsaen ætse mi.kon.æd* 'Hasan sneezes' may equally refer to a single act of sneezing.

The other point at issue is whether the imperfective non-past of a punctual verb in cases where reference is made to a single instance of the punctual situation, could be taken as presenting the situation as continuous at the moment of speech or as presenting the situation as a whole, i.e. as having perfective implication. The question can be reformulated as whether the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* is in this kind of verb constructions still the expression of the notion of continuity or that of some other notion, e.g. punctuality. The answer is that the function of the imperfective marker is still the expression of continuity; since as Comrie (1976) notes, most punctual situations are, strictly speaking, not punctual at all, but rather situations of short duration which are conceived of as punctual³⁷, and as such may be considered as durative (alternatively continuous) under special circumstances; i.e. as encompassing the time point recognized by the context of use as the reference point which is as a mathematical point dimensionless. One of these special circumstances would be the use of the present tense, i.e. the imperfective non-past in Persian to narrate a story. Example 4.68. is taken from a novel by Mahmoud called *Hæmsaye.ha* 'neighbours'. The narrating technique is first person singular narrator. The narrator in this story uses the imperfective non-past tense throughout. Given the first person singular narrating technique, the verb phrase: *ætse mi.kon.æd* 'he is sneezing', either denotes a series of sneezing or represents a single act of sneezing as continuing or

³⁷With regard to the question whether there are situations which are strictly punctual, Comrie (1976: 43) notes that:

"one possible example [of strictly punctual situations] would be a situation of the sort described in the sentence *John reached the summit of the mountain*: here there is one moment when John had not reached the summit, and another moment when he had, with no time intervening between the two. No matter how slowly one presented the film of John's mountaineering exploits the interval between these two moments would always be zero, and it would always be inappropriate to say at this point, John is reaching the summit. Imperfective forms of *reach the summit* would then only have iterative meaning as in *the soldiers are already reaching the summit* (i.e. some have already reached it, some have not yet reached it, there being several individual acts of reaching the summit" (p43).

unfolding at the time point taken by the context of use as the moment of communication.

Example 4.69. (*xub mi.dan.æm ke . . .* 'I know well that . . .') illustrates the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* with the stative verb *danes.t.æn* 'know' (e.g. a fact). *danes.t.æn*, as already noted, when combined with the perfective aspect, has an insight sense and implies the meaning 'come to know, grasp', as in *foræn danes.t.æm ke dar.æd doruq mi.guy.æd* 'I knew immediately that he was (lit. is) lying'. In combination with the imperfective marker *mi-* this verb, however, denotes a stative situation, i.e. an unchanging situation which stretches out on both sides of the time point recognised by the context of use as the point of reference. *danes.t.æn* 'know' (e.g. a fact) is not the only stative verb which collocates with the imperfective marker *mi-*. In fact, as already explained almost all stative verbs in Modern Persian may co-occur with the imperfective marker *mi-*. One type of evidence for this is the imperfective non-past of the copula verb *bu.d.æn* 'be', i.e. *mi.bash.æd* 'it is' in example 4.70.. The naturalness of the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* with stative verbs indicates that the imperfective marker *mi-* despite the fact that it also co-occurs freely with all dynamic verbs including punctual verbs³⁸, should not be defined as describing a situation in progress. Rather as expressing the given situation as continuous; since the notion of 'progress' is closely associated with dynamic situations and as such should not be used to characterize stative situations which involve no change throughout their continuation. To put it in another way, since the imperfective marker *mi-* collocates equally with dynamic and stative verbs, the notion of 'progress' could not be a part of the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-*, but rather a part of the meaning of the dynamic verb which refers to situations which necessarily involve change and as such could be conceived of as in progress. Given the fact that the notion of 'progress' is a part of the meaning of the dynamic verb, the

³⁸Comrie (1976: 50) notes that since punctual situations automatically involve a change of state, they are automatically dynamic: thus punctual verbs are all dynamic verbs.

most suitable definition for the imperfective marker *mi-* would be the expression of the situation referred to as continuous.

The following data illustrate further the interactions between the general meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* and the meanings of other linguistic items present in the sentence.

- 4.71. bish.tær.e mærdom.e eraq be zæban.e æræbi
 most. of people of Iraq to language. of Arabic
 soxæn mi.guy.ænd. (Boyle; 1966: 69)
 word ipfv. say. they
 Most of the people of Iraq speak the Arabic language.
- 4.72. æbrishæm æz kerm.e æbrishæm be dæst mi.ay.æd. (ibid.: 64)
 silk from worm. of silk to hand ipfv. come. it
 Silk is produced (lit. comes to hand) from the silkworm.
- 4.73. hær.ruz sa'æt.e pænjo nim bolænd mi.shæv.æm. (ibid.: 64)
 every day hour. of five and half long ipfv. become. I
 Everyday I get up at half past five.
- 4.74. dær zemestan pæræstu æz ja.ha.ye særd be gærmsir
 in winter swallow from place. pl. of cold to tropics
 mi.ræv.æd væ dær tabestan bær mi.gærd.æd. (ibid.)
 ipfv. go. it and in summer up ipfv. turn. it
 In the winter the swallow goes from the cold places to the tropics and in
 the summer it returns.
- 4.75. gav ælæf mi.xor.æd.
 cow grass ipfv. eat. it
 Cows eat grass.
- 4.76. færda be tehran mi.ræv.æm. (Boyle; 1966: 64)
 tomorrow to Tehran ipfv. go. I
 I am going to Tehran tomorrow.

4.77. sobh.e zood hæm.in.ke seda.ye xorus
 morning. of early same. this. that sound. of cock
 dær am.æd mæn pa mi.shæv.æm væ mi.ræv.æm. (ibid.)
 out come. it I leg ipfv. become. I and ipfv. go. I
 Early in the morning as soon as the cock crows (lit. the sound of the
 cock has come out) I shall get up and go.

4.78. mæn shoma ra zæn væ shohær e'lam mi.kon.æm.
 I you (pl.) o.m. wife and husband pronounce ipfv. do. I
 I pronounce you husband and wife.

4.79. æli tup ra pas mi.dæh.æd be æhmæd.
 Ali ball o.m. pas ipfv. give. he to Ahmad
 Ali passes the ball to Ahmad.

Sentences like 4.71. and 4.72. and sentences like 4.73. and 4.74. above are commonly used by traditional grammarians (e.g. Boyle (1966), Lambton (1963)) as examples of general truth (alternatively 'universal/eternal time') and of habitual uses of the Persian imperfective non-past. Some traditional grammarians also quote sentences like 4.75. as the representation of the generic sense of this verb form. In other words, the traditional grammarians of Persian language maintain that the expression of the general truth, the habitual and generic situations are the secondary meanings of the imperfective non-past in this language.

Contrary to the traditional grammarians the present writer holds the view that the Persian imperfective non-past has only one meaning, and that the habitual, general truth, and generic meaning can be considered as the different meanings of the imperfective non-past only at the expense and neglect of the semantic role of other linguistic elements present in the sentence, such as the adverb of frequency, plural subject, etc. In other words, the present writer contends that the general truth, the habitual and generic meaning are implied by other linguistic and extra-linguistic elements present in the sentence and as such do not impinge on the meaning of the

imperfective marker or of the imperfective non-past verb form. Imperfective marker *mi-* in general truth, generic and habitual sentences simply indicates the continuation of the situation referred to, and the complexity (i.e. the iterativity) of the situation versus its simplicity (i.e. its semelfactive nature) is immaterial to the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-*. That is, the imperfective verb form regardless of whether the situation denoted is semelfactive and occurs only once, or is iterative and occurs an indefinite number of times simply indicates the notion of continuity. One type of evidence for this is that if the non-specific subject of a generic sentence (e.g. *gav* 'cows' (lit. 'cow') in *gav ælæf mi.xor.æd* 'Cows eat grass') is replaced by a specific subject (e.g. *gav.e æli* 'Ali's cow' in *gav.e æli ælæf mi.xor.æd* 'Ali's cow eats grass'³⁹), the generic meaning does not obtain any more. The other type of evidence derives from the fact that many habitual sentences contain temporal adverbials such as 'everyday', 'every week', etc. which specify the habituality of the situation in question, i.e. specify that the given situation is a complex situation which consists of subsituations rather than a simple situation which occurs only once. It goes without saying that the omission of habitual temporal adverbs may or may not lead to a change in the nature of the situation referred to. Thus, the omission of the temporal adverb *hær.ruz* 'every day' in sentences like *æli hær.ruz be pedær.æsh yek name mi.nevis.æd* 'Ali writes a letter to his father every day' may or may not produce a semelfactive reading. I.e. the resulting sentence *æli be pedær.æsh yek name mi.nevis.æd* is ambiguous and may either mean that Ali is (now) writing a letter to his father or that Ali habitually writes a letter to his father. Despite this ambiguity the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* is invariably the expression of continuity, in the former reading a single act of writing is described as continuing at the moment of speech, in the latter a habit is described as continuous at the moment of speech.

³⁹The sentence *gav.e æli ælæf mi.xor.æd* may either imply that Ali's cow is now eating grass or that Ali's cow habitually eats grass. In both cases the meaning of the imperfective marker, however, is indication of continuity. In the former implication a single act of eating is described as continuous in the latter, a habit is described as continuous.

The last evidence for the claim that the function of the Persian imperfective marker *mi-* is invariably the expression of the continuation of the situation referred to derives from the fact that many linguists e.g. Comrie (1976), Leech (1971), Allen (1966), etc. have noted that habitual, gnomic, generic, and general truth situations do not refer to a sequence of situations recurring at intervals, but rather to a habit, a characteristic feature that holds at a period or at all times, i.e. to an unchanging state of affairs that holds true for an indefinite extent of time stretching out both into the past and into the future. If this is true, then in these types of sentences a single stative situation is designated rather than a series of recurring situations, and the imperfective marker *mi-* is in fact describing a habit, a characteristic feature which holds at a period or at all times, as continuous. In other words, in these types of sentences the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* is invariably the indication of situation as continuous.

Sentences 4.76. and 4.77. exemplify the use of the imperfective non-past in contexts where reference is made to a future situation. These sentences at first glance may appear to be counterexamples to the general theory adopted in the present study, namely the monosemantic nature of the imperfective marker *mi-*. However, a detailed analysis of these sentences shows that even these sentences do not vitiate the invariant meaning analysis of the imperfective aspect.

In the previous chapter, it was pointed out that the Persian non-past tense, i.e. the imperfective non-past simply locates the time of the situation as simultaneous with a given time point which could be either a time point which is in the past with respect to the moment of speech, as in the historical use of the imperfective non-past, or the moment of speech, or a time point in the future relative to the moment of speech normally indicated by a future time adverbial. It was also pointed out that the Persian non-past tense is a compound form which consists of the imperfective marker *mi-*, the (non-past) root of the lexical verb and the personal ending. Given the compound or complex nature of the the Persian non-past tense, the core meaning of simultaneity should be seen as the outcome of the interactions of the meaning of the two major

components of this verb form, namely the imperfective marker *mi-* and the non-past root of the lexical verb rather than the information implied by either of them. Thus, in the present study the invariant meaning of the (imperfective) non-past tense is analysed as the outcome of the interaction of the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* which is the indication of the given situation as continuous, and of the non-past root of the lexical verb which is non-anteriority, rather than as the secondary meaning of either of these two major components. This analysis is further supported by sentences like 4.80. below where the temporal adverb *in moqe'* 'this time' emphasises the continuation of the event referred to at a given time in the future.

- 4.80. færda in moqe' ma football bazi mi.kon.im.
 tomorrow this time we football play ipfv. do. we.
 Tomorrow at this time we are playing football.

Sentence 4.80. is almost synonymous with sentence 4.81. below where the continuation of the event referred to at a future time is emphasised by the progressive auxiliary *dash.t.aen* 'have' rather than by temporal phrase *in moqe'* 'this time'.

- 4.81 færda ma dar.im football bazi mi.kon.im.
 tomorrow we prog. football play ipfv. do. we.
 Tomorrow we are playing football.

An interesting case is provided by sentences like *ma færda football bazi mi.kon.im* 'we are playing football tomorrow'. In sentences like this it may not be so much the event which is viewed as continuous at a time point in the future as it is the intention of the performance of the event⁴⁰.

