4 Verbal category II: Inherent

4.1. Preview

As the title of this chapter suggests, this chapter will deal with the inherent categories relating to the verb in MKR. As discussed in §2.4, the inherent categories refer to intrinsic properties that are found with particular words. Tense, aspect, and mood (TAM) are three prototypical inherent categories associated with the verb. All three categories are found in MKR and the purpose of this present chapter is to discuss each of them in turn.

By way of preparing a general background, a discussion of TAM will be presented first. Next, the TAM system of MKR will be surveyed in the light of this general discussion.

Tense has been defined as a grammaticalized expression of location in time (Comrie 1985: 9), and this temporal location is deictic in nature. Because of the unavailability of any orientational means of locating situations in time, some arbitrary reference point becomes necessary. Such a reference point can be of help in locating the situation being talked about in terms of a timeline. For the category of tense, the present moment is usually taken as this arbitrary reference point. Tense as well as the various subcategories subsumed under it serve to locate situations in the following ways: (a) at the same time as the present moment (b) prior to the present moment, (c) subsequent to the present moment. This concept can be illustrated with the help of a timeline, as in Figure 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past tense</th>
<th>Present tense</th>
<th>Future tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Figure 4.1 The timeline

When tense locates a situation at the present moment, it is termed as the present tense; when it locates a situation prior to the present moment, that is called the past tense; finally, when the situation indicated is subsequent to the present moment, it is
called the future tense. These three subcategories of tense are considered within a broad type called Absolutive Tense\(^1\) in the linguistic tradition. In absolutive tense, the present moment is considered as a reference point for locating a situation in time as opposed to Relative Tense where a different reference point is used. In the latter case, tense marking is used to locate the time of one situation relative to the time of another situation. Such tense distinctions are expressed through verbal morphology in many languages of the world.

Apart from verbal morphology, the meaning and opposition of tenses can be expressed by different temporal adverbs (Comrie 1985). There are some languages where no verbal morphology is used to express tense oppositions. In these languages, the meaning of tense is expressed by temporal adverbs or by some lexically composite expressions. Other languages use both conventions. In such languages, the temporal adverb generally serves to locate situations more accurately before or after a given reference point. By using these temporal adverbs, a language can distinguish various degrees of distance. Some languages, however, have verbal morphology to indicate this distinction (Comrie \textit{ibid.}: 83).

The category of aspect is closely related to tense. It is a category that provides different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation (Comrie 1976: 3). Like tense, it does not provide any information about the location of an event in time. Rather, it exhibits the internal organization of the event in time. The internal organisation relates to factors such as the static or dynamic nature of the event, its duration, end point, iterativity etc. There are two ways in which information regarding aspectual distinctions across languages is expressed. These are grammatical aspect and lexical aspect. Grammatical aspect is expressed by verbal affixation as well as periphrastically, with the help of grammatical aspectual auxiliaries. Lexical aspect is expressed by the inherent aspectual properties of the predicate itself and sometimes by a special set of lexical aspectual auxiliaries. Aspectual distinctions of both kinds can be shown with the help of following diagram.

\footnote{Regardless of the controversy concerning its use, (cf. Comrie 1985:36), this term is adopted here to simply refer to the present moment as the deictic centre, in relation to which the tense system of MKR can be discussed.}
Mood is associated with the speaker's attitude towards the situation or the speaker's commitment to the probability that the situation is true (Payne 1997: 234). The category of mood is semantically correlatable to various notions like possibility, probability, certainty, ability, necessity, willingness, permission, suggestion and so on.

The foregoing discussion was intended as a general background on TAM. These categories will now be considered in the context of MKR.

MKR shows the distinction of present, past, and future tense with the help of a special set of suffixes. It has two distinct markers for past and future reference while the reference of present tense is unmarked. In addition, non-finite constructions involved the use of relative tense. The meaning of this tense is also expressed by means of verbal morphology. MKR also seems to use a set of temporal adverbs which express degrees of remoteness through the colligation of tenses. The next section (§4.2.2) deals with absolute tense, followed by a section on relative tense (§4.2.3) and a section on the role of time adverbials in expressing degrees of remoteness (§4.2.4).

MKR uses both grammatical aspect and lexical aspect. Grammatical aspect is expressed by verbal suffixation and by the grammatical aspectual auxiliaries. Lexical aspect is expressed by lexical aspectual auxiliaries, and sometimes by the inherent

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2 This diagram is taken from Tamuli (1998: 137).
properties of the predicate itself. These aspectual distinctions will be taken up in §4.3. The aspectual meaning of verbs can also be sometimes expressed by specific adverbials (cf. §4.3.2).

The meaning of mood is expressed by verbal inflections and by modal auxiliaries. The category of mood is sometimes cumulatively expressed by the tense markers in MKR. These issues are discussed in §4.4.

Along with tense, aspect, and mood, this chapter will also include a discussion of the causatives and negatives found in MKR. It is true that these two aspects cannot be treated as inherent grammatical categories of the verb in the same lines of tense, aspect, and mood. Nor are they semantically related to the concept of tense, aspect, and mood. However, morphologically, they occupy their places within the range of the verb form as do the categories of tense, aspect and mood. Moreover, as elements attached to the verb (cf. §3.1), the causatives participate in the process of valence changing. Causatives and negatives will be dealt with in §4.5 and §4.6 respectively.

This chapter also offers a brief account of each category as used in modern Assamese in the relevant sections to indicate changes in the language between the stages of MKR and modern Assamese.

4.2. Tense

4.2.1. Overview

This section will deal with three main aspects of tense as follows: absolute tense (§4.2.2), relative tense (§4.2.3) and the role of time adverbials in order to express degrees of remoteness (§4.2.4). The basic aspects of the tense system of modern Assamese are presented in (§4.2.5) in order to enable a comparison of the tense systems of the two stages of Assamese. §4.2.6 summarises those features of tense that are shared by these two stages.

4.2.2. Absolute tense

As stated in the previous section, MKR shows a distinction of three tenses: present tense, past tense and future tense, and the meaning of the three tenses is provided by means of
verbal suffixation. MKR takes two distinct markers for the past and future tense: -lil ‘PST’, and -b/-ib ‘FUT’ as illustrated in (1) and (2).

**Past tense**

(1) aponara acara karila nariaga
    apona-ra acara kar-il-a nari-ga-e
    self-GEN custom do-PST-3 woman-PL-ERG

    ‘The women performed their custom.’

    Ay, Ch. 1, V. 40

**Future tense**

(2) acinte kariba nidra dewata asura.
    a-cint-e kar-ib-a nidra dewata asura
    NEG-worry-LOC do-FUT-3 sleep deity demon

    ‘The deity and demon will sleep without any worry.’

    (Lañ, Ch. 37, V. 24)

There is no formal marker for the present tense. The present reference is cumulatively expressed by the person markers. The verb forms in (3) and (4) show the association of the person markers with the present tense.

**Present tense**

(3) patala nagaloke moke kare sewa.
    patal-ara naga-lok-e mo-k-e kar-e sewa
    Patal-GEN snake-PL-ERG I-DAT-EMPH do-3.PR worship

    ‘The snakes of the Patal world worship me.’

