CHAPTER 4
VERB-SECOND (V2) PHENOMENA

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided evidence to support the claim that in Kashmiri the lexical projections (including verb) are head-final and the functional projections are head-initial. There is, however, a generalization about Kashmiri word order that I have not fully addressed yet: The finite verb in declarative main and some subordinate clauses invariably occupies the clause-second position. This generalization, known in the generative grammar as the verb-second phenomenon, holds remarkably consistently across Germanic languages, with the exception of English.¹


At a descriptive level the facts seem to be rather straightforward: there is a word order constraint only in declarative main clauses of Germanic languages that requires the finite verb to be the second constituent regardless of what precedes it. This phenomena of verb-second (V2) in Germanic is illustrated in main and embedded clauses

1 In this chapter I will not discuss English ("residual") V2 found in questions such as (i)

(i) What has John eaten?

or in constructions with topicalised negative elements (affective operators) as in (ii)

(ii) Never have these boys eaten such a rotten bread.

For a discussion of the English V2 as a subcase of V2, the readers are referred to Rizzi (1989, 1990).

2 Haider (1991) correctly cautions us that V2 is not restricted to the root contexts in all Germanic languages. In some languages, e.g., German, V2 is constrained by the presence or absence of a complementizer.
below in (1) to (4). In the case of SOV languages like German (1) and Dutch (2), V2 is clearly observed; the finite verb occupies the position immediately after the first constituent (wherever possible we give a nonsubject-initial clause). In SVO languages like Swedish (3) and Norwegian (4), V2 can be detected only by its position relative to sentential adverbials or negatives—the Adverb-Verb order indicating no movement vs. the Verb-Adverb order indicating verb movement (V2).

German (Hans Hock, personal communication)

(1a) Einen Apfel **ass** Johann
an apple ate John

John ate an apple.

(1b) Ich weiss daß einen Apfel Johann **ass**
I know that an apple John ate

I know that John ate an apple.

Dutch (from, Weerman 1989:14)

(2a) de man **heeft** een book gezien
the man has a book seen

The man has seen a book.

(2b) ik geloof dat de man een boek
I believe that the man a book

**heeft** gezien
has seen

I believe that the man has seen a book.

Swedish (adapted from, Platzack 1986a: 27,28)

(3a) Erik **hade** verkligen kopt boken
Erik had really bought the-book

Erik had really bought the book.