The illustration of the fact that the Persian imperfective non-past in collocation with a future time adverbial or non-linguistic contextual features incompatible with present time reference, denotes the continuation of a given situation in the future, or of the intention for performing it, gives rise to the question of whether in Persian one could view the future situation perfectly, i.e. as a single whole. Given the fact that

⁴⁰For a similar analysis of English sentences like *we're playing volleyball tomorrow* see King (1983: 135).

the perfective non-past of Modern Persian (i.e. the *mi*-less verb form) is practically restricted to some gnomic expressions and to literary texts, and the fact that the so-called definite future: *xas.t.æn* 'want' + short infinitive is basically a modal construction, the answer to the above question appears to be in the negative. However, this applies only to main clauses. In fact, in certain subordinate clauses where the only verb form allowed is the so-called non-past subjunctive of Modern Persian, which has perfective meaning, the perfective view of a relative future event is possible, as in *gozash.t.æm xanom dæst.æm ra be.gir.æd* (pfv.) (DB 52) 'I let the lady take my hand'. The meaning of the perfective verb form with *be-*, as already pointed out in chapter 3, is posteriority⁴¹, i.e. the location of the time of the situation posterior to a given time point of reference, whereas the meaning of the non-past tense (more accurately the imperfective non-past) is simultaneity. The reason for this is that in the case of the perfective form with the prefix *be-* the event is reduced, irrespective of its objective complexity, to a single point, and there is always a reference time point established by the main verb which precedes the time of the event, whereas in the case of the imperfective non-past due to the presence of the imperfective marker *mi-*, the situation is viewed as continuous, and as such can always frame, i.e. be simultaneous with a given time point which is either the moment of speech or a time point in the past or future with respect to the moment of speech.

As will be recalled, the non-past verb form with the prefix *be-* is traditionally named 'present subjunctive' and is defined as "expressing a state or action about which there is an element of doubt" (Lambton; 1963: 151). It is however the claim of the present study that the so-called present subjunctive is a tense form and the prefix

⁴¹It is important to note that in the present study, the notion of posteriority is analysed as the result of the interaction between the meaning of perfectivity and non-anteriority expressed respectively by the perfective marker *be-* and the non-past form of the lexical verb. Given the effect of the perfective marker *be-*, which is the reduction of the situation to a single point, and the meaning of non-anteriority, and given the fact that the perfective form is normally incompatible with present time reference, the Persian perfective verb form with *be-* almost always locates the situation referred to after the time point reference established by the main verb.

be- is the marker of perfectivity. The reasons for this claim will be discussed in section 4.13.

Sentences 4.78. (*mæn shoma ra zæn væ shohær e'lam mi.kon.æm* 'I pronounce you husband and wife') and 4.79. (*æli tup ra pass mi.dæh.æd be æhmæd* 'Ali passes the ball to Ahmad') are the last sentences which are investigated in this section in relation to the study of the semantics of the imperfective marker *mi-*. Sentence 4.78. represents sentences which (the Oxford philosopher) J. L. Austin calls performative sentences in Austin (1962). Performative sentences are those sentences "where the act described by the sentence is performed by uttering the sentence in question" (Comrie; 1976: 37). Performative sentences, despite the fact that the action denoted finishes with the utterance of the sentence, do not pose any problem for the description of the imperfective marker *mi-* proposed in the present chapter; firstly because the imperfective form is "noncommittal with respect to completion or non-completion" (Allen;1966: 21) of the situation designated, secondly because, the verbal action depicted is not strictly punctual and as such can be conceived of as extending on both sides of the present moment. As a matter of fact, if the verbal action in question were strictly punctual and had, by definition, no internal structure, then given the incompatibility of punctuality and imperfectivity, and the incompatibility of perfective non-past and present time reference, the perfective past should be used instead of the imperfective non-past. The perfective past is of course unacceptable in performative constructions, as in performative constructions the verb form should invariably be in the present tense.

Sentence 4.79. is a typical example of the commentary/stage direction/demonstration use of the Persian imperfective non-past. Sentences like 4.79. do not pose any problem for the description of the imperfective marker *mi-* proposed here either; since, the situations described in different commentaries are in general situations of very short duration, and as such could be described as extending on both sides of a given time point. The evidence for this is that situations described in

commentaries may also be referred to by progressive forms, as in *æli dar.æd tup ra be æhmæd pas mi.dæh.æd* 'Ali is passing the ball to Ahmad'.

4.12. The interaction between the ipfv. marker *mi-* and past tense marker /D/

The Persian data analysed in the previous section have all been in the non-past tense, but each has had a different type of lexical verb: durational, punctual, telic, atelic, etc. The semantic study of the examples with durational and stative verbs provided the present work with the grammatical meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-*, i.e. that bit of information that is constant with each and every use of the form, namely the expression of the indefinite continuation of the given situation on both sides of a the present moment, or any time point taken by the context as deictic centre. The analysis of the Persian sentences with nondurational verbs, and sentences which refer to habitual, general truth, generic, and gnomic situations, not only supported the characterisation formulated on the basis of the constructions with durational and stative verbs, but also exemplified the categorial interplay between the aspect and other categories generally associated with the verb, e.g. tense and Aktionsart. Now, to complete the semantic analysis of the imperfective marker *mi-*, it is necessary to study a number of sentences with the imperfective past verb form. The sentences to be investigated are again selected in such a manner that the combination of the imperfective aspect with different types of lexical verbs in the past tense is represented.

4.82. *væqt.i.ke mæ.ra seda zæ.d.ø ketab*
 when I. o.m. call strike pt. he book
mi.xan.d.æm. (Lambton; 1963: 147)
 ipfv. read. pt. I

When he called me I was reading a book.

- 4.83. væqti seda.ye dær.e otaq mæ.ra⁴² æz xab
 when sound. of door. of room I. o.m. from sleep
 pær.an.d.ø⁴³ mæn xab.e emtehan ra
 jump. c. pt. it I dream of examination. o.m.
 mi.di.d.æm. (JS 91)
 ipfv. see. pt. I
 When the noise of the door of the room woke me up
 I was dreaming about the exam.
- 4.84. dæst.e bæradær.æm væqti an kaqæz ra emza
 hand. of brother. my when that paper o.m. signing
 mi.kær.d.ø mi.lærz.id.ø. (SB 52)
 ipfv. do. pt. he ipfv. shake. pt. it
 My brother's hand was shaking when he was signing
 that contract.
- 4.85. bimar modam sorfe mi.kær.d.ø.
 patient continually cough ipfv. make. pt. he
 The patient was coughing incessantly.
- 4.86. æz ævvælæsh xod.æm mi.danes.t.æm. (SB 150)
 from first. its self. my ipfv. know. pt. I
 I knew it from the beginning.
- 4.87. hær sal anja mi.ræf.t.æm. (Lambton; 1963: 147)
 every year there ipfv. go. pt. I
 Every year I went there.

⁴²The first person singular pronoun *mæn* when it is followed by the direct object marker (o.m.) *ra* usually loses its final consonant and reduces to the bound morpheme *mæ-*. In cases like this *ra* joins the bound morpheme *mæ-* and forms a two-morpheme word.

⁴³The causative morpheme *-an* affixes to the (non-past) root of a large number of Persian verbs, e.g. *xab.id.æn* 'sleep', *dæv.id.æn* 'run', *xænd.id.æn* 'laugh', *ræqs.id.æn* 'dance', etc. to construct their causative forms. The causative verbs formed by affixing the causative suffix to the (non-past) root, form their past form by affixing the past tense morpheme *-(i)d* to the resulting causative root.

4.88. ægær mi.danes.t.æm be shoma
 if ipfv. know. pt. I to you
 mi.gof.t. æm. (Rubenchik; 1972: 91)
 ipfv. tell. pt. I
 If I knew I would tell you.

4.89. bay.æd mi.amæ.d.ø . (Windfuhr; 1979: 100)
 must. he ipfv. come. pt. he
 He should have come.

Sentence 4.82. exemplifies the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* with a durational verb. Durational verbs denote situations which last in time and as such may be viewed as continuous at a given time. The imperfective marker *mi-* is the grammatical device for the view of the situation as continuous. In sentence 4.82. the reading situation is viewed as continuous at the time the calling event occurs. Similarly, in sentence 4.83., the dreaming situation is viewed as continuous, at the time the waking up situation takes place. Despite the fact that, the reading situation and the dreaming situation are both viewed as continuous in the sentences under investigation, while the reading situation may well continue for some time or up to completion after the calling event, the dreaming situation may not. This does not however impinge on the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-*, as the possibility or the impossibility of the continuation of the situation designated by the imperfective form after the occurrence of the situation denoted by the perfective verb form depends on the real world nature of the former, rather than on the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-*.

Sentence 4.84. also instantiates the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* with two durational situations; the difference being that while the first situation, namely the signing situation eventually comes to an end, the second situation, i.e. the shaking situation may continue for ever. The difference just noted, is nevertheless

relatable to the typology of the situations referred to, rather than to the semantics of the imperfective marker *mi-*.

Sentence 4.85. is an instance of the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* with a punctual verb. Punctual verbs, as they refer to situations that "are conceived of as lacking duration, as occurring all at once, all in a moment" (Allen; 1966: 199), tend to combine with perfective rather than with imperfective aspect. Nevertheless, when they do combine with the imperfective aspect, the resulting constructions "invariably express repetition or refer to the period leading up to the act or event concerned" (Bache; 1982: 68) (see also Herman; 1927: 217-18, Forsyth; 1970: 47-51; and Comrie; 1976: 41-44). The very fact that the imperfective aspect-punctual Aktionsart combination expresses repetition or refers to the period leading up to the event concerned (or presents a single act as continuous under special circumstances involving modern technology, e.g. slow motion), depending on the time adverbial, e.g. *modam* 'unceasingly', or on the other element present in the sentence, indicates that repetition and reference to the period leading up to the event are not included in the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-*, which is the expression of the continuation of the situation referred to, and are best analysed as the result of the interaction between the meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* and the meaning of the other elements present in the sentence, particularly the aspectual meaning of the lexical verb.

Sentence 4.86. represents the combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* and the stative verb: *danes.t.æn* 'know' (e.g. a fact). Stative verbs are generally defined as referring to situations that are homogeneous, and all phases of which are identical. I.e. whichever point of time one chooses to cut in on a given stative situation, one finds exactly the same situation. Stative situations, as they involve no shift or variation and have neither activity nor successive stages, may be described as continuous, but not as in progress. This fact and the naturalness of the combination of stativity and imperfectivity form the main reason of the present study for defining the imperfective marker *mi-* as the expression of indefinite continuity of the situation denoted rather

than as indicating the situation in progress (The characterisation of the imperfective as "indicating a situation in progress" is one of the characterizations Comrie (1976: 19) proposes for the imperfective aspect).

Most stative verbs when combined with the perfective aspect mark the beginning of the stative situation; but when combined with the imperfective aspect, the stative verbs denote the indefinite continuation of the stative situation designated. The imperfective verb form *mi.danes.t.æm* 'I knew' actually verifies this claim, in that it refers to a knowing situation which extends indefinitely in time.

Sentence 4.87. denotes a past habitual situation; i.e. an unlimited number of occurrences of the given situation, namely *ræf.t.æn* 'go'. As the verb form normally used in Persian to refer to a (past) habitual situation is imperfective in form, the imperfective verb forms are traditionally assumed to have at least two uses: (a) "to describe an action as being still in progress" (Boyle; 1966: 65), (b) "to describe an habitual action" (ibid.). Nonetheless, there are at least two reasons to maintain that the meaning of the imperfective verb form is invariably the expression of the situation as continuous. First, in the majority of sentences designating habitual actions the linguistic element responsible for habitual reading appears to be temporal adverbs such as *hær.ruz* 'every day', *hær.sal* 'every year', etc. The evidence for this is that in most cases the omission of the temporal adverb and the addition of a temporal clause containing a perfective verb form (e.g. *væqti.am.æd* 'when he came') leads to a non-habitual reading. Second, as already noted, many linguists maintain that habitual constructions do not refer to the successive occurrence of several instances of the given situation, but rather to a habit, to a characteristic feature that holds at a period or at all times. If this is true, the imperfective verb form in habitual sentences is referring to a single stative situation and is describing that single stative situation as continuous, rather than denoting the mere repetition of a situation.

Sentences 4.88. and 4.89. exemplify the use of the imperfective past in conditional sentences, and after the modal words *bay.æd* 'must', and *shay.æd*

'perhaps'. At first blush, these sentences appear to undermine the claim that the imperfective marker *mi-* invariably denotes the situation referred to as continuous, since in conditional sentences and after the modal word *bay.æd* the imperfective past verb form seems to express respectively unreal condition (i.e. hypothetical meaning⁴⁴) and an action about which there is some doubt. Windfuhr (1987: 513) describes the use of the imperfective past in the conditional sentences and after modal words like *bay.æd* 'must' as one of the secondary meanings of the imperfective past. In other words, according to Windfuhr in the illustrative examples no. 4.88. and 4.89., the imperfective past expresses respectively an unreal condition and an action about which there is some doubt, rather than the continuation of the stative situations *danes.t.æn* 'know', and *ræf.t.æn* 'go'. A brief reflection, however, reveals that Windfuhr's analysis of the use of the imperfective past in conditional sentences is not accurate. The reason for this is that his analysis ignores the semantic contribution of the conditional particle *ægær* 'if' in conditional sentences like 4.88. and that of the modal word *bay.æd* 'must' in sentences like 4.89. Given the semantic contribution of the conditional particle *ægær* 'if' and of the modal word *bay.æd* 'must', the correct analysis would be to say that in conditional sentences and in modal constructions the hypothetical meaning is expressed respectively by the conditional particle and the modal word, and the imperfective past verb form invariably describes the situation denoted as continuous. The evidence for this is that the omission of the conditional particle and the modal words nullifies the hypothetical meaning of the protasis clauses and modal constructions.