    (Ar, Ch. 13, V. 7)

(4) puspabana sugandhe amoda kare mana.
    puspabana sugandh-e amoda kar-e mana
    flower garden fragrance-ERG pleasure do-3.PR mind

    ‘The fragrance of the flower of the garden give pleasure to the mind’

    (Ay, Ch. 1, V. 9)

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3 Patal is any one of the seven regions under the earth.
Besides present reference, the present tense form in MKR is also used to narrate an event of a situation as in (5) and (6).

(5)  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{rama} & \text{sita} & \text{krītā} & \text{kare} \quad \text{citrakūṭa} & \text{bane} \\
\text{rama} & \text{sita} & \text{krītā} & \text{kar-e} \quad \text{citrakūṭa} & \text{ban-e}
\end{array}
\]
Rama  Sita  play  do-3.PR  Citrakut  forest-LOC

‘Ram and Sita are playing in the forest of Citrakuta.’

(Ay, Ch. 35, V. 1)

(6)  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
tapana & \text{sahite} & \text{yuddha} & \text{kare} \quad \text{kapi} & \text{gaja} \\
tapana & \text{sahite} & \text{yuddha} & \text{kar-e} \quad \text{kapi} & \text{gaja}
\end{array}
\]
sun  with  fight  do-3.PR  monkey  PL

‘The monkeys are fighting with the sun.’

(Lañ, Ch. 9, V. 51)

From examples (5) and (6), it can be seen that instead of using present progressive forms, the simple present forms have been used to narrate the events described by the verbs. This kind of narrative use of the present form is frequent in MKR. This is because the story is being described by the author in a manner as if he is watching the events happening in Rāmāyana and describing them like a cricket commentary. This kind of present usage is described as historic present in the linguistic tradition.

To describe certain beliefs and truths relating to Hindu culture, the author seems to have used the simple present tense form as illustrated in (7).

(7)  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
jala & \text{piṅḍa} & \text{dāne} & \text{kare} \quad \text{bansāka} & \text{uddhāra} \\
jala & \text{piṅḍa} & \text{dān-e} & \text{kar-e} \quad \text{bansa-ka} & \text{uddhāra}
\end{array}
\]
water  lump  offering-ERG  do-3.PR  family-DAT  salvation

‘The offering of water and lump brings salvation to the family.’

(Kis, Ch. 16, V. 22)

4.2.3. Relative tense

Relative tense is found in MKR in non-finite constructions. The verbs of a main clause found in complex sentences receive absolute time reference, while the non-finite verbs receive relative time reference. The relative time reference of non-finite verbs is sometimes found as simultaneous with the time reference of the main verb as in (8)-(10).

\[4\] A lump or ball of rice mixed with milk, sugar, and so on, offered to the soul of a deceased person.
In (8), the time reference of 'look-NF' is simultaneous with the time reference of the main verb 'got-PST-3'. Since the time reference of 'paila' is past and it has the status of a finite verb, 'paila' receives absolute time reference. On the other hand, the time reference of 'cahante' is interpreted as simultaneous with that past moment in time, 'cahante' gets relative time reference. A different interpretation is available if the tense of the main verb is changed from past to future, keeping the non-finite form unchanged, as in (9). Here, 'khojante' 'want-NF' indicates a situation that is simultaneous with the time reference of the main verb 'haiba' 'become-FUT'. The situation described by 'khojante' in (9) will be interpreted as having a future reference, given the future tense of 'haiba'. Thus, the relevant factor in the choice of this non-finite form is relative time reference, not absolute time reference.

(9) bistara bilamba haiba ausadhi khojante
  bistara bilamba ha-ib-a ausadhi khoj-ante
  many late be-FUT-3 medicine search-NF
  ‘There will be much delay while looking for medicine.’
  (Lañ, Ch. 46, V. 51)

Sometimes, the relative tense locates a situation at a time that is prior to the situation described by the main verb, as in (11)-(13).
rājāyō  śhante  mota  puchilanta  kāja
raja-yō  śh-ante  mo-ta  puch-il-anta  kāja
king-EMPH  come-NF  I-LOC  ask-PST-3  work

'The king asked me about the matter when he came.'
(Ay, Ch. 23, V. 25)

jala  pāna  karāyā  ghonrāka  dilā  ghāsa.
jala  pāna  kar-āyā  ghonrā-ka  di-lā  ghāsa
water  drink  do-NF  horse-DAT  give-PST-3  grass

'The horse was given grass after being made to drink water.'
(Ay, Ch. 18, V. 21)

aranya  erāyā  pāila  baruṇa  ālaya
aranya  er-āyā  pā-il-a  baruṇa  ālaya
forest  leave-NF  reach-PST-3  cloud  residence

'After crossing the forest, (s/he/they) reached the residence of cloud.'
(Ar, Ch. 15, V. 126)

In (11-13), the time of the events described by the non-finite verbs (āhante in (11), karāyā in (12), and erāyā in (13)) are located prior to the events described by the main verbs puchilanta, dilā, and pāila.

Sometimes, the notion of relative tense is also expressed by the pluperfect in MKR. However, as in English, there is no distinct form to indicate pluperfect. At the same time, MKR uses some other devices to convey the meaning of pluperfect. At times, the meaning of pluperfect is implied by the context, as in (11)-(13) above. In other instances, this is expressed by the use of specific time adverbial as in (14) and (15).

sokaka  tambāyā  pāce  bākya  bulilanta
sok-aka  tamb-āyā  pāce  bākya  bul-il-anta
sadness-DAT  suppress-NF  after  dialogue  say-PST-3

'Having suppressed the sadness, (s/he) said the dialogue.'
(Ay, Ch. 26, V. 25)
'Having listened, the king Guha said the dialogue.'

(Ay, Ch. 32, V. 25)

The pluperfect in the pāče/pāče 'after' clause describes past situations (tambāyā 'having suppressed', suni 'having listened') completed prior to some other past situations denoted by the matrix verbs buliliana 'say-PST-3' in (14) and bulīlā 'say-PST-3' in (15).

4.2.4. The Role of time adverbials

MKR does not have any grammatical marker to express degrees of remoteness. The category of remoteness is expressed by temporal adverbs which occur with all tenses. These serve to locate a situation more accurately before or after a given reference point as (16-18) illustrate.

(Ay, Ch. 3, V. 71)

(Ay, Ch. 3, V. 38)

(Ay, Ch. 7, V. 14)
In (16-18), the temporal adverbs aji ‘today’, kāli ‘tomorrow’, and etiksane ‘this moment’ indicate different degrees of remoteness relative to the future reference point. The adverb etiksane in (18) conveys the meaning of a more immediate future than the adverb aji. Again, aji implies the meaning of a more recent future than that expressed by the adverb kāli.

4.2.5. Tense in modern Assamese

As mentioned in §4.2.1, this section seeks to provide a brief description of the tense system in modern Assamese so that some aspects of the development of Assamese between the MKR stage and modern Assamese can be examined. It should be pointed out that not all aspects of tense in modern Assamese are discussed here. This section presents only those features of tense in modern Assamese which correspond to the features of tense found in MKR.

Like MKR, modern Assamese also has three tenses. However, morphologically only two distinct suffixes are found to mark the tense distinctions. These are -l/-il for the past tense and -b/-iba for the future tense. The meaning of the present tense is jointly expressed by the personal suffixes. (19-21) illustrate all these three tenses.

**Present tense**

(19)  
\[
\text{hi skulot kam kore} \\
\text{hi skul-ot kam kor-e} \\
\text{he-INF.DST school-LOC work do-3} \\
\text{‘He works in a school.’}
\]

**Past tense**

(20)  
\[
\text{hi tumar kantu korile.} \\
\text{hi tuma-r kantu kor-il-e} \\
\text{he-INF.DST you-GEN work-CLF do-PST-3} \\
\text{‘He did your work.’}
\]
Future tense

(21) hi tumar kamtu koribo.
hi tuma-r kam-tu kor-ib-o
he.INF.DST you-GEN work-CLF do-FUT-3

'He will do your work.'

Unlike in MKR, the future tense suffix in modern Assamese has two allomorphs. These are -b/-ib, when the verb is marked for the second person and third person, and -im, when the verb is marked for the first person. This indicates that as in the case of the present tense, the future tense in modern Assamese is also jointly expressed by the person marker. However, unlike the present tense, the joint expression of the future tense is limited to the first person only, as illustrated in (22).

(22) moi/ami tumar kamtu korim.
moi/ami tuma-r kam-tu kor-im
I/we you.FAM-GEN work-CLF do-FUT.1

'I/we will do your work.'

In contrast, MKR takes the -b/-ib suffix in case of all persons as stated earlier.

As in the case of MKR, the function of relative tense in modern Assamese is found in non-finite constructions. The co-occurrence of the verbs of matrix predicates with the verb forms taking non-finite markers -ôte, -i, -ile etc. serves to express the meaning of relative tense in modern Assamese, as (23-26) illustrate.

Simultaneous event

(23) moi kolezoloi zaüte tak dekʰisīlu
moi kolez-oloi za-üte ta-k dekʰ-is-il-u
I college-DRT gO-NF he.INF.DST-DAT see-IPFV-PST-1

'I saw him while I was going to school.'

Prior event

(24) hi ḅat kʰai ga ǵui skuloloi zaj
hi ḅat kʰa-i ga ǵu-i skul-oloi za-j
he.INF.DST rice eat-NF body wash-NF school-DIRT go-3.HAB

'After having rice and taking a bath, he goes to school.'
Conditional

(25) moi sit\textsuperscript{i} lik\textsuperscript{h}ile hi ah\textsuperscript{b}o.
moi sit\textsuperscript{i} lik\textsuperscript{h}-ile hi ah\textsuperscript{b-o}
I letter write-NF he.INF.DST come-FUT-3

‘He will come if I write a letter.’

Pluperfect

(26) moi gor\textsuperscript{t} ah\textsuperscript{i} pa\textsuperscript{o}te hih\textsuperscript{ot} hule
moi gor\textsuperscript{t} ah\textsuperscript{i} pa-\textsuperscript{o}te bi-h\textsuperscript{ot} bu-l-e
I house-LOC come-NF get-NF he.INF.DST-PL sleep-PST-3

‘They had slept when I reached home.’

The form -\textsuperscript{ote} in examples (23) and (26) seems to be inherited from -\textsuperscript{ante} ‘NF’ in MKR. The markers -\textsuperscript{i}, and -\textsuperscript{ile} are found to exist since the time of MKR. It is likely that apart from these four forms, there are other instances of relative tense in modern Assamese. However, their study is beyond the scope of the present work.

4.2.6. Summary

This section seeks to summarise the similarities between the language of MKR and modern Assamese. Three oppositions of the category of tense are found, as Table 4.1 illustrates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense distinctions</th>
<th>MKR</th>
<th>modern Assamese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>-e, -aya</td>
<td>-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>-l/-il</td>
<td>-l/-il</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>-b/-ib, -im</td>
<td>-b\textsuperscript{b}/-ib, -im</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Aspect

4.3.1. Overview

As mentioned in §4.1, the aspecual distinction is expressed in two ways in MKR. One is by using morphology and the other is by using a special set of auxiliaries. Apart from these two, the aspecual distinction is indicated by the inherent aspecual properties of various classes of lexical items known as lexical aspec. The three aspecual distinctions
are discussed as follows - morphological aspect (§4.3.2), aspectual auxiliaries (§4.3.3). Lexical aspect is discussed in relevant places of (§4.3.2 and §4.3.3). As with §4.2, a brief discussion of aspectual category in modern Assamese is presented in §4.3.4 to enable a comparison of the changes between the language of MKR and modern Assamese.

4.3.2. Morphological aspect

There appears to be a binary opposition of the perfective aspect and the imperfective aspect in MKR. But morphologically, only the suffix -ich 'IPFV' is found to express aspect. -ich expresses the imperfective aspect as well as the present perfect. Out of the five occurrences of -ich in the entire text, only one occurrence expresses the imperfective aspect and that too as past imperfective, as in (31) below. The present imperfective is not found in MKR. It may be noted that the imperfective aspect is also expressed periphrastically by the auxiliary verb āch 'be'. In fact, the latter usage is more frequent than the former (cf. §4.3.3).

The function of -ich

As Present perfect

(27)  
\[
\text{akṣa} \quad \text{kumāraka} \quad \text{pūrbbe} \quad \text{karicho} \quad \text{sanhāra} \\
\text{akṣa} \quad \text{kumār-aka} \quad \text{pūrbbe} \quad \text{kar-ich-o} \quad \text{sanhāra}
\]

Akhya prince-DAT earlier do-IPFV-1 destroy

'(I/we) have killed Prince Akhya earlier.'

(Laṅ, Ch. 17, V. 51)

(28)  
\[
\text{sumantra} \quad \text{kahiche} \quad \text{mota} \quad \text{tomāra} \quad \text{guṇa} \quad \text{yata} \\
\text{sumantra} \quad \text{kah-ich-e} \quad \text{mo-ta} \quad \text{tomā-ra} \quad \text{guṇa} \quad \text{yata}
\]

Sumantra tell-IPFV-3 I-LOC you.FAM-GEN quality how much

'Sumantra has told me about all your qualities.'

(Ay, Ch. 3, V. 22)
However, the aspectual meaning carried by (30) is not similar to the aspectual meaning expressed in (27)-(29). In (30), the occurrence of the inherent punctual verb mar ‘kill’ along with repetitive adverbial aneka bār ‘several times’, gives -ich an iterative sense, and the whole sentence expresses a past iterative meaning.

**Past imperfective**

(31) eka beli āśichila kṣamā nāhi tawa
eka beli āś-ich-il-a kṣamā nāhi tawa
one time come-IPFV-PST-3 forgive no you
‘You came once, (so) there is no forgiveness for you.’
(Su, Ch. 17, V. 37)

In contrast with the imperfective, there is no distinct marker for the perfective aspect in MKR. It is expressed cumulatively by the simple past stems, as exemplified in (32-33).