As regards the use of the imperfective past verb form in unreal conditions and modal constructions, i.e. where some other languages (e.g. English) use the perfective form, it would be argued that the Persian imperfective form which presents the given situation as continuous, and for that matter can be conceived of as ignoring the endpoints of the event, is less real than the perfective form which presents the

⁴⁴Leech (1971) defines the hypothetical meaning as "an assumption by the speaker, that the happening described did not, does not, or will not take place" (ibid. 111).

given situation as an analysable whole, and as such is more appropriate for unreal (alternatively counterfactual) conditions than for real conditions where "both the main clause and the dependent clause are truth-neutral" (Leech; 1971: 110), and the occurrences of the condition and the event contingent on the condition are probable. This is further supported by the fact that Modern Persian uses the perfective past and the subordinate perfective non-past (pfv. marker *be-* + (non-past) verbal root + personal ending) in factual conditions where the occurrence of the situation referred to by the main clause is still probable, and the imperfective past, which presents the situation as continuous, in unreal conditions where the occurrence of the situation denoted by the main clause is either improbable or did not come about. The following examples explicitly verify the generalisation just made.

4.90. ægær in kar.o⁴⁵ be.kon.id, hazer.im dæst æz
 if this. work. o.m. pfv. do. you, ready. are hand from
 shekayæt be.kesh.im. (GK 65).
 prosecution pfv. draw. we

If you do this job, we are ready to give up prosecution.

4.91. ægær ø.ræf.t.i pæshiman mi.shæv.i. (Khanlari; 1976)
 if pfv. go. pt. you penitent ipfv. become. you
 If you go, you'll regret it.

4.92. ægær in shouhær.æm hæm tælaq.æm mi.da.d.ø,
 if this husband. my also divorce. my ipfv. give. pt. he
 che mi.kær.d.æm. (AS 17)
 what ipfv. do. pt. I

If my second husband divorced me (lit. was divorcing me), what I could do (lit. was doing)

4.93. u bay.æd be.yay.æd. (Rubenchic; 1971: 86)
 he should pfv. come. he

⁴⁵The direct object marker *ra* in colloquial and informal speech usually reduces to *-o* and inflects the direct object.

He should come

4.94. u bay.æd mi.am.æd. (Rubenchic; 1971: 86)

he should ipfv. come. he

He should have come (lit. He should have been coming).

The analysis of the Persian data comprising the imperfective past verb forms completes the study of the semantics of the Modern Persian imperfective marker *mi-*. The study of the Persian data with the imperfective past verb forms advocates the grammatical meaning assigned to the imperfective marker *mi-*, namely the expression of the indefinite continuation of the given situation on the both sides of a given time point, on the basis of the study of the Persian corpora containing the imperfective non-past. The situation viewed as continuous could be semelfactive, i.e. may occur only once, as in *æli ketab mi.xan.æd* 'Ali is reading a book', or complex, i.e. consisting of subsituations, as in habitual dispositional situations, or a fact, a general truth "that lasts through all time, without any beginning and without any end". (Comrie; 1976:4). The description proposed for the imperfective marker *mi-*, given the general tendency of durational situations to combine with imperfectivity, has been based on the overall meaning of verb constructions consisting of the imperfective marker *mi-* and a durational verb. The analysis of other verb constructions consisting of the imperfective marker *mi-* and other types of lexical verbs revealed that the characterisation of the imperfective marker *mi-* as the expression of continuity is accurate, and also that the imperfective aspect, despite ignoring the endpoints of the situation through focusing on its continuation, is "noncommittal with respect to completion or non-completion" (Allen; 1966: 219) of the situation depicted by the lexical verb⁴⁶.

⁴⁶It is however important to note that completion and incompleteness of the situation are bits of information provided either by the type of lexical verb involved or by extra linguistic features of the context of use. Thus, whereas the actions referred to in a sport commentary by virtue of their short duration tend to follow one another in their entirety, those designated by durational verbs, telic or atelic, may never be completed.

4.13. Persian progressive aspect

In chapter 1, it was explained that the progressive aspect constitutes a controversial issue in the study of the verb system of Modern Persian. It was also mentioned that the Persian language grammarians may be divided into two groups depending on their treatment of the verb forms constructed from the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* 'have' and the imperfective form of the main verb. The first group maintain that Modern Persian does not have a progressive aspect independent of the imperfective aspect. Farroukhpay (1979) belongs to this group. He argues that the progressive marker in utterances like *væqti amæ.d.æm, dash.t.∅ mi.nevesh.t.∅* 'When I came (away), s/he was (still) writing' "is the prefix *mi-* as identified in the words *mi.avær.d.ænd* 'they were bringing', and *mi.nevesh.t.∅* 's/he was writing' (ibid. : 23), and as a consequence regards the verb *dash.t.æn* as used redundantly. The second group, on the other hand, recognises verb constructions such as *dar.æd mi.ræv.æd* 'he is going', *dar.æm mi.ay.æm* 'I am coming', etc. as progressive, and regard the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* 'have' and the prefix marker *mi-* respectively as the marker of progressivity and imperfectivity. Dehgan (1972), Keshavarz (1962), and Marashi (1979) belong to this group. These linguists base their argument for an independent progressive category within the Persian verb system on the fact that verb constructions with *dash.t.æn* as an auxiliary has been used in Standard Modern Persian for quite some time. Keshavarz (1974: 687), for instance, states that constructions with the verb *dash.t.æn* is a form of the verb which we use tens of times in everyday speech (trans. from the present writer).

The question would then rise which of these two approaches to the verb constructions with *dash.t.æn* as an auxiliary is linguistically warranted. The following syntactico-semantic facts seem to support the second approach which contends that Modern Persian has a progressive category distinct from the imperfective category.

a) The imperfective and the progressive category in Modern Persian, as the following examples illustrate, both may be used to describe habitual situations as well

as semelfactive situations. However, while with the imperfective verb form the single instances of the habitual event are not necessarily viewed imperfectively, i.e. as continuous, with the progressive verb form each instance of the occurrence of the habitual event is viewed imperfectively, i.e. as in progress. Therefore, while with the imperfective verb form the several instances of the given situation are collectively viewed imperfectively, with the progressive verb form every single instance of the given situation is viewed imperfectively, i.e. as in progress.

4.95. æli be pedær.æsh name mi.nevis.æd.

Ali to father. his letter ipfv. write. he

Ali is writing a letter to his father.

4.96. æli hær.ruz be pedær.æsh yek name mi.nevis.æd.

Ali every. day to father. his one letter ipfv. write. he

Ali writes a letter to his father every day.

4.97. lily dar.æd be kæbutær.ha dane mi.dæh.æd.

Lily prog to pigeon. plr. grain ipfv. give. she

Lily is feeding the pigeons.

4.98. lily dar.æd hær.ruz be kæbutær.ha dane mi.dæh.æd⁴⁷.

Lily is always feeding the pigeons.

b) The imperfective marker *mi-*, as already noted, quite naturally combines with the stative as well as dynamic verbs. In fact, all Persian stative verbs (even the primary stative verbs *bu.d.æn* 'be', and *dash.t.æn* 'have') may combine with the imperfective marker *mi-*⁴⁸; but the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* when used as the marker of progressivity does not normally co-occur with stative verbs, and if it does, unlike the

⁴⁷Comrie (1976) claims that one of the differences between the progressive and the imperfective aspect is that "imperfectivity includes as a special case habituality" (ibid. : 33). I.e. he maintains that while the imperfective forms may either denote a single situation or a habitual situation, the progressive forms only refer to semelfactive situations. Persian sentences like 4.98. and English sentences like *Old Lily is always feeding the pigeons in the park* (ex. from King (1983: 130), however, prove that even the progressive verb forms may be used in habitual contexts.

⁴⁸The imperfective past forms of *bu.d.æn* 'be' and *dash.t.æn* 'have' may be used in the protasis clauses of conditionals. Dehgan (1972) points out this fact with respect to the verb *dash.t.æn*: The verb *dash.t.æn* does not take the prefix marker *mi-* except where it is a part of some compound verb, or when used in the past conditional" (ibid.: f.n. 15 p205)

imperfective marker *mi-* endows the stative verb with non-stative reading. Thus, whereas the progressive sentences like *dar.æm mi.fæhm.æm* 'I am understanding', *dar.æm mi.bin.æm* 'I am seeing' and *dar.æm mi.shenæv.æm* 'I am hearing' denote processes which vary with respect to intensity and subtlety, and as such involve change over time, the imperfective counterparts of these sentences, i.e. *mi.fæhm.æm* 'I understand', *mi.bin.æm* 'I see', *mi.shenæv.æm* 'I hear' designate stative situations which do not change over time.

c) The Persian imperfective form is not the only imperfective form which does not exclude the progressive meaning. According to Comrie (1976: 33) in Spanish and Italian the distinction between progressive and nonprogressive forms is optional, i.e. the progressive form may be replaced by other forms without implying nonprogressive meaning. The optionality of the use of the progressive forms in Spanish and Italian is an indication of the fact that the optionality of the use of the progressive forms in a given language should not be taken to mean that that language does not have a separate progressive aspect.

Having proved that the progressive auxiliary *dash.t.æn* 'have' is not always redundant --as Farroukhpay (1979) claims-- it is time to study the semantics of the progressive marker *dash.t.æn*, and the contexts where the progressive constructions may be used.

At the beginning of the present section, it was pointed out that a group of Persian grammarians, in particular linguistically influenced scholars, e.g. Dehgan, Marashi, Keshavarz, Windfuhr, etc. have already acknowledged that the verb constructions formed by the auxiliary *dash.t.æn* and the imperfective of the main verb are independent verb forms in the Modern Persian verb system. Dehgan's account of the progressive constructions with *dash.t.æn* is however the most comprehensive and exhaustive. He defines the progressive past as expressing "an action that had begun in the remoter past, was in the process of being performed at the time spoken of, and may either have ceased by the commencement of some other action or may have

continued for some time afterwards" (1972: 199); the progressive perfect (used mostly in the 3rd per. sg.) as "denoting an action that had begun in a remoter past; was in the process of being performed at the time spoken of, and ceased when another action [also in the perfect] began" (ibid.). Finally he defines the progressive present (non-past) as denoting "(a) an action in the process of being completed at the time of speaking, although it may have begun in the past, (b) an action which will be going on in the future before some other action or state of being" (ibid. : 200).

Dehgan also takes notice of a number of syntactic features of the progressive forms, of which the following are the most important.

(1) The progressive forms are formed only in the indicative [as opposed to the subjunctive mood⁴⁹]" (ibid. :200)

(2) Progressive past and progressive present are also used in the passive voice; examples: *dash.t.∅ nevesh.t.e mi.sho.d.∅* 'it was (in the process of) being written', *dar.e pus(t)esh kæn.d.e mi.sh.e* 'it is (in the process of) being skinned'.

(3) The progressive form is not used with the verb *dash.t.ǣn* and *bu.d.ǣn* as the main verb. (This remark should be generalized to read as 'the progressive form is not generally used with stative verbs)

(4) None of the progressive tenses has a negative form.

(5) "*dash.t.ǣn* may be separated from the main verb by one or more words" (ibid. : 200-201).

Mention of the above characteristic features of the progressive forms is a further indication of the comprehensiveness of Dehghan's analysis of these forms. He even notices that the progressive non-past either denotes an action in progress at the time of

⁴⁹As it was explained in chapter 1, in Modern Persian the so-called subjunctive mood does not have any especial morphological marker; and the prefix *be-* traditionally referred to as subjunctive/imperative marker is in practice one of the two Modern Persian markers of perfectivity (the other one being the absence of the imperfective marker *mi-*) (see also § 4.12.). Thus, Dehgan's remark about the incompatibility of the progressive auxiliary *dash.t.ǣn* 'have' with the subjunctive mood should be corrected to read 'the progressive marker *dash.t.ǣn* is incompatible with perfective marker *be-*. This is not very surprising, taking into account that an imperfective marker is not in general compatible with a perfective marker .

speech or at a time point in the future established by the temporal adverbial present in the sentence.

Dehghan's analysis of the progressive forms with *dash.t.æn*, despite being very comprehensive and exhaustive, also has a number of shortcomings as follows:

First, Dehghan's definitions of the three progressive forms: the progressive past, the progressive non-past and the progressive perfect, are unduly complicated, and should be coalesced into one simple and general definition to read as: the progressive form presents the given situation as in progress at a given time point.