(32) khaṅgāla gomara kaṅkālata dile lāthi
khaṅgāla gomara kaṅkāl-at-a di-l-e lāthi
angry snake waist-LOC give-PST-3 kick
‘(S/he) kicked the angry snake in the waist.’
(Ar. Ch. 6, V. 114)
In (32) and (33), the perfective aspect is covertly expressed by the verb forms 
\textit{dile} 'gave' and \textit{kahile} 'told' which are in the simple past. In both examples, the verb forms present a situation as a whole, without any focus on the internal structure of the situation denoted by the verbs.

Unlike the imperfective, habitual aspect is not marked in MKR, but covertly expressed with the agreement marker of the first person, as in (34) and (35).

\begin{verbatim}
(34) pāṭālara nāga loke moke kare sewā
    Patal-GEN snake PL-ERG I-DAT-EMPH do-3.HAB worship
\end{verbatim}

'SThe snakes of the Patal worship me.'

(Ay, Ch. 13, V. 7)

\begin{verbatim}
(35) ṛṣi saba mārīyā rudhira kare pāna
    sage PL kill-NF blood do-3.HAB drink
\end{verbatim}

'(S/he) drinks the blood of sages after killing them.'

(Ar, Ch. 6, V. 35)

The habitual meaning can sometimes be determined by co-occurring adverbials, as in (36) and (37).

\begin{verbatim}
(36) candra sūryye anukūle sewā kare nīta
    moon sun properly worship do-3.HAB daily
\end{verbatim}

'The moon and the sun worship properly and regularly.'

(Ar, Ch. 16, V. 19)
'(S/he) worshipped the parents regularly.'

(Ay, Ch. 1, V. 47)

The temporal adverb nita ‘daily’ in (36) occurs with the present indefinite form and expresses a present habitual meaning. In (37), however, nite ‘daily’ occurs with the simple past tense form and exhibits a past habitual meaning.

4.3.3. Aspectual auxiliary

Two kinds of aspectual auxiliaries are found in MKR: The grammatical aspectual auxiliary āch ‘be’, and the lexical aspectual auxiliaries zā ‘go’, thāk ‘stay’, and pelā ‘throw’. The grammatical aspectual auxiliary āch is a periphrastic realisation of the aspectual suffix -ich IPFV. It is used to mark the progressive, as in (38) and (39).

(38) āśiyā āchanta āge sumitrā lakṣmaṇe
āś-i-yā āch-anta āge sumitrā lakṣman-e
come-NF be-3 in the front Sumitra lakṣman-ERG

‘Laksman, the son of Sumitra, is coming in the front.’

(Ay, Ch. 3, V. 43)

(39) ākāśata dēwagaṇa cāhyā āchanta
ākāś-ata dēwa-gaṇa cāh-i-yā āch-anta
sky-LOC deity-PL look-NF be-3

‘The deities are looking on from the sky.’

(Lañ, Ch. 17, V. 132)

In most cases, the aspectual meaning of the auxiliary āch is determined by the lexical semantics of the main verb. Accordingly, two kinds of progressive meaning of āch are expressed: dynamic progression and stative progression.

The sense of dynamic progression is expressed by the auxiliary āch occurring with dynamic verbs like kānd ‘cry’, has ‘laugh’ and yujh ‘fight’, as in (40)-(42).
'The husband is crying because of the fear of death.'

(Husband's death)

'Holding the summit of the mountain, and looking towards Lanka, (Nil, the bear) is smiling.'

(Ram's fight)

The meaning of stative progression is expressed by the co-occurrence of stative verbs like *bas* 'sit', *sut* 'sleep' and *par* 'fall' with *acht*, as illustrated in (43)-(45).

'He sees Kaikeyi is sleeping in the anger-house.'

'Two brothers are lying under the rabi tree.'
Generally, an imperfective form does not occur with an achievement verb because of the differences in their inherent semantics. However, in MKR, the imperfective *ach* occurs with the achievement verb *mar* ‘die’ as in (46) and indicates an ongoing event consisting of a durative span followed by a natural endpoint.

(46) bharata bhaiyai, marante achya, erileka raja bhoga
bharata bhaiyai mara-nte ōch-aśya ēr-il-eka rāja bhoga
Bharata brother die-NF be-3 leave-PST-3 king enjoyment

‘Brother Bharat is dying, he has abandoned all the royal enjoyment.’

(Lañ, Ch. 53, V. 9)

Apart from the grammatical auxiliary *ach*, three lexical aspectual auxiliaries (also known as vectors), are found in MKR. These are *thāk* ‘stay’, *pelā* ‘throw’, and *za* ‘go’. When these auxiliaries occur with main verbs, they express meanings of experience, progression/continuation, state, result, completion, and so on. The examples in (47-56) illustrate these various meanings.

**Experience**

(47) tileko nāpekṣi, agniśara gaileka, dekhı,
    til-ek-o nā-pekṣ-i agniśara ga-il-eka dekh-i
moment-one-EMPH NEG-wait-NF fire-arrow see-NF

jatāyū gaileka darı,
jatāyū ga-il-eka dar-i
Jatayu go-PST-3 fear-NF

‘Upon seeing the fiery arrow, within an instant, Jatayu became afraid.’

(Kis, Ch. 25, V. 14)

(48) ākarpa sabada mili gailā kolāhala
    ākarpa sabada mil-i ga-il-ā kolāhala
to the ear word meet-NF go-PST-3 noise

‘The words reaching the ear made noise.’

(Lañ, Ch. 9, V. 16)

---

5 An achievement verb is a punctual verb with a natural endpoint. For a discussion on the classification of verbs according to temporal features, see (Vendler 1967)

6 Arrow made by fire
Result

(49) sukāi gaila saskasama pāṇji hena keśa
sukā-ī ga-il-a saskasama pāṇji hena keśa
dry-NF go-PST-3 like skin CLF like hair

'The long and thick hair became dry like skin.'

(50) prthiwi para gailā cūrikṣta hui
prthiwi-ta par-i ga-il-ā cūrikṣta ha-i
eargh-LOC fall-NF go-PST-3 break into pieces become-NF

'(The mountains) Fell on the earth, breaking into pieces.'

(51) nirantare laṅkā, uthal gaila ghrta āgutira gandhe
nirantare laṅkā uthal-i ga-il-ā ghrta āguti-ra gandh-e
incessantly Lanka rise-NF go-PST-3 ghee sacrifice-GEN scent-LOC

'Without ceasing, Lanka is used rose to the scent of sacrificial butter.'

State

(52) camatkāre thākī gailā bhuvana bhitarā
camatkār-e thāk-i ga-il-ā bhuvana bhitarā
marvelous-AVZR stay-NF go-PST-3 world inside

'(They) remained marvellously inside the world.'

Progression

(53) sainyaka ākali rāme thākī gaila hāsi
sainya-ka ākali rām-e thāk-i ga-il-a hās-i
soldier-DAT hug Ram-ERG stay-NF go-PST-3 smile-NF

'Hugging the soldiers, Ram continued to smile.'

(54) kāndante thākilā keho dharāṇita luti
kānd-ante thāk-il-ā keho dharāṇi-ta luf-i
cry-NF stay-PST-3 some people earth-LOC roll-NF

'Some people kept crying and rolling on the earth.'
(55) \textit{bisbamitra janakeyo thäkilanta cäi} \\
\textit{bisbamitra janak-e-yo thäk-il-anta cä-i} \\
Bisbamitra Janak-ERG-EMPH stay-PST-3 look-NF  \\
'Bisbamitra and Janak also kept looking.'  \\
(Ar, Ch. 1, V. 92)

Completion  

(56) \textit{āṭhagoṭā siddha hāte ācāri pelāila} \\
\textit{āṭha-goṭā siddha hāt-e ācār-i pelā-il-a} \\
eight-CLF skilled hand-AVZR jerk-NF throw-PST-3  \\
'(It) was jerked away with the help of eight skilled hands.'  \\
(Ar, Ch. 2, V. 68)

In all these examples, the non-finite markers attached to the verbs occur as \textit{ante-aspectizers} in terms of their distributional behaviour in the respective clauses. This label is used to distinguish the non-finite forms from the containing structure in which they occur. The function of such markers is determined by the aspecual auxiliaries (grammatical, lexical aspecual or modal auxiliaries) with whom they occur. For example, in (38), the function of the non-finite marker -\textit{ya} is determined by the co-occurring auxiliary verb \textit{achanta}. In this example, -\textit{ya} expresses the meaning of progression in colligation with the auxiliary verb. In (56), on the other hand, the non-finite marker -\textit{i} expresses the meaning of completion in colligation with the lexical aspecual auxiliary \textit{pelāila}. Here also, the auxiliary verb motivates the non-finite marker to express the sense of completion. The combination of these non-finite suffixes with the auxiliaries expresses aspecual distinctions in MKR.

4.3.4. Aspect in modern Assamese

As stated in §4.1, this section seeks to briefly present those features of aspect in modern Assamese which have direct correspondence to MKR.

Modern Assamese shows a binary opposition of imperfective and perfective for the category of aspect. As in MKR, the imperfective aspect in modern Assamese is expressed by the morphological aspect marker -\textit{ich} (represented by the phonetic
symbols -is), while the perfective aspect is expressed by the simple past tense form. In addition, the aspectual distinctions in modern Assamese are expressed by aspectual auxiliaries, by the composition of different adverbial elements, and by the lexical semantic of the main verbs. As in the case of MKR, two types of aspectual auxiliaries are found in modern Assamese—the grammatical auxiliary as ‘be’ and lexical auxiliaries za ‘go’, t’uk ‘stay’, pela ‘throw’, ah ‘come’. The function of these auxiliaries is alike with the auxiliaries found in MKR.

4.4. Mood

4.4.1. Overview

The following sections deal with mood in MKR (§4.4.2) and mood in modern Assamese (§4.4.3) and a summary (§4.4.4). The reason of providing the discussion of mood in modern Assamese is similar to the reasons cited in the discussion of tense and aspect in §4.2.1 and §4.3.1.

4.4.2. Mood in MKR

Mood is expressed through morphologically in MKR. Two types of mood are used—imperative mood and optative mood. The imperative mood is expressed cumulatively by the agreement marker of second person pronoun, while a distinct marker is used for the optative mood (cf. §3.4), as (57-58) illustrate.

**Imperative mood**

(57) sbāmita bhakati kara patibratā huyā
    sbāmi-ta bhakati kar-a patibratā h(a)u-yā
husband-LOC devotion do-INF.MP chast become-NF

‘Devote yourself to husband, being loyal to him.’

(Ar, Ch. 1, V. 51)

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7 Before -y, the a of ha changes to u.
Optative mood

(58) 
\[
\text{rāghawē karoka āsi tora pratikāra} \\
\text{Raghaw-ERG do-OPT come-NF you.INF-GEN cure}
\]

'Let Raghaw come and cure you.'

(Ar, Ch. 11, V. 6)

In addition, MKR has some modal auxiliaries that express notions like possibility, probability, willingness, suggestion, permission, compulsion, intention, desire and so on. These modals are pār 'can', khoj 'want', lāg 'need' and pāi 'may'. These modal verbs occur in the following contexts: pār occurs with verb forms containing the non-finite suffixes -iba/-ibe, -ibāka/-ibeka and -ita/-ite, khoj occurs with verbs containing the non-finite suffixes -ite, and -ibe; lāg occurs with verbs containing the suffixes -iba/-ibe, -ibāka/-ibeko and -ite/-ita; pāi occurs with verb forms containing the suffix -ibāka. Out of these four, pāi can occur only in sentences containing third person subjects. The use of the various modal auxiliaries is illustrated in (59-62).

pār

(59) 
\[
\text{katāksaṭe tribhuwana mohibāka pāre} \\
\text{glance-LOC-EMPH three worlds attract-NF can-3}
\]

'(He) can charm the three worlds at a glance.'

(Ar, Ch. 1, V. 107)

khoj

(60) 
\[
\text{mohōka yujibe khoje bānarata āśe} \\
\text{I-DAT fight-NF want-3 monkey-LOC expect-NF}
\]

'Expecting help from monkeys, (he) wants to fight with me.'

(Laṅ, Čh. 7, V. 35)
The non-finite markers occurring with the modals can be regarded as *ante-modal* markers because distributionally they occur before the modal auxiliaries and express different modal meanings according to the semantics of the co-occurring modal auxiliaries. As with the label ante-aspectizer (cf. §4.3.3), this label is also used to distinguish the non-finite forms occurring in (59)-(62) from other non-finite forms in terms of the containing structures where they occur. The function of these markers is to express modal meanings in concatenation with modal auxiliaries. Like the ante-aspectizers (cf. §4.3.3), the following modal auxiliaries determines the function of this kind of non-finite markers.

The next section presents a discussion of the category of mood in modern Assamese to enable a comparison with the language of MKR.

### 4.4.3. Mood in modern Assamese

As in MKR, mood in modern Assamese is expressed morphologically by three markers. Two of these express the imperative mood and the third expresses the optative mood, as (63)-(66) illustrate (§3.4.2. & 3.4.3).

#### Second person inferior imperative mood

(63) 

cvi \may

\text{to\text{\textunderscore}Inf} \, \text{write\textunderscore\text{Imp}}

\text{\textbackslash}`You write.'\text{\textbackslash}

\text{(Kis, Ch. 24, V. 31)
Second person familiar imperative mood

(64) tumi likb-a
    tumi likb-a
you.FAM write-2FAM
'You write.'

Optative

(65) apuni likb-ok
    apuni likb-ok
you.HON write-OPT
'(I wish), you write.'