Second, Dehghan fails to highlight the difference between the progressive past and the progressive perfect. The evidence for this failure is that Dehghan's descriptions of these two verb forms are almost identical.

Third, Dehghan fails to notice that the progressive may not only be used to denote an action in progress at the moment of speech or at a future time point (depending on the presence vs. the absence of a future time adverbial), but also to indicate that the preparations of a future event are in progress at the time of speech. Thus, progressive sentences like *mæn dar.æm be pedær.æm name mi.nevis.æm* 'I am writing a letter to my father' may either describe the action denoted as in progress at the time of communication, or indicate that the action referred to is about to begin. The latter sense normally holds when the doer of the action is not engaged in performing the action denoted at the time of communication.

Fourth, Dehghan fails to notice that the progressive constructions with *dash.t.æn* in collocation with temporal adverbials like *hæmishe* 'always' which denote repetition, have an habitual reading, e.g. *u hæmishe dar.æd be kæbutær.ha dær park dane mi.dæh.æd* 's/he is always feeding (lit. giving grains to) the pigeons in the park'⁵⁰.

⁵⁰It is often assumed that in sentences like *she's buying far more vegetables than they can possibly eat* (ex. from Comrie; 1976: 37), the function of the progressive is to imply "a sense of mild reproach". King (1983), however, notes that such an implication "is the function of context, since one need not be expressing reproach (mild or otherwise) in *Old Lily is such a kind person. She's always feeding the pigeons in the park* (ibid. :130).

Finally, nowhere does Dehghan refer to the fact that the progressive form of the lexical verb *ræf.t.æn* 'go' has the potentiality to be used, like the English future auxiliary 'to be going to', to express futurity. I.e., he fails to notice that *dar.æm mi.ræv.æm* in the sentence *dar.æm mi.ræv.æm name.i be u be.nevis.æm* 'I am going to write to him/her a letter', particularly if uttered when 'I' is sitting rather than walking, for instance, to his desk, is used to indicate that the writing situation is predicted/promised/intended to take place some time in the future⁵¹.

Had Dehghan incorporated these points in his analysis of the progressive forms with *dash.t.æn* as auxiliary, he would have come up with almost a perfect analysis of these forms.

The last point to consider with respect to the progressive forms with *dash.t.æn* pertains to the combination of the progressive aspect with different types of Aktionsarten, i.e. with different types of lexical verbs. As it may be recalled, it was illustrated in the previous section that the grammatical meaning of the imperfective marker *mi-* is invariably the presentation of the situation referred to as continuous, and that the various meanings such as futurity, habituality, repetition, etc. traditionally allocated to the imperfective verb forms as their secondary meanings, should be ascribed either to other linguistic elements present in the linguistic expression, or should be analysed as the categorial interplay between the imperfective aspect, tense and/or Aktionsart. It is now the contention of the present study that the same generalization holds true for the progressive marker *dash.t.æn*; i.e. the present study holds the view that the progressive marker *dash.t.æn* invariably denotes an action in progress, and that nuances of meanings such as habituality (ex. 4.99.), iteration (ex. 4.100.), futurity (ex. 4.101.) are contextual meanings resulting from the interaction between the progressive meaning, the meanings of other linguistic items present in the sentence (e.g. temporal adverb, subject, object(s), etc.), and the aspectual meaning of

⁵¹The present writer has not yet come across sentences like *dar.æm mi.ræv.æm be u telephone kon.æm* 'I am going to phone him' in actual speech. However, according to his intuitions as a native speaker of Persian, these sentences are completely acceptable.

lexical verb involved. One type of evidence for this is that while the progressive forms of the majority of lexical verbs denote the situation referred to in progress, the progressive forms of verbs such as *ista.d.æn* 'stand', *neshæs.t.æn* 'sit', *xab.id.æn*⁵² 'sleep', express meanings such as 'to be about (to do)', 'to intend' (cf. Dehghan; 1972: 200). The progressive forms of these verbs clearly reveal that the meanings such as 'to be about (to do)', 'intend', etc. derive from the interaction between the progressive meaning and the meaning of the lexical verb rather than from the progressive marker *dash.t.æn*.

4.99. æli hæ.ruz dær in sa'æt dar.æd dær park

Ali every.day in this hour prog.he in park

qædæm mi.zæn.æd.

pace ipfv strike. he

Ali is always walking at this hour in the park.

(In this example the complex situation is viewed as in progress at the moment of speech).

4.100. bimar dar.æd sorfe mi.kon.æd

patient prog.he cough ipfv. make. he

The patient is coughing.

(In this example the punctual verb is responsible for the iterative meaning rather than the progressive marker).

4.101. dash.t.ænd mi.xab.id.ænd. (ex. from Dehghan; 1972)

prog. pt. they ipfv. sleep. pt. they

They were sleeping (were about to sleep).

(In this example, future in the past meaning derives from the interaction between the progressive meaning and the meaning of the lexical verb *xab.id.æn* rather than the progressive auxiliary *dash.t.æn*).

⁵²The progressive form of the verb *xab.id.æn* 'sleep', may also be taken to mean that the preparations preceding the sleeping situation are in progress at the time spoken of.

4.13.1 *Other means of expressing progressive meaning*

As has been explained, the progressive construction with *dash.t.æn* is generally restricted to Standard Colloquial Persian and to works of fiction. This gives rise to the question whether in formal speech and writing the progressive meaning is always denoted by the imperfective form, or there are other constructions which could be used instead of the imperfective verb form to express the progressive meaning. The answer is in the affirmative. In other words, non-Colloquial Persian has access to linguistic devices which may be used in place of the imperfective form to view situations as in progress at a certain time point. There exist two of these linguistic devices. First, the locative phrase *dær hal.e* 'in process of' and the copula *bu.d.æn* 'be' may combine with the infinitive form of the main verb to denote an action in progress, example: *æli dær hal.e qæza xor.d.æn (inf.) bu.d.ø ke telephone zæng zæ.d.ø* 'Ali was eating (lit. was in process of eating) food, when the phone rang'. Second, the adjective *mæshqul* 'busy' and the enclitic ezafe marker */-e /* may be used with the infinitive form of the main verb to describe an action in progress, example: *æli mæshqul.e nevesh.t.æn.e name bu.d.ø ke æhmæd amæ.d.ø* 'Ali was writing (lit. busy of writing of) the letter, when Ahmad came in'. The progressive construction *dær hal.e . . . bu.d.æn* and the adjective *mæshqul* 'busy' combine with both the past and the non-past tense to denote an action in progress at a past time point and at a non-past time point respectively. When combined with the non-past tense these progressive markers describe an action in progress either at the time of communication or at a time point in the future depending on the absence or presence of a future temporal adverb, examples:

4.102. u dær hal.e/mæshqul.e nevesh.t.æn (inf.) yek name æst.
 s/he in process. of/busy. of write. pt. inf. one letter is
 S/he is writing a letter (now).

4.103. u færda dær hal.e/ mæshqul.e nevesh.t.æn yek name æst.
 Tomorrow, he is writing a letter.

The above mentioned progressive markers may also combine with the modal verb *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish' to predict that a given situation will be in progress at a later time in the future or to express that the speaker intends to be in the process of performing an action some time in the future, example:

4.104. u fārda mæshqul.e/dær hal.e nevesh.t.æn.e name xah.æd bu.d.ø.

Tomorrow, he will be writing the letter.

The use of the periphrastic constructions *dær hal.e* + infinitive + *bu.d.æn* and *mæshqul.e* + infinitive + *bu.d.æn* in formal speech and writing to express the progressive meaning is particularly significant in that it verifies the fact that the progressive auxiliary in colloquial expressions like *dar.e fekr mi.kon.e* (ST 79) 'he is thinking', is not redundant, as it performs the same function as the progressive markers of non-colloquial Persian, namely disambiguating the imperfective verb phrases like *fekr mi.kon.æd* 'he is thinking/ thinks' which are usually ambiguous between a habitual and a progressive reading.

4.14. The perfective aspect

The reader might have wondered why contrary to routine in the majority of books on aspect, the perfective term of Modern Persian aspect system is being studied after the imperfective and the progressive terms. This deviation from the routine is simply due to the fact that in Persian, unlike in Russian "which is generally considered as the aspect language *par excellence* " (Bache; 1985: 1), it is the imperfective verb form which is, morphologically speaking, the marked member of the aspectual opposition perfective/ imperfective.

The perfective aspect has already been defined in the present chapter. The definition is that of the view of the situation "as a single complete whole". This definition belongs to Comrie (1976). Comrie's definition is adopted in this work not because the other descriptions proposed by other linguists are incorrect, but rather because most of the other characterisations suggested are more or less identical with his characterisation. This can easily be verified by looking at the descriptions offered

by the scholars whose analyses of the aspect category have been reviewed in the present chapter.

Having adopted Comrie's definition of the perfective aspect as appropriate for the Persian perfective category, the main task is now to find out whether or not it can be claimed that the Persian perfective markers \emptyset - and *be-* retain their grammatical meaning regardless of the contexts in which they are used. Prior to that, it is necessary to discuss in more detail the grammatical meaning of the verbal prefix *be-* .

As has been explained (cf. chapter 1), the Persian grammarians, with the exception of a few, maintain that the verbal prefix *be-* is the imperative/subjunctive marker, and describe the meaning of this prefix as expressing "a state or action about which there is an element of doubt", e.g. *momken æst be.yay.æd* 'he may come' (Lambton; 1960: 151), or as expressing "an action of supposition, possibility, necessity, or wish" (Rubenchic; 1971: 92). There is, however, ample evidence that this analysis is inaccurate. First, verb forms formed from the (non-past) root of the verb, the prefix *be-* and personal endings, i.e. the so-called subjunctive non-past, may also occur in contexts where there is no element of doubt or supposition about the occurrence of the event referred to, examples:

4.105. *gozash.t.æm xanom dæst.æm ra be.gir.æd.* (DB 52)

let. pt. I lady hand. I o.m. pfv. get. she

I let the lady take my hand.

4.106. *belæxære tævanes.t.æm æz ruy.e tæxt*

at last can. pt. I from surface. of bed

bolænd be.shæv.æm. (AS 16)

tall pfv. become. I

At last, I managed to get up from the bed.

Second, "in early Persian *be-* occurred with virtually all verb forms" (Windfuhr;1979: 94), and in literary sentences like *sepæs æz shæhr.e xod be.gorix.t.∅* 'then he ran away from his own city' (SGh 42) the verb form with the

prefix *be-* does not express an action about occurrence of which there is an element of doubt, or supposition, but rather presents the given action as a unified entity.

Third, MacKinnon (1975) on the basis of a study of 2593 verb forms in a fairly reliable edition of the 10th century history *Tarix.e Bal'ami* (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1966) proves that the function of the prefix *be-* since Middle Persian was to mark perfectivity. If it is true that the prefix *be-* had a perfective function since Middle Persian, given the fact that there is no linguistic evidence to indicate a sudden shift in the function of the prefix *be-* from marking perfectivity to marking modal notions such as doubt, wish, supposition, etc., it would be reasonable to assume that the prefix *be-* is still a marker of perfectivity.

Fourth, verb forms of temporal clauses, especially of temporal clauses beginning with *bæ'd æz* 'after', *qæbl æz* 'before', must have perfective aspect (cf. Smith; 1983: 485), and the verb forms which almost always occur in Modern Persian in these temporal clauses is the verb form with the prefix *be-*.

Fifth, the modal notions such as doubt, uncertainty, prediction, intention, etc. traditionally ascribed to the verb form with the prefix *be-* are normally expressed by modal elements present in the context of use.

Finally, the Persian imperative verb constructions --which consist of the prefix *be-*, the (non-past) root of the lexical verb, and the appropriate personal suffix-- denote perfectivity rather than modal notions such as doubt, wish, etc. The evidence for this is that the Persian imperative constructions are in deep structure subordinate clauses, and in subordinate clauses the verb phrase must in general have perfective form.

In order to establish that the Persian perfective category has one single meaning which does not depend on the context and cannot be changed by it, rather than a number of meanings of which one is more central, more typical, a method similar to the one used for the imperfective and progressive category will be exploited. I.e., a set of Persian data representing the combination of the perfective aspect with the members

of other categories associated with the verb (i.e. Aktionsart and tense) will be investigated.

4.107. xanom ruy.e mu.ha.y.æm⁵³ ra bus.id.ø (pfv.). (SB 40)

lady upon. of hair. pl. my o.m. kiss. pt. she

The lady kissed my hair.

4.108. æzizjan an.qædr gerye kær.d.ø (pfv.) væ do'a

Azizjan that. much cry make. pt. she and pray

xan.d.ø ke hosele.ye næsrin sær ræf.t.ø. (DB143)

read. pt. she that tolerance. of Nasrin spill go. pt. it

Azizjan cried and prayed so much that Nasrin was fed up.

4.109. chaii.y.æm ra ke xor.d.æm, estefa'.name.æm

tea. my o.m. that eat. pt. I, resignation. letter my

ra nevesh.t.æm. (AM 134)

o.m. write. pt. I

After I drank my tea, I wrote my resignation letter.

4.110. soxænran bolænd sho.d.ø , pæn̄j bar sorfe

lecturer stood become. pt. he, five time cough

kær.d.ø (pfv.) væ gof.t.ø. . .⁵⁴

make. pt. he and said . . .

The lecturer stood up, coughed five times, and said . . .

4.111. xas.t.ø bær.gærd.æd væ do.bare be hæmam

want. pt. he up. turn. he and two. time to bathroom

be.ræv.æd. (AS 28).

pfv. go. he

He wanted to return and to go to the bathroom again.

⁵³In Persian when a syllable ending in a vowel is followed by a syllable beginning with a vowel, the glide /y/ will be used to ease pronunciation.

⁵⁴Sentence 4.110. is virtually the translation of the English sentence: *the lecturer stood up, coughed five times and said . . .* given by Comrie (1976: 27) as an illustration of the fact that "if a situation is repeated a limited number of times, then all of these instances of the situation can be viewed as a single situation, albeit with internal structure, and referred to by a perfective form" (ibid.)

Sentence 4.107. exemplifies the combination of the perfective marker \emptyset - with the punctual verb *bus.id.æn* 'kiss' which refers to a punctual situation. Given the fact that the punctual situations are not in general conceived of as lasting in time, and as such cannot be referred to by constructions marked truly as imperfective (cf. Bache; 1982: 68), sentence 4.107. verifies the accuracy of Comrie's definition of the perfective aspect, namely presenting the situation "as a single unanalysable whole, with the beginning, middle, and end rolled into one" (1976: 3).

Sentence 4.108. designates two atelic situations: *gerye kær.d.æn* 'cry' and *do'a xan.d.æn* 'pray', which like any other atelic situations, depending on the stamina of the doer of the action, can extend indefinitely through time. The actual duration of these situations is however immaterial to the function of the perfective marker. The perfective marker \emptyset - regardless of the actual duration, denotes atelic situations in their entirety, and to use the well established metaphor, reduces them to a single point⁵⁵.

Sentence 4.109. denotes two telic situations *chay xor.d.æn* 'drink (a) tea', and *estefa' name emza kær.d.æn* 'sign a resignation letter'. These situations are telic in that there eventually comes a time point at which they are complete. Telic verbs/constructions which designate telic situations, when combined with the past tense and the perfective aspect, tend to describe the designated situations as *completed* prior to the moment of speech. The characterization of the telic situations referred to as completed is, however, the function of the interaction between the perfective aspect, the past tense and the telic nature of the situation, rather than that of the perfective aspect which invariably views the situation in its entirety. One type of evidence for this is the Persian perfective non-past with the perfective marker *be-*, which is restricted to subordinate clauses. This verb form, which generally has (relative) future time reference, in sentences like *be u gof.t.æm estefa' name.æsh ra emza be/kon.æd* 'I told him to sign his resignation letter', given the fact the signing situation has not

⁵⁵Comrie (1976) notes that "since the notion of a point seems to preclude internal complexity, a more helpful metaphor would perhaps be to say that the perfective reduces a situation to a blob, rather than to a point: a blob is a three dimensional object, and can therefore have internal complexity" (ibid. :18)

taken place yet, but rather predicted to take place, can only be said to present the given telic situation as complete, and not as completed. This clearly indicates that where the perfective marker and the telic Aktionsart are collocated with the past tense marker, the situation is viewed as completed, but where the perfective marker and the telic Aktionsart are combined with the non-past marker, the situation is viewed as complete. The other type of evidence is constructions where the past tense and the perfective marker co-occur with the punctual verbs; i.e. with verbs which denote situations whose successive phases (their beginning, middle, and end) under normal circumstances are conceived of as completely overlapping. In this type of constructions, given the fact that punctual situations, by definition, have no duration and for that matter no internal structure, the situation referred to can only be presented as a single complete whole, rather than as completed.

Sentence 4.110. refers to a punctual situation which is repeated a limited number of times. Comrie (1976) contends that "if a situation is repeated a limited number of times, then all of these instances of the situation can be viewed as a single situation, albeit with internal structure, and referred to by a perfective form" (ibid. : 27). Sentence 4.110. supports this contention, as the perfective verb form in this sentence views the limited number of the occurrences of the coughing situation as constituting a single situation and presents this single complex situation as an unanalysable whole. In examples like 4.110. each instance of the complex situation is also presented as a single complete whole.

Sentence 4.111. illustrates the combination of the perfective marker ϕ - with the stative verb *xas.t.æn* 'want'. At first glance, it might seem that if the imperfective form of this verb *mi.xas.t.ϕ* 'he wanted' (lit. was wanting) is substituted for the perfective counterpart, no change in the meaning of the sentence under consideration will occur. This supposition may even take some ground from the fact that 'wanting' as a state is continuous, and from the fact that the sentence with perfective and the imperfective form are both translated into English as 'he wanted to return and go to the

bathroom again'. Nonetheless, a closer look reveals that there is an interesting notional difference between the two sentences. The difference is that with the perfective form the 'wanting' situation is presented as holding for a single moment, but with the imperfective form the meaning of which is the presentation of the situation as continuous, the 'wanting' situation is described as holding for some time. The evidence for this is that while the sentence with the imperfective form may conjoin the sentence: *væ hænuz hæm mi.xah.æd* 'and still he wants to', the one with the perfective may not, and if it does the conjoined sentence sounds odd at the least.

4.112. ? *xas.t.ø bær.gærd.æd væ do.bare be hæmam be.ræv.æd,*
væ hænuz hæm mi.xah.æd.

Other examples illustrating the combination of the perfective aspect with the members of other categories associated with the verb (i.e. Aktionsart and tense) are as follows:

4.113. *væqti fæhm.id.ø tærke.ha ra shekæs.t.e.im*
 when understand. pt. he stick. pl. o.m. break. pt. ptp. we
kæmærbænd.æsh ra baz kær.d.ø væ door.e
 belt. his o.m. open make. pt. he and round. of
pa.y.e pesær.æsh pichi.d.ø. (AM 59).
 foot. of son. his tie. pt. he

When he found out that we had broken the sticks, he unfastened his belt and tied it round his son's foot.

4.114. *di.d.æm dar.æd æz tærs qaleb tohi mi.kon.æd. (AM 63)*
 see. pt. I prog. he from fear body empty ipfv. do. he
 I saw that he was (lit. is) dying from fear.

4.115. ... *væ zæn.æm besyar xosh.hal bu.d.ø. (DB 72)*
 ... and wife. my very good. mood be. pt. she
 ... and my wife was very happy.

- 4.116. ægær u ra di.d.i sælam.e mæ.ra
 if s/he o.m. see. pt. you regard. of I. o.m.
 be.res.an. (Khanlari; 1974: 150)
 pfv. reach. c
 If you see (lit. saw) him give my regards to him.
- 4.117. dæst.e.kæm be.gzar mor.d.e.æsh ra
 hand. of. short pfv. let die.pt. ptp. it o.m.
 be.bin.æm. (DB 84)
 pfv. see. I
 At least let me see its dead body.
- 4.118. digær hich pærænde.i jor'æt næ.dash.t.ø dær
 no more no bird. a courage neg. have.pt. it in
 aseman.e baq pærvaz be.kon.æd. (DB 173)
 sky. of garden fly pfv. do. it
 No bird dared any more to fly in the sky of the garden.
- 4.119. ... æz pust.esh mi.dæh.æm kæfsh væ kif
 ... from skin. its ipfv. give. I shoes and bag
 be.saz.ænd. (DB 177)
 pfv. make. they
 ... I am going to have a pair of shoes and a hand
 bag made of it's skin.
- 4.120. mi.danes.t.ø ne.mi.tævan.æd qæza.y.e xod ra
 ipfv. know. pt. she neg. ipfv. can. it food. of self o.m.
 be.yab.æd. (DB 174)
 pfv. find. it
 She knew that it would not be able to find its own food.
- 4.121. ægær shohær.æsh be.ya.y.æd, ... kæm.tærin
 if husband. her pfv. come. he ... little. most

mæræz.i ke mi.gir.æd sel æst. (DB 130)

disease. a that ipfv. get. he tuberculosis is

If her husband comes, . . . he will contract tuberculosis at the least.

Ex. 4.113. and 4.114. demonstrate the insight sense of the perfective forms of stative verbs such as *danes.t.æn* 'know' (e.g. a fact), *shenax.t.æn* 'know' (i.e. to be acquainted with), *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand', *di.d.æn* 'see', etc⁵⁶. Comrie (1976) uses examples similar to 4.113. above from other languages (e.g. Spanish) to prove that the perfective aspect may also have a secondary meaning, namely the 'ingressive meaning'. The present writer, however, holds the view that the ingressive meaning does not at all impinge on the meaning of the perfective aspect. The evidence for this is two fold. First, it would be more appropriate to consider the ingressive meaning as Aktionsart category rather than the perfective aspect; as only a subgroup of lexical verbs, namely some stative verbs when combined with perfective aspect have ingressive sense. Second, as Mourelatos (1981) points out, stative verbs like *know* and *understand* in sentences like *And then suddenly I knew* (pfv.) and *Once Liza understood* (pfv.) (*grasped*) *what Henry's intentions were, she lost all interest in him*, "have the insight sense", which is the sense of an achievement, and as such they refer to punctual situations which mark the end of processes ending in the knowing and understanding situations, rather than the ensuing stative situations.

Example 4.115. contains the perfective past form of the copula verb *bu.d.æn* 'be'. *Bu.d.æn*, as a stative verb, should in fact favour imperfective rather than perfective aspect (cf. Comrie; 1976: 121). However, as already noted in Modern Persian, particularly in the past tense, the copula verb *bu.d.æn* only has *mi-* less, i.e. perfective form. The perfective past of *bu.d.æn* unlike the perfective past forms of other stative verbs, e.g. *danes.t.æn* 'know', *shenax.t.æn* 'to be acquainted with', *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand' which have an achievement sense, is clearly imperfective and as such generally refers to a state which extends indefinitely on both sides of the

⁵⁶In ex. 4.113. the stative verbs *di.d.æn* 'see', *danes.t.æn* 'know' and *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand' may be used interchangeably to imply the insight sense: 'come to know, grasp'.

time point spoken of. Thus, in ex. 4.115. the state of happiness could have come to hold at any time prior to the time spoken of and could continue to hold afterwards for an indefinite period of time. Modern Persian copula *bu.d.æn* 'be' and *dash.t.æn* 'have' are actually the only Persian stative verbs whose perfective forms clearly have imperfective meaning. The perfective forms of other stative verbs in Persian, as already noted, have achievement (more accurately perfective) meaning and as such contrast with their imperfective forms which have imperfective meaning.

Ex. 4.116. is a conditional sentence. The verb form of the protasis clause (*di.d.i* 'saw you') is in the perfective past. The condition is stated here as real. However, in accordance with the general theory of the present study which states that each linguistic element present in the sentence makes its own contribution to the overall meaning of the sentence, the particle *ægær* 'if' plus the perfective view of the situation (which renders the situation as more real) would be regarded as responsible for the expression of the real condition⁵⁷ rather than the perfective form of the verb. The evidence for this is that if one decontextualises the verb form *di.d.i* 'saw you', i.e. if one omits the conditional particle *ægær* 'if', *di.d.i* would simply designate a single act of catching sight of somebody.

Sentences 4.117. to 4.121. are selected in such a way that they would instantiate the combination of the Persian perfective marker *be-* with different types of verbs: punctual verbs, durational verbs, etc. Ex. 4.117. contains the combination of the perfective marker *be-* with the stative verb *di.d.æn* 'see'. As already pointed out, the perfective form of *di.d.æn*, like that of some other stative verbs, has an insight sense and as such refer to the punctual event 'catch sight of something. In fact, some stative verbs, especially sensational verbs, e.g. *di.d.æn* 'see', *shæn.id.æn* 'hear', *ehsas kær.d.æn* 'feel', etc. and inert perception verbs, e.g. *fæhm.id.æn* 'understand', *danes.t.æn* 'know', etc. when combined with the perfective marker *be-* or \emptyset - imply an achievement sense.

⁵⁷In Persian the conditional meaning can also be implied by rising the tone in the protasis clause, e.g. *u ra di.d.i, sælam.e mæ ra be.res.an* 'if you see him, give him my regards'.