(66) hi/teo likb-ok
    hi/teo likb-ok
he.INF/he.HON write-OPT
'(I wish), he writes

Besides these markers, modern Assamese contains some modal auxiliaries which are functionally alike with the auxiliaries of MKR. These modals are par ‘can’, khoz ‘want’, lag ‘need’, and pai ‘may’. Of these, the first two can be inflected for all tense-persons, while the latter two are characterized by certain inflectional constraints, as the examples in (67)-(68) illustrate.

(67) a. moi kamtu koribo paro
    moi kam-tu kor-ibo par-o
I work-CLF do-NF can-1
'I can do the work.'

b. toi kamtu koribo paro
    toi kam-tu kor-ibo par-o
you.INF work-CLF do-NF can-2INF
'You can do the work.'

c. tumi kamtu koribo para
    tumi kam-tu kor-ibo par-a
you.FAM work-CLF do-NF can-2FAM
'You can do the work.'
You can do the work.

He can do the work.

Like *par*, *k'uz* can take the agreement markers for all the three persons but *lag* and *pai* are restricted in this regard. *pai* occur only with sentences containing third person subjects, while *lag* occurs in all sentences containing subject pronouns of all the three persons, as (68a-e) illustrate.

(68) a. *moi zabo lagibo*

moi za-bo lag-ibo

I go-NF need-FUT

‘I will need to go.’

b. *toi zabo lagibo*

toi za-bo lag-ibo

you-INF go-NF need-FUT

‘You will need to go.

c. *tumi zabo lagibo*

tumi za-bo lag-ibo

you.FAM go-NF need-FUT

‘You will need to go.’

d. *apuni zabo lagibo*

apuni za-bo lag-ibo

you.HON go-NF need-FUT

‘You will need to go.’
However, (69) is not acceptable.

\[(69) \quad \text{* moi/toi/tumi/apuni zabo pai} \]
\[\quad \text{moi/toi/tumi/apuni za-bo pai} \]
\[\quad l'/you.INF/you.FAM/you. gO-NF may \]
\[\quad \text{HON} \]
\[\quad \text{'I/you may go.'} \]

(70) is an acceptable sentence.

\[(70) \quad h'i/teû \quad zabo \quad pai \]
\[\quad h'i/teû \quad za-bo \quad pai \]
\[\quad he.INF/he.HON gO-NF may \]
\[\quad \text{'He may go.'} \]

One interesting difference between MKR and modern Assamese is that the modals of MKR can concatenate with verb forms containing different non-finite markers as shown above. On the other hand, the modals of modern Assamese can only co-occur with verb forms containing the -iba non-finite marker.

4.4.4. Summary

By way of summing up, it can be said that MKR takes two sets of distinct markers for indicating the imperative mood and the optative mood. The imperative mood is cumulatively expressed by the person markers while the optative mood is independently expressed. Both MKR and modern Assamese show a binary opposition for the category of mood. In modern Assamese also, the imperative is cumulatively expressed by the second person familiar (alternatively, the imperative can be said to exhibit syncrétism with the second person familiar). The optative mood is expressed independently as in MKR. Apart from these two moods, MKR contains four modal auxiliaries which are semantically correlatable to the various notions as mentioned in §4.4. The modals of MKR are similar with the modals of modern Assamese.
The discussion so far concerned the inherent category for verbs. The following sections deal with causatives (§4.5) and negatives (§4.6) in so far as they are morphologically attached to the verbs in the same lines as the grammatical categories of tense, aspect and mood.

4.5. Causatives

This section begins with a general discussion of the process of causativization (§4.5.1), before considering the more specific cases of the causatives in MKR (§4.5.2) and the causatives in modern Assamese (§4.5.3).

4.5.1. Causativization

Causativization is a process which is used to adjust the valence in a clause. The valence can be a semantic valence, which refers to the number of participants required by the verb. Alternatively, it can be a grammatical or a syntactic valence, referring to the number of arguments present in any given clause. Every language has some processes by which it can adjust the semantic or syntactic valence of a clause. Some of these processes help to increase the valence, while others help to decrease the valance in a clause. Therefore, the notion of valence is closely aligned with the traditional idea of transitivity. Through the valence increasing process, a language can change an intransitive verb into a transitive one, and a transitive verb into a ditransitive one. Conversely, by using valence decreasing process, the language can reduce a transitive verb into an intransitive one and a ditransitive verb into a transitive one.

The causative construction is a valence increasing process. It can be formed on the basis of intransitive or transitive caused events. If the caused event is intransitive, the causative is transitive and if the caused event is transitive, the causative is ditransitive (Payne 1997: 176). Three types of causatives are found across languages. These are lexical causatives, morphological causatives and analytic causatives. Of these, the lexical and the morphological causatives are regarded as valence increasing processes while the analytic causative is not. Semantically, the analytic causative can be interpreted as a valence increasing process. Syntactically however, this type of causatives does not serve to increase the valence.
4.5.2. Causatives in MKR

The causatives of MKR are derived from the base roots in two ways: (1) by adding causative suffixes, with automatic alteration of the root forms (not associated with any specific morpho-phonological rules); (2) by using different verbs.

Of the three types of causatives described in the previous section (§4.5.1), the use of lexical and morphological causatives can be found in MKR. However, the use of the former is very rare. Wherever it is found, it occurs as a different verb from non-causative verbs, as mentioned in the preceding section. The evidence of a non-causative is attested by (71).

**Non-causative**

(71) māja nīśā marila nṛpati daśaratha
māja nīśā mar-il-a nṛpati daśaratha
middle night die-PST-3 king Dasaratha

‘King Dasaratha died in the middle of the night.’

(Ay, Ch. 26, V. 18)

Lexical causatives will be dealt with in the next section (§4.5.2.1) and morphological causatives in §4.5.2.2.

4.5.2.1. Lexical causatives

In (72), the verb form mār 'kill' occurs as a lexical causative verb. The non-causative verb corresponding to mār is mar 'die' as shown in (71) above.

(72) raghawe mārilā mora khara dūṣapaka
raghaw-e mār-il-a mo-ra khara dūṣap-a-ka
Raghaw-ERG kill-PST-3 I-GEN Khara Dusan-DAT

‘Raghawa killed my Khara and Dusana.’

(Ar, Ch. 16, V. 9)

(72) involves two situations. One is the causative macro-situation and the other is the resulting micro-situation. Raghaw is responsible for the dying of khara and dūṣapaka, since raghaw indicates the causative macro-situation. In the second situation, khara and dūṣapān died as a consequence of the act of killing by raghawa. Hence, it is a resultant
micro-situation. The lexical causative and the morphological causative indicate both direct and indirect causation. The analytic causative always refers to indirect causation.

4.5.2.2. Morphological causatives

Two suffixes occur as evidence of morphological causatives in MKR. These are -ā, and -ua (-uwa). Of these, the suffix -ā is more productive than -ua. Many verbs in MKR take this suffix and undergo a change from the intransitive to transitive, as (73-76) illustrate.

Intransitive to transitive

-ā suffix

(73) āśbāsā kariyā sabe sainyaka capāilā
dé-ā kari-yā sab-e sainya-ka cap(cap)ā-ā-ā
reassurance do-NF everyone-ERG soldier-DAT gather-CAUS-PST-3

All gathered the soldiers after reassuring them.'