Ex. 4.118. denotes an atelic (to use Vendler's terminology, an activity) situation: *pærvaz kær.d.æn* 'fly' (lit. feather open make) which may be protracted indefinitely. The possibility of atelic situations being protracted indefinitely, does not however affect the meaning of the perfective marker *be-*. Since as Smith (1983: 492) notes, activities like achievement and accomplishment situations have endpoints (activities have arbitrary endpoints, but achievement and accomplishment situations have natural endpoints), and as such, like achievement and accomplishment situations, may be presented as single whole or as continuous (or as in progress) depending on whether they are combined with the perfective marker, or the imperfective marker. The evidence for this is that sentences containing the perfective form of an activity verb cannot be conjoined with sentences expressing the continuation of the atelic situation denoted in the sentence with the perfective form, hence the ungrammaticality of **pær.ænde pærvaz kær.d.∅ væ hanuz hæm pærvaz mi.kon.æd* '*the bird flew (away) and is still flying'.

Ex. 4.119. is an instance of the combination of the perfective marker *be-* with a telic verb (*sax.t.æn* 'make'). Verb phrases consisting of the perfective marker *be-* and a telic verb unlike those consisting of the perfective marker \emptyset - and a telic verb, given the fact these perfective verb forms are subordinate perfective forms with (relative) future time reference, can not be taken to indicate a completed action⁵⁸, i.e. to indicate the end of a situation. Thus, the Perfective forms with the prefix *be-* and a telic verb like other perfective forms with the prefix *be-* invariably present the situation as a single complete whole.

Sentence 4.120. is an example of the combination of the perfective marker *be-* with a punctual verb: *yaf.t.æn* 'find'. As already noted, punctual verbs do not pose any problem for Comrie's definition of perfectivity, namely the presentation of the

⁵⁸The indication of a completed action, as already explained, should not be analysed as one of the secondary meanings of the perfective marker, but rather as the outcome of the interaction between the perfective and the past tense meaning, as the perfective verb forms denoting a future event can not be taken to indicate the situation as completed. This, as Comrie points out, "further demonstrates the inadequacy of 'completed', rather than 'complete', as a characterization of the perfective" (1976: 18).

situation as a single complete whole. The reason for this is that punctual verbs refer to situations that are conceived of as lacking duration, as occurring "all at once, all in a moment" (Allen; 1966: 199), for that matter to say that the perfective aspect presents a punctual situation as completed is like saying that a punctual situation has internal structure.

Finally, ex. 4.121. represents the use of the perfective subordinate form (*be.ya.y.æd* 'comes he') in the protasis clause of a conditional sentence. As has been explained, the great majority of Persian grammarians postulate that in conditional sentences like in any other context, "the basic function of the subjunctive [i.e. of the verb form with the prefix *be-*], is to express potential action" (Windfuhr; 1987: 538). However, the existence of sentences like *belæxære tævanes.t.æm/movvæfæq sho.d.æm u ra be.bin.æm* 'At last, I managed to see him', reveals that the modal notion 'potential' is expressed by other elements present in the sentence rather than by the so-called subjunctive marker *be-*, and that the verb forms with the prefix *be-* must be expressing another meaning in the sentences involving modal notions such as 'potentiality' , 'probability', 'uncertainty', etc. The meaning assigned to this tense-aspect verb form in the present study, given the incompatibility of the perfective non-past with the present time reference, is the expression of (relative) future time reference.

The last issue that should be discussed in relation to the Persian subordinate perfective form is the fact that in Modern Persian both perfective forms, i.e. the perfective past and the subordinate perfective, could be used in conditional clauses to denote possible or real conditions, examples:

4.122. ægær ræf.t.i (pfv. past) sælam.e mæ ra be.res.an.
 if go. pt. you regard. of I o.m. pfv. reach. c.
 If you go, give my regards (to them).

4.123. ægær ælan be.ræv.i (pfv. non-past) u ra
 if now pfv. go. you s/he o.m.

mi.tævan.i be.bin.i.

pfv. can. you pfv. see. you

If you go now, you will be able to see him.

Windfuhr (1987: 540) postulates that the difference between the protasis clauses with the perfective past and the protasis clauses with the subordinate perfective form is that the former denote factual actions and states and the latter potential actions and states: "Factual actions and states are in the indicative, even in conditional clauses . . . Potential actions and states are in the subjunctive . . ." (ibid.). Thus, according to Windfuhr the protasis clause of ex. 4.122. above refers to a factual action, and that of ex. 4.123. refers to a potential action. Windfuhr's distinction between the protasis clauses with the perfective past and those with the subordinate perfective form in terms of denoting a factual versus a potential action is, however, an ad hoc distinction. The reason for this is that conditional sentences like 4.122. may be followed by a comment like *ægær ræf.t.æm* 'If I went' (with the main stress on the conditional particle *ægær* 'if') by the addressee. This shows that the protasis clauses with the perfective past equally denote potential or possible conditions.

Given the fact that Windfuhr's explanation of the difference between protasis clauses with the perfective past and those with the subordinate perfective is inaccurate, the question would then arise what distinguishes these two types of clauses from one another. The view held in the present study is that in the conditional sentences with the perfective past, the verb form of the protasis clause locates the time of the situation designated in the past relative to the time of the situation described by the main verb, whereas in the conditional sentences with the subordinate perfective form the verb form of the protasis clause locates the time of the situation referred to as posterior to the time of speech. In other words, the present study contends that what distinguishes the two types of the protasis clauses is the category of tense rather than the category of mood. The evidence for this is that the perfective past, by virtue of the presence of the past time marker /D/, always has (relative) past time reference, and the subordinate

perfective non-past, by virtue of the presence of the non-past time marker $-\emptyset$, always has (relative) future time reference.

The study of the semantics of the subordinate perfective form completes the analysis of the Persian perfective aspect. The analysis has demonstrated that the grammatical meaning of the Persian perfective markers, namely the presentation of the situation as a single complete whole, does not depend on the context and cannot be changed by it.

4.15. More on the interaction between tense and aspect

Throughout the present study, the grammatical categories of tense and aspect have consistently been distinguished as two independent categories, in order to avoid any confusion in discussing either tense or aspect. However, the categorial autonomy of tense and aspect should not be taken to mean that these two categories never impinge on one another. The present section is thus allocated to the systematic analysis of further relationships between aspect and tense in Modern Persian.

4.15.1 *Perfective, present, and future.*

Comrie (1976: 66) notes that "in languages where the basic tense distinction is between past and non-past, we have, strictly speaking, not the possibility of a perfective present, but rather of a perfective non-past, i.e. of the perfective of the present-future" (ibid.). That is, in these languages, the perfective present form generally refers to a future situation, rather than to a strictly present situation. A typical example of this is the perfective present form of Russian which Bache (1985: 34) claims never refers to a strictly present situation, but to a future situation. Comrie's explanation for this phenomenon is as follows: "Since the present tense is essentially used to describe, rather than to narrate, it is essentially imperfective, either continuous or habitual⁵⁹, and not perfective" (1976: 66). Bache (1985) accounts for this characteristic feature of the (perfective) present forms in a

⁵⁹As has been indicated, the Persian (imperfective) non-past tense is invariably continuous. I.e. it always denotes a situation as continuous. But, depending on whether the given situation is simple or complex, the notion of continuity applies either to a single event or to the habitual occurrence of that event.

rather different way. He asserts that as "the terminal phase of a situation required for perfective focus never dwells long enough in the present moment to inspire a simultaneous representation: it either belongs to the past or to the future" (ibid. :133), the perfective present form may not be used to refer to a strictly present situation.

Given Bache's and Comrie's observations on the perfective present (or alternatively 'non-past') forms, one might expect the Persian perfective non-past (i.e. the non-past verb form without the imperfective prefix *mi-*) in the actual usage to refer to a future situation. Nevertheless, the situation is not that easy in Modern Persian. First, as Windfuhr (1979) rightly suggests, in Modern Persian the imperfective present (non-past), e.g. *mi.pors.æm* 'I am asking' normally replaces the perfective present, e.g. *pors.æm* 'I ask'. I.e. even where one is referring to a future event, the imperfective present is the form which should be used⁶⁰, hence the use of the term 'imperfective non-past' instead of 'imperfective present' in the present study. Second, while almost all Persian verbs only have imperfective forms in the non-past tense, the primary stative verbs *bu.d.æn*⁶¹ 'be' and *dash.t.æn* 'have' only have perfective forms both in the past and the non-past tense, and the stative verb *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish' has both perfective and imperfective forms in the past and non-past tense. The perfective non-past forms of *bu.d.æn*, i.e. *hæst.æm* 'I am', *hæst.i* 'you are', *hæst.ø* 'he is', *bash.æm* '(that) I be', *bash.i* '(that)you be', *bash.æd* '(that) he be' etc. (the perfective non-past forms of *bu.d.æn* constructed from the non-past root *bash* only occur in the subordinate clauses and the imperative), and of *dash.t.æn*⁶² 'have', i.e. *dar.æm* 'I have', *dar.i* 'you have', *dar.æd* 'he has' etc. are primarily present tenses.

⁶⁰Persian unlike Russian does not have an imperfective (periphrastic) future distinct from the imperfective present.

⁶¹As has been pointed out, the copula verb *bu.d.æn* also has an imperfective non-past form (constructed from the imperfective marker *mi-*, the non-past root *bash* 'be', and the appropriate personal ending, e.g. *mi.bash.æm* 'I am/will be', *mi.bash.i* 'you are/will be', etc. which is strictly used in formal speech and writing.

⁶²The perfective non-past forms of *dash.t.æn*, i.e. *dar.æm* 'I have', *dar.i* 'you have', etc. are restricted to the main sentences, and as a consequence the perfect non-past forms of this verb are used instead in the subordinate clauses and the imperative sentences to locate the 'having' situation as simultaneous with the time point established by the main verb or with the present moment, ex: *in ra dash.t.e bash* 'have this'

I.e. they primarily locate the stative situations of 'being' and 'having' as simultaneous with the present moment⁶³. The perfective non-past forms of the stative verbs *bu.d.æn* and *dash.t.æn* present an interesting instance of the categorial interaction between tense, aspect, and Aktionsart, rather than only between tense and aspect. Since their perfective non-past forms unlike those of other lexical verbs primarily have present time reference.

The perfective non-past of *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish', i.e. *xah.æm* 'I want', *xah.i* 'you want', etc. only co-occurs with the short infinitive of a main verb to produce modal constructions such as *xah.æm ræf.t* 'I will go', *xah.i ræf.t* 'you will/shall go'. Traditional grammars treat these verb phrases which are mainly restricted to non-colloquial style of speech and writing as tense constructions and call them 'Simple or Definite Future'. However, as it has been pointed out, the present study maintains that these verb phrases are primarily modal constructions and the only difference between these constructions and those formed from the imperfective non-past of *xas.t.æn* and the subordinate perfective form of the main verb (e.g. *mi.xah.æm be.ræv.æm* 'I want to go') is that the former locate the 'wanting' situation in the future relative to the time of speech, and the latter locate it at the moment of speech.

The last point to take into consideration with respect to the categorial interaction between the present tense and the perfective aspect is that in Modern Persian the imperfective non-past verb form replaces the perfective non-past only in main clauses. In fact, in the majority of subordinate clauses where the time of the situation described is posterior to the time of the situation described by the main verb, such a replacement is not allowed, and the only acceptable verb form is the perfective non-past with the perfective marker *be-*, example:

⁶³Whenever a future time adverbial is present the perfective non-past form of *bu.d.æn* 'be' and *dash.t.æn* 'have' indicate the relevant stative situations as holding at the future time point established by the time adverbial, examples: *færda mæn in.ja hæst.æm* 'tomorrow I am/will be here', *færda to ketab ra dar.i* 'tomorrow you have/will have the book'. Given the fact that stative situations normally extend indefinitely on both sides of the established time point, the above sentences do not necessarily mean that the stative situations denoted, do not hold at the moment of speech.

4.124. mæn del.æm mi.xas.t.ø be tehran be.ræv.æm. (DB 40)

I heart. my ipfv. want. pt. it to Tehran pfv. go. I

I wanted/wished to go to Tehran.

*mæn del.æm mi.xas.t.ø be Tehran mi.ræv.æm.

This last point is particularly significant in that it verifies Comrie's generalization about the perfective present verb forms, namely "the perfective non-past is primarily a future tense" (1976: 67).