(Lañ, Ch. 9, V. 308)

(74) bharate mātiyā śatrughanaka jagāila
bharat-e māt-iyā śatrughana-ka 'jag(jāg)-ā-ā-ā
Bharat-ERG call-NF Satrughna-DAT wake-CAUS-PST-3

'Bharat woke Satrughana up by calling out.'

(Ay, Ch. 33, V. 2)

(75) jala laiyā sugriwara lotaka gucāila
jala la-iyā sugriw-ara lotaka guc-ā-ā-ā
water take-NF Sugriw-GEN tears remove-CAUS-PST-3

'(He) removed the tears of Sugriwa by using water.'

(Lañ, Ch. 9, V. 187)

(76) rāmaka duihnāte dhari kōlāta baisāila
rām-aka dui-hāt-e dhari-kōlā-ā bais-ā-ā-ā
Ram-DAT two-hand-INS hold-NF lap-LOC sit-CAUS-PST-3

'(S/he) sat Ram down on (his/her) lap by holding him with two hands.'

(Lañ, Ch. 52, V. 16)

As a result of adding the causative suffix -ā to the root, the root vowel ā becomes a.
In (73-76), the causative suffix \(-a\) attaches to the intransitive base verb \(cāpīla\) 'came close', \(jāgīla\) 'awake', \(gucīla\) 'remove', and \(bāsīla\) 'sit' and forms a new set of verbs which are transitive: \(cāpīla\), \(jagīla\), \(gucīlā\), and \(bāsīlā\). Moreover, the subjects of the intransitive base verbs, \(sainya\) 'soldier', \(satruhna\) 'Satruhna', \(lotaka\) 'tear', and \(rāma\) 'Rama' function as direct objects of the causatives in examples (73)-(76).

\(-uā\ (-uwa^9)\) suffix

This suffix attaches to the intransitive verbal root and forms transitive verbs, as exemplified in (77) and (78).

(77) \(haruwaile\)  
\(lankēśbare\)  
\(laṅkā\)  
\(hena\)  
\(rāja\)  
\(har(harā)^{10}-uwa-il-e\)  
\(lankēśbar-e\)  
\(laṅkā\)  
\(hena\)  
\(rāja\)  
\(lose-CAUS-PST-3\)  
\(Lankesbar-ERG\)  
\(Lanka\)  
\(like\)  
\(kingdom\)

'Lankesbar lost a kingdom such as Lanka.'

(Ar, Ch. 18, V. 17)

(78) \(khara\)  
\(duṣanaka\)  
\(uruwāllā\)  
\(yena\)  
\(tuṣa\)  
\(khara\)  
\(duṣan-aka\)  
\(ur-uwa-il-ā\)  
\(yena\)  
\(tuṣa\)  
Khar  
Dusana-DAT  
fly-CAUS-PST-3  
like  
cotton

'(Ram) caused Khar and Dusana to fly like cotton.'

(Laṅ, Ch. 48, V. 306)

In (77-78), \(-uwa\) functions as a primary causative. However it is also found to occur as a secondary causative in the text. The difference between the primary causative and the secondary causative is as follows. By adding a primary causative, an intransitive verb can be turned into a transitive verb with a two-place argument. The subject of the base verb becomes the direct object of this transitive verb. On the other hand, a secondary causative serves to introduce a new participant comprising a human agent and a structural word such as \(hāte\) 'by hand', and \(hātēt\) 'on hand', to the base verb. This new participant functions as an agentive adverbial, as illustrated in (79)-(82) below.

\(^{9}\) \(w\) of \(-uwa\) appears during the period of transition from \(u\) to \(ā\).

\(^{10}\) \(ā\) of \(harā\) is omitted in the presence of the causative suffix \(-uwa\).
(79) bāpekara hāte, kapaṭe rāmaka, bāp-ek-ar-ā hāt-e kapaṭ-e rām-aśa
defather-3(N)-GEN hand-INS devious-AVZR Ram-DAT

diyāilleka bana bāsa
dī-ya-il-ek-a bana bāsa
give-CAUS-PST-3 forest living

‘Deviously got the father to send Ram to the forest on exile.’
(Ay, Ch. 31, V. 17)

(80) bānarara hāte niyā bandi karāillanta
bān-ar-arā hāt-e ni-yā bandi kar-ā-il-anta
monkey-GEN hand-INS bring-NF arrest do-CAUS-PST-3

‘(Bibhisana) got the monkeys to arrest (Suka and Sarana).’
(Lañ, Ch. 2, V. 20)

(81) mawekara hāte raṭya lawāilleka māgi
mā-wek-ar-ā hāt-e raṭya la-wā-il-ek-a māg-ī
mother-3(INF)-GEN hand-INS kingdom take-CAUS-PST-3 beg-NF

‘Got the mother to obtain the kingdom by begging.’
(Ay, Ch. 35, V. 47)

(82) rāmara hātata khara bhavāika mārāillō
rām-ar-arā hāt-ata khara bhavā-il-ka mār-ā-il-ō
Ram-GEN hand-LOC Khara brother-DAT kill-CAUS-PST-1

‘I got Brother Khar killed with Rama’s help.’
(Ar, Ch. 8, V. 265)

However, the new agentive adverbials introduced in (79-82) function as participants of the verbs in semantic terms, they are not arguments syntactically. These participants do not alter the grammatical valence of the verbs. Rather, they serve to reduce the closeness of the cause and effect introduced by the primary causatives in transitive sentences by changing the relationship between the cause and effect from direct to

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11 ‘ is present as a result of transitioning from /to .

12 If any word ending in or comes before a suffix beginning with - or - , a new element w is inserted after final vowel of the first word such as and in māwekara and lawāilleka.
indirect. That is to say, the grammatical subjects of the verbs in (79-82) are not directly involved with the effects, with which their relationship is indirect. This type of causatives is known as indirect causatives. (79-82) are examples of indirect causatives.

4.5.3. Causatives in modern Assamese

As with the previous sections, this section seeks to compare the causative construction in MKR with the causatives in modern Assamese to get an idea of the changes between the two distinct stages of the language.

Like MKR, modern Assamese has two morphological causative markers: -a, and -oa (-owa\(^1\)). Both these causatives are added to primary intransitive verbs and primary transitive verbs to derive transitives and indirect causative. Hence, it can be concluded that modern Assamese does not distinguish direct and indirect causation morphologically as the language of MKR does. However, the modern Assamese verb takes the causative suffix -oa only when it introduces a new participant functioning as an agentive adverbial (which comprises the structural word hotui ‘through’).

In addition to the morphological causatives, both MKR and modern Assamese have lexical causatives, where the notion of cause is wrapped up in the lexical meaning of the verb itself. Thus, as far as causatives are concerned, MKR and modern Assamese share the same properties. The only difference between these two stages of the language is that the verb form of MKR takes the -a suffix when a new participant comprising an agentive adverbial and a structural word hâte is introduced. The verb of modern Assamese allows the -oa suffix in such cases. The structural words hâte, hätato of MKR, and hotuai of modern Assamese share the same root.