4.15.2 *Aspectual distinctions restricted to certain tenses*

One of the most interesting ways in which tense and aspect interact with one another is the restriction of an aspectual distinction to one or more tenses. In the previous section it was noted that the perfective non-past forms of all Persian verbs except those of *bu.d.æn* and *dash.t.æn* cannot be used in main clauses to refer to a present or future situation; in main clauses the perfective non-past forms of verbs are replaced by their imperfective counterparts. This means that in Modern Persian, the aspectual opposition perfective-imperfective is restricted to the past tense, and does not operate across the board independently of tense. In other words, the distinction between *mæn go.f.t.æm* 'I said' and *mæn mi.gof.t.æm* 'I was saying/used to say' has no corresponding distinction in other tenses. Another interesting example of the restriction of the aspectual opposition perfective-imperfective in Persian to one tense is accommodated by the so-called perfect forms. Modern Persian, as it may be recalled, has four perfect forms: the past perfect, e.g. *ræf.t.e bu.d.ø* 'he had gone' (lit. he was gone), the non-past perfect, e.g. *ræf.t.e æst* 'he has gone' (lit. he is gone), the subjunctive perfect, e.g. *ræf.t.e bash.æd* '(that) he has gone' (lit. (that) he is gone), and the double perfect, e.g. *ræf.t.e bu.d.e æst* 'he had gone' (lit. he gone been is). Of these four perfect forms, only the second one may combine with the imperfective marker *mi-*. (The combination of the imperfective marker *mi-* with the non-past perfect tense has been claimed by most Persian grammars to be restricted to the 3rd pers. singular and plural. Nonetheless, the occurrence of sentences like *mæn hæmishe*

æz in.ke mesl.e digæran bash.æm mi.tærs.id.e.æm (perf. ipfv.) *væ mi.tærs.æm* (SK 98) 'I have always feared and fear to be like the other people', in works of fiction shows that this assertion is not absolutely correct).

In relation to the restriction of a given aspectual opposition to one or more tenses, it is worth noting that the Persian progressive aspect with *dash.t.æn* 'have' does not combine with the past perfect, the subjunctive perfect, and the double perfect, and its combination with the non-past perfect like the combination of the imperfective aspect with the non-past perfect, is restricted to the 3rd pers. singular and plural.

Persian is, of course, not the only language where an aspectual distinction is restricted basically to the past tense. As Comrie (1976: 71) notes, in many Indo-European languages, for instance, "the difference between the Aorist and the Imperfect exists only in the past tense, and there is no corresponding distinction in other tenses" (ibid.). Restrictions like these is an indication of the fact that the past tense is the tense that most often evinces aspectual oppositions.

4.15.3 *Narrative present*

Narrative present, i.e. the use of the present tense in place of the past tense, to refer to a past situation, instantiates one interesting facet of the general problem of the relation between tense and aspect. A simple English example of Narrative present would be the use of *I'm sitting on the verandah when up comes Joe and says . . .* rather than *I was sitting on the verandah when up came Joe and said . . .*, and a Persian example of Narrative present would be the use of *ta mi.bin.æd.æm* (ipfv. pres.) (SK 98), *dæst.æsh ra bolænd mi.kon.æd* 'as soon as he sees me, he raises his hand' rather than *ta did.æm* (pfv. pt.), *dæst.æsh ra bolænd kær.d.ø* (pfv. pt.) 'no sooner had he seen me, he raised his hands'. As the reader might have already guessed, while the narrative use of the present tense in English does not pose any problem for aspect, its use in Modern Persian does. This is due to the fact that "the English progressive is not tied to any one tense", [and as a consequence] "the

difference between Progressive and non-progressive is retained, or rather retainable in the displaced version" (Comrie; 1976: 73); but the Persian aspectual distinction between perfective and imperfective is restricted to the past tense, and as a result it cannot be retained in the narrative present. Persian is not however the only language which poses this problem for aspect; according to Comrie (1976) other languages with a perfective-imperfective opposition, e.g. French, Georgian, Bulgarian, etc. give rise to the same problem for aspect.

The study of the general problem of the narrative use of the present tense completes the examination of the interaction between the grammatical categories of tense and aspect. The interaction between tense and aspect is basically manifested in one of the following ways: (a) the perfective present of aspectual languages despite being formally opposed to the imperfective present refers primarily to a future situation rather than to a present situation. (b) the aspectual distinction between perfective and non-perfective is restricted to one or more tenses.

The Persian language exemplifies both of these linguistic generalizations: the subordinate perfective non-past almost primarily has (relative) future time reference, the perfective-imperfective opposition expounded respectively by the absence and the presence of the imperfective marker *mi-* is restricted to the past tense only.

4.16. Aspect: a subjective or an objective category?

As already explained (cf. § 4.9.), aspect is typically described as the speaker/writer's way of looking at a given situation. This suggests that aspect is a subjective category. Thus, it could be argued that the following Persian sentences (both corresponding to English 'Ali lived in Tehran for three years') refer to exactly the same situation of a three-year-long duration, the difference being that the former views it perfectly, i.e. as a single complete whole, but the latter imperfectly, i.e. as continuous.

4.125. æli se sal dær Tehran zendegi kær.d.ø. (pfv.)

4.126. æli se sal dær Tehran zendegi mi.kær.d.ø. (ipfv.)

However, Bache (1982: 66) notes that the choice of aspect is not always optional and that there are cases of obligatory distribution of aspects. One type of evidence is that the present perfective in many aspectual languages, e.g. Russian, Polish, Czech (cf. Comrie; 1976), given the logical incompatibility of the perfective aspect with reference to a process or activity in progress at the time of speaking, regularly has future time reference, thus in describing the situations in progress at the time of speech, the speaker does not have a free choice between a perfective or imperfective view of the situation described, but rather has to use the imperfective non-past. Another type of evidence is the loss of the main clause perfective non-past verb form in Modern Persian. In this language, non-past situations must obligatorily be referred to by the imperfective non-past form. Adverbial concord may also be held responsible for some cases of obligatory distribution of aspects. In Persian, for example, adverbials like *dær yek cheshm be.hæm zæ.d.æn* 'in a split second' (lit. 'in an eye blink'), *nagæhan* 'suddenly' which emphasise the punctual Aktionsart normally combine with the perfective aspect, but adverbials like *modavem* 'continually', normally combine with the imperfective aspect. Aspectual possibilities are also limited when reference is made to a sequence of past events (cf. Smith; 1983: 485). For instance, in Modern Persian, only the perfective verb form may be used when a series of past events is described. The main reason for this is that the Persian imperfective and progressive aspect focus respectively on the continuation and progression of the situation, i.e. on its middle phases rather than on its boundaries or its endpoints which are, according to Heinamaki (Smith; 1983: 485), minimal semantic requirements for successiveness between situations.

The above types of evidence show that although many traditional scholars define aspect in terms of a 'subjective' choice between perfectivity and imperfectivity, "yet there must be 'objective' differences between perfectivity and imperfectivity determining the cases of obligatory distribution" (Bache; 1982: 66). Given this, and the fact that the speaker/writer may choose to view the situation either perfectly (i.e. as a

whole), or imperfectively (i.e. as continuous), where both values are appropriate, Bache quite correctly concludes that

"Although aspect does basically express the speaker's subjective attitude to a given action in the real world, the choice of aspect in a context . . . is to a considerable extent dictated by objective observations of meaning, syntax and expressional emphasis . . ." (ibid. : 66-67).

Given the fact that aspect is basically a subjective category, the present study takes Porzic's characterisation of aspect (1927: 152): "the speaker/writer's view of the action or situation described"⁶⁴ as its working definition. Porzic's definition of aspect is supported by the detailed exposition of Persian aspect presented in this chapter.

4.17. Aspectual verbs of Modern Persian

'Aspectual verbs' (or 'aspectualisers') is the term Freed (1979) uses to denote those verbs which "act as referentials, each referring to one or another of the event-segments named in their complements" (ibid. : ix). According to Freed the following twelve verbs are the most important aspectual verbs in English.

begin	resume	cease
start	repeat	finish
continue	stop	end
keep	quit	complete

Freed characterizes the above verbs as "verbs which take sentential complements, derived nominals, or primitive (concrete) nouns as their objects" (ibid. :1), and considers them as operators operating on these forms. Freed gives the following examples:

⁶⁴The English translation of Porzic's characterisation of aspect which is in German belongs to Bache (1982:64).

- (1) (a) $\left[S_1 \quad \text{NP Vasp} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{to VP} \\ (S_2)_n \end{array} \right] \right]$
 Linda started to write her second book.
- (b) $\left[S_1 \quad \text{NP Vasp} \left[(S_2)_n \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{V-ing X} \\ \text{VP} \end{array} \right] \right] \right]$
 Linda started writing her second book.
- (2) $\left[S_1 \quad \text{NP Vasp} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{NP} \\ (V_2)_n \end{array} \right] \right]$
 Bill started the conversation.
- (3) $\left[S_1 \quad \text{NP Vasp NPprim} \right]$
 Barry started his new car.

In (1) an aspectualizer (*V asp*) operates on a sentential complement (or a nominalized sentence) S_n . "The complement can have either a *to V* or a *V-ing* form. An equi-NP condition usually holds between the main verb (*V asp*) and the complement verb (V_2). . . . In (2) *V asp* operates on a derived nominal (or a nominalized verb) V_n In (3) *V asp* takes as its object a primitive (concrete) noun *N prim*." (Freed; 1979: 2).

Interestingly enough, the Persian translational equivalents of the above English aspectual verbs:

aqaz kær.d.æn	'begin'	tekrar kær.d.æn	'repeat'
shoru' =	'start'	motevæqqef =	'stop'
edame da.d.æn	'continue'	tærk =	'quit'
æz sær geref.t.æn	'resume'	kamel =	'complete'
tæmam kær.d.æn	'finish'		

also refer to one or another of the temporal segments of the given event, and also share certain syntactic properties. Thus, they may take sentential complements, derived nominals, or primitive (concrete) nouns as their objects. The following examples may serve to illustrate the point at issue.

$$4.127. \left[S_1 \begin{array}{c} NP \\ \left[(S_2)_n \quad VP \text{ ra} \right] \end{array} \quad V_{asp} \right]$$

æli name nevesh.t.æn ra shoru' kær.d.ø.
Ali began writing the letter.

$$4.128. \left[\begin{array}{c} NP \\ \left[(V_2)_n \text{ ra} \quad NP \right] \end{array} \quad V_{asp} \right]$$

æli azmza.y.esh ra shoru' kær.d.ø
Ali began the examination.

$$4.129. \left[S_1 \begin{array}{c} NP \quad NP_{prim} \text{ ra} \quad V_{asp} \end{array} \right]$$

æli name ra shoru' kær.d.ø.
Ali began the letter.

Notwithstanding the consistency of the properties which they share, and the reference to one or the other temporal segment of the situation in question, the above Persian verbs⁶⁵ have never been recognized in the literature as the aspectual verbs or aspectualizers. This could well be due to the fact that the aspectual nature of these verbs has not been discovered before. The evidence for this is that in Windfuhr (1979), which is one of the most comprehensive study of Modern Persian, other verbs have been considered as aspectual verbs. One of these verbs is *dash.t.æn* 'have'. Windfuhr asserts that *dash.t.æn* with the three imperfective forms of the main verb (i.e. the imperfective non-past, the imperfective past, and the imperfective perfect) expresses the progressive . . ." (ibid. : 102). The second verb is *geref.t.æn* (non-past root *gir*) 'take'. Windfuhr correctly states that *geref.t.æn* when preceded by the infinitive form of the main verb has inchoative meaning, e.g. *baran bar.id.æn geref.t.ø* 'it began to rain' (lit. rain raining got). The construction infinitive + *geref.t.æn* however occurs only in elevated style.

⁶⁵A comprehensive and systematic analysis of these aspectualizers are beyond the scope of the present study.

The last verb which Windfuhr claims to have an inchoative sense besides its primary lexical sense is *xas.t.æn* 'want'. Windfuhr refers to Lazard (1957: 1950-51), and accepts his contention that in the sentence *bi.chare mi.xah.æd be.mir.æd* 'the poor guy is about to die', *xas.t.æn* 'want' has an inchoative meaning. It is not, however, clear in what way the verb phrase *mi.xah.æd (ke) be.mir.æd* 'he wants/wishes to die' differs from other verb phrases consisting of *xas.t.æn* and the subordinate perfective forms of other verbs, e.g. *mi.xah.æd (ke) name be.nevis.æd* 'he wants to write a letter', where *xas.t.æn* expresses intention, wish, etc., and why in the former but not in the latter *xas.t.æn* has an inchoative meaning. Most probably, Lazard ascribes an inchoative meaning in his example to *xas.t.æn* because people do not normally wish to die, and because his example is usually used by the Persian speakers to imply that the person spoken of is seriously ill, and his death is imminent. However, given the fact that Lazard's example: *mi.xah.æd be.mir.æd* may equally be used to imply that the person spoken of just wishes to die, the inchoative meaning should be taken as a semantic feature of the context of use, rather than as the meaning of the modal verb *xas.t.æn*.

Mention should also be made of the aspectual nature of the verb *sho.d.æn* 'become'. As it was pointed out in chapter one Moyne (1974) maintains that the so-called passive constructions of Modern Persian formed from the past participle and the full paradigm of *sho.d.æn* is in fact inchoative, and like any other verb phrase consisted of an adjective and the verb *sho.d.æn*, e.g. *æli xeli xosh.hal sho.d.∅* 'Ali got/became very happy', indicates the ingression of a new state. I.e. he holds the view that *sho.d.æn* 'become' is invariably an inchoative verb, and as such when combined with the perfective aspect indicates the beginning of a situation. A closer look, however, reveals that *sho.d.æn* is primarily a process verb, and as such does not so much indicate (when combined with perfectivity) the beginning of a new state as the termination of a process which brings about a particular state. Thus, the correct analysis would be to say that the perfective form of the process verb *sho.d.æn*

'become' in sentences like *name nevesh.t.e sho.d.∅* 'letter was written' (lit. became written), *æli æsæbani sho.d.∅* 'Ali got angry' express^{ES} the termination of the writing process and the event which leads to Ali's entry into an angry state. That is, *sho.d.æn* is not so much an inchoative as it is a terminative verb.

The review of Windfuhr's observations on aspectual meaning of certain Persian verbs completes the survey of the Persian aspectual verbs (or aspectualizers, using Freed's term). As already pointed out, this survey is far from complete and a comprehensive study of the syntactic-semantic features of these verbs calls for a large scale research project.

4.18. Conclusion

The objective of the present chapter has been twofold. First to present a complete analysis of the Modern Persian aspectual subsystem, second, to prove that the morphological markers of aspects in Modern Persian each have an invariant, context independent meaning. As regards, the analysis of aspectual subsystem, the present chapter illustrated that the aspect system of Modern Persian has three terms: the perfective, the imperfective and the progressive aspect. The perfective aspect is marked with the zero morpheme \emptyset - in the past tense (the perfective non-past form marked with zero morpheme \emptyset - is strictly restricted to poems, proverbial and gnomic expressions), and with the perfective marker *be-* in the non-past subordinate clauses (the use of the perfective past with the prefix *be-* e.g. *be.ræf.t.∅* 'he went', *be.xan.d.æm* 'I read' in main clauses is archaic and strictly restricted to highly literary texts). Finally, the progressive aspect is marked with the auxiliary verb *dash.t.æn*, and is not restricted to any one of the two tenses: past and non-past.

In order to corroborate that each grammatical marker of aspect in Modern Persian has only one single invariant meaning, the present chapter invoked the general linguistic theory which asserts that each linguistic item present in the linguistic expression has its own meaning, and the overall meaning of the linguistic expression is the sumtotal of the meanings of its components. This resulted in defining the

perfective aspect as the presentation of the situation designated as a single complete whole, the imperfective aspect as describing the situation as continuous, and finally the progressive aspect as describing the situation in progress (The differentiation between the progressive aspect and the imperfective aspect as denoting respectively the action as in progress and as continuous was inspired by the fact that while the progressive does not normally co-occur with stative verbs, the imperfective is not subject to such a restriction and may co-occur with stative or non-stative verbs). The characterisations proposed here for the three aspects: the perfective, the imperfective, and the progressive are further supported by the fact that the perfective verb forms regardless of the objective duration of the situation denoted may combine with the adverbial *dær yek cheshm be hæm zæ.d.æn* 'in a split second' (lit. 'in an eye blink') (which has also the effect of reducing the situation to a single point), and by the fact that sentences containing the progressive or the imperfective constructions generally collocate with sentences which contain a perfective verb form, and as such present the background to the event designated by the perfective verb form.

The proof for the other hypothesis of the present chapter, i.e. the monosemantic nature of the three aspectual markers of Persian is the observation that most of the so-called secondary meanings of these aspectual forms are either dependent on the other linguistic items present in the context of use, or are best analysed in terms of the interaction between the members of the aspect subsystem and the members of other categories normally associated with verbs.

The present chapter has not dealt with perfect forms, due to the fact that the present study does not hold the view that the perfect form should be treated as aspectual forms on a par with the perfective, the imperfective or progressive forms. The perfect forms have been discussed in the previous chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Summary and prospects for future research

5.0. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is twofold; firstly, to summarize the results of the research, secondly, to outline some notes for future research. These notes are seen as an expansion of the scope of the present research studying the tense and aspect system of Modern Persian from a syntactic and semantic point of view.

5.1. Summary of results

Lazard (1970b: 68) remarked ". . . in Persian the verb is an easily definable part of speech with specific morphemes". In terms of prefixation and suffixation the verbal system of Modern Persian is indeed simple; "but the tense, mood, and aspect differentiations implicit in this 'simple' morphology, present considerable problems" (Windfuhr; 1979: 83).

Windfuhr (1979) mentions a number of problems which the verbal system of Modern Persian presents. The first problem is to separate verbal forms which occur in Modern Persian from unproductive (obsolete) forms. Indeed, many linguists have not yet overcome the tradition of listing all forms occurring in Classical Persian: Chodzko (1852: 54-56), who was oriented towards Contemporary Persian, includes e.g., the (non-existing) "compound conditional": *zæ.d.e mi.bu.d.æm* 'I would (have) hit' and the aorist (the perfective non-past, to use the present study's terminology) *zæn.æm* 'I hit, may hit' vs. the 'present' *mi.zæn.æm* 'I hit'" and "Boyle, over one hundred years later (1966: 36) still cites the simple present *pors.æm* ['I ask'] as opposed to the 'continuous present' *mi.pors.æm* ['I am asking]" (Windfuhr; 1979: 84). The present work, on the other hand, overcomes the tradition of listing all forms occurring in Classical Persian and discusses the syntactic and semantic features of only those verbal forms which occur in Modern Persian.

The second problem is to describe the semantics of the two verbal forms which sporadically occur in all periods of Modern Persian, i.e. the perfect imperfective, e.g. *mi.xær.id.e æst* 's/he has been buying', and the double perfect, e.g. *xær.id.e bu.d.e*

æst 's/he is having been bought'. The present dissertation solves this problem successfully, and defines these two verbal forms in a satisfactory way.

The last difficulty, Windfuhr points out is to distinguish clearly between the categories of tense, aspect and mood. The present work overcomes this difficulty, and distinguishes tense, aspect and mood from each other, and in order to keep the project within manageable proportions, studies only tense and aspect. The results of the study of tense and aspect attempted may be summarized as follows:

(a) The study of the Persian verbal forms should be carried out in two stages. In the first stage, the meaning of morphemes expounding the categories of tense, and aspect should be established. In the second stage verb forms should be studied as units.

(b) All reference to objective real world time is contextual.

(c) There is not a one-to-one correspondence between tense-aspect form and time in the real world, i.e. past form for past occurrence, present form for present occurrence, and future form for future occurrence. Nevertheless, some unitary representation of temporal reference is involved in all uses of a given tense-aspect form of Modern Persian in different contexts.

(d) The meanings traditionally assigned to a given verb form of Modern Persian are contextual meanings which are worked out on the basis of the interaction between the context-independent meaning of the verb form in question and other linguistic elements present in the sentence.

(e) Modern Persian tense-aspect forms grammaticalize the semantic notions of anteriority, simultaneity, posteriority, continuity, and progressiveness.

(f) The point of speech is a reference point like any other reference point, and (as Prior notes) a sharp distinction between the point or points of reference and the moment of speech is unnecessary and misleading.

(g) The so-called subjunctive non-past and the subjunctive perfect of Modern Persian belong to the category of tense rather than the category of mood, and as such have nothing to do with the modal notions such as 'doubt', 'uncertainty', 'wish', etc.

(h) The Persian perfect forms are tense rather than aspectual forms and locate the state of having performed an action at a given time point. The given time point is a reference point in the past with respect to the deictic centre of the context in the case of the past perfect, and the deictic centre itself in the case of non-past perfect forms, i.e. the other perfect forms of Modern Persian.

(i) All that the past tense marker /D/ means is that there is a reference point subsequent to the time of the situation.

(k) The major tense split in Modern Persian is between anterior and non-anterior.

5.2. Prospects for future research

5.2.1. *The study of the category of mood*

The grammatical categories of tense and aspect are in practice two of the three categories generally associated with the verb. The category of mood is the third category. The present work has not investigated the mood system of Modern Persian for the following reasons. First, the study of the mood system as well as that of tense and aspect system was beyond the scope of the research. Second, while in Modern Persian tense and aspect are marked morphologically on the verb, the category of mood is lexicalized. The modal verbs of Persian are *xas.t.æn* 'want, wish', *bayes.t.æn* 'it is necessary', *shayes.t.æn* 'it is apt, worthy', and *tævanes.t.æn* 'can'.

The Persian modals have already been studied in Marashi (1972) and Farrokhpay (1979). These studies were however conducted within the framework of the theory of one form several meanings, and as such have assigned at least two meanings to each modal verb: a deontic and an epistemic sense. It is the view of the present research that a syntactic and semantic study of the modal verbs of Modern Persian within the framework of the theory of one form one meaning, and of their interactions with other elements of the linguistic expression, especially the categories of tense and aspect, is not only worth while, but also necessary. The recommended study can benefit considerably from Perkins' analysis of the English modals. Perkins

(1980) isolates "a single core meaning for each of the English modals which is independent of its context of use" (ibid. : 245).

5.2.2. *The study of the aspectual verbs of Modern Persian*

As pointed out in chapter 4, a number of verbs in Modern Persian act as referentials, and refer to one or another of the event-segments named in their complements. These verbs, as has been explained, take sentential complements, derived nominals, or primitive (concrete) nouns as their objects. The present study, following Freed (1979), has called these verbs 'aspectual verbs'. Aspectual verbs of Modern Persian have not so far received a proper analysis, and the survey of these verbs in the present research is far beyond complete. Thus, a comprehensive study of the syntactic-semantic features of Modern Persian aspectual verbs (alternatively, aspectualizers) would be recommended.

5.2.3. *Diachronic study of tense-aspect system of Modern Persian*

As it was pointed out, in chapter 2, the present research is a synchronic study, and as such is concerned solely with the tense and aspect system of Contemporary Standard Persian rather than with its historical evolution through various stages. Thus, a diachronic study of the tense and aspect system of Persian, i.e. a study of the formal-functional relationships between the various synchronic systems from pre-Aryan to Modern Contemporary Persian can be seen as an expansion of the scope of the present dissertation.

Another interesting diachronic and sociolinguistic research would be the case of the progressive constructions formed from the auxiliary verb *dash.t.aen* 'have' and the three imperfective forms of the verb (i.e. the imperfective non-past, the imperfective past, and the perfect imperfective). These constructions, as has been explained, are totally ignored in most of the Persian Grammars which are traditional in approach. In spite of that, these verb constructions "have been accepted in Standard Colloquial Persian as well as in works of fiction" (Windfuhr; 1979: 102), and have been described in some modern grammars and textbooks, and in articles by Persians, e.g.

by Keshavarz (1962), Dehghan (1972), Bassari (1967). etc.. The present work also considers the verb constructions with the auxiliary verb *dash.t.aen* as separate verb categories of Modern Persian. A diachronic and sociolinguistic study analysing the speech of the different groups of Persian speakers with different levels of education and social background may further support the position taken in this study.

5.2.4. *The tense and aspect system of the different dialects of Modern Persian*

The present work has primarily been concerned with the Tehrani dialect¹ of Modern Persian, i.e. with the dialect which is spoken in Tehran, the capital of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, in order to be able to construct a system of tense and aspect which subsumes all the dialects of Modern Persian, in particular dialects spoken outside the Iranian territory, e.g. in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and Russia, it would be necessary to study first the tense and aspect systems of the other major dialects. The present dissertation regards the analysis of the verbal forms of the major dialects of Modern Persian as the expansion of its scope in a new dimension.

5.2.5. *Tense and aspect system of other Iranian languages*

"The Iranian languages, of which the Persian branch is the most important, belong to the Indo-European family, within which Old Iranian and Sanskrit form the Aryan group (the term "Aryan" and "Iran" having a common origin)" (Britannica; 1964: Vol. 12, p. 585). Other important Iranian languages are Pushtu, Urdu, Gojorati, Yaghnobi (a modern descendant of Sogdian), and Ossetic (spoken in the heart of Caucasian mountains south of Vladikavkaz). It goes without saying that the syntactic and semantic study of the tense and aspect systems of these languages could shed more light on the tense and aspect system of Persian in its former stages, and for that reason can be seen as an expansion of the scope of the present research.

¹The present writer himself speaks in Tehrani dialect.

THE SOURCES OF THE DATA

- AM: Jalal Ale Ahmad, Modir.e Mædrese (Amir Kabir).
AS: Jalal Ale Ahmad, Setar (Amir Kabir).
AT: Jalal Ale Ahmad, Tærs.o Lærz (Zaman).
DB: Simin Daneshvar, Be Ki Sælam Konæm (Xarazmi)
MH: Ahmad Mahmoud, Hæmsayeha (Amir Kabir).
MK: Jævad Mojabi, Kætibe Chænd Ghesse (Amir Kabir).
MK: Gouhar Morad, Karbafakha dar sangar (Sepehr).
SGH: Ahmad Sokkoni, Ghessehaye an donya (Amir Kabir).

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