4.6. Negatives

The following sections are concerned with negatives in MKR (§4.6.1), negatives in modern Assamese (§4.6.2) and a summary (§4.6.3) of the whole section.

\(^1\) \text{appears because of the transition from o to a.}
4.6.1. Negatives in MKR

Negation in MKR is exhibited by prefixing a negative morpheme *na-* to the verbal base. Three features are involved in the process of negativization. First, depending on the non-initial first vowel of the verb, the vowel of the negator undergoes certain changes through the process of assimilation. Secondly, the vowel of the negator does not undergo any change depending on the non-initial first vowel of the verb as in the earlier instance. Thirdly, in the context of a verb beginning with a vowel, the vowel of the negator is always deleted. However, if the verb begins with a consonant than a vowel, then the vowel of the negator in not deleted. In fact, the second feature is more common in MKR than the first and the third. These three features are exemplified in (83-86).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>kare</em></td>
<td><em>nakare</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kar-e</em></td>
<td><em>na-kar-e</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do-3</td>
<td>NEG-do-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>jānili</em></td>
<td><em>nājānilo</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>jān-il-i</em></td>
<td><em>nā-jān-il-o</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know-PST-2INF</td>
<td>NEG-know-PST-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dekhe</em></td>
<td><em>nedekhe</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dekh-e</em></td>
<td><em>ne-dekh-e</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see-3</td>
<td>NEG-see-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bindhila</em></td>
<td><em>nibindhila</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bindh-il-a</em></td>
<td><em>ni-bindh-il-a</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pierce-PST-3</td>
<td>NEG-pierce-PST-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bolanta</em></td>
<td><em>nabolanta</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bol-anta</em></td>
<td><em>na-bol-anta</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tell-3</td>
<td>NEG-tell-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(84)</td>
<td>kātilo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kāt-il-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>cut-PST-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bolante</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bol-ante</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tell-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bulil-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bul-il-a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>say-PST-3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bujaya</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>buj-aya</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>understand-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dibo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>di-b-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>give-FUT-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| (85)  | eri-bā         | neribā                    |
|       | er-ib-ā        | n-er-ib-ā                 |
|       | leave-FUT-2FAM | NEG-leave-FUT-2FAM         |
|       | ānileka        | nanileka                  |
|       | ān-il-eka      | n-an-il-eka               |
|       | bring-PST-3    | NEG-bring-PST-3           |
|       | olā-waya       | nolā-waya                 |
|       | olā-waya       | n-olā-waya                |
|       | come out-3     | NEG-come out-3            |

| (86)  | Affirmative    | Negative                  |
|       | karibō         | nakaribō                  |
|       | kar-ib-ō       | na-kar-ib-ō               |
|       | do-FUT-1       | NEG-do-FUT-1              |
|       | karō           | nakarō                    |
|       | kar-ō          | na-kar-ō                  |
|       | do-1           | NEG-do-1                  |
The negative forms of the verbs *pār* 'be able to' in all the tenses and *āch* 'be/BE' in the present imperfective (habitual) represent a fusion between the negative element and the verbal stem, as illustrated in (87) and (88).

(87)  
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{pare} & \text{nowāre} \\
\text{pār-e} & \text{n-owār-e} \\
\text{can-3} & \text{NEG-can-3}
\end{array}
\]

(88)  
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{āche} & \text{nāi} \\
\text{āch-e} & \text{nāi} \\
\text{be-3} & \text{NEG + be}
\end{array}
\]

### 4.6.2. Negatives in modern Assamese

This section presents a brief discussion of negatives in modern Assamese so that the negative constructions of the language of MKR and that of modern Assamese can be compared. Moreover, the features of the negatives in modern Assamese taken up for discussion here are directly relevant to the negatives found in the earlier stage of the language.

As in MKR, negation in modern Assamese is also expressed by prefixing the negative morpheme *na-* to the verbal base. However, the process of negativization in modern Assamese involves two features instead of the three. First, the vowel of the negator changes according to the non-initial first vowel of the verb through a process of assimilation. Secondly, if the verb begins with a vowel rather than a consonant, then the vowel of the negator is deleted. The examples are similar to those of MKR.

Besides these two features, the verb forms *par* 'can' and *as* 'be' in modern Assamese also represent a fusion between the negative element and the verbal stem, as in MKR. Here too, the examples of Modern Assamese correspond to the examples from the earlier stage of the language.

Further, modern Assamese exhibits two other features which are not found in MKR. These features are discussed in (1) and (2) below.\(^\text{14}\)

---

\(^{14}\) The discussion of these two features draws on Tamuli (1998).
(1) The present imperfective and past imperfective forms of negative existential *nai* 'is not' and *n-as-il* 'was not' occur in periphrasis along with verbs undergoing negation, as illustrated in (89).

**Present Imperfective**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(89)</th>
<th>a.</th>
<th>lik^b^ise</th>
<th>lik^b^a</th>
<th>nai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lik^b^-is-e</td>
<td>lik^b^-a</td>
<td>nai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write-IPFV-3</td>
<td>write-DNOM</td>
<td>NEG + be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Past Imperfective**

| b. | lik^b^-is-il | lik^b^a | nasil |
|    | lik^b^-is-il | lik^b^-a | n-as-il |
|    | write-IPFV-PST | write-DNOM | NEG-be-PST |

(2) The contrast between the first person and second person honorific/third person future forms and the present habitual forms is neutralised under negation, as illustrated in (90).

(90) **Affirmative**

**Future:**

\[
\begin{align*}
lik^b^-im \\
lik^b^-im \\
write-FUT.1
\end{align*}
\]

**Present habitual:**

\[
\begin{align*}
lik^b^-ö \\
lik^b^-ö \\
write-1
\end{align*}
\]

**Negative**

\[
\begin{align*}
nilik^b^-ö \\
ni-lik^b^-ö \\
NEG-write-1
\end{align*}
\]

Similar neutralisation is found in the case of the negative forms of the present imperative and the future imperative (which are in contrast in the unmarked indicative mood), as illustrated in (91).
The last feature illustrated by (91) is also found in MKR. However, (90) does not occur.

4.6.3. Summary

Negation is formed in both MKR and modern Assamese by prefixing the negative element to the verbal base. The only negative morpheme that occurs in MKR is *na-* which still exists in modern Assamese as a negator. As soon as the negator is prefixed to the verbal element, some morpho-phonological changes take place in the negative element in both stages of the language. However, Modern Assamese shows a more regular and rigid pattern than MKR with regard to these changes.

4.7. Chapter overview

This chapter has been concerned with the inherent categories of the verbs found in MKR. Three inherent categories for verbs have been discussed – tense (§4.2), aspect (§4.3), and mood (§4.4). These categories were discussed according to their position in simple verb construction and their relative importance in the organization of grammar. In addition, two other categories of causatives (§4.5) and negatives (§4.6) were also discussed. While causatives and negatives are not similar with tense, aspect, and mood in respect of their status as inherent categories of the verb, all the five are morphological constituent of the verb form. This was the underlying rationale for dealing with all the five categories together in the same chapter.