3.1 Heads of Noun Phrase

The head of a noun phrase may be a noun, a pronoun, an adjective and a numeral. The function of the Head is to specify the entity that the NP refers to, and it is the element that is responsible for the different relations with all the other elements in the NP and in the sentence. It is, therefore, expresses the core meaning implied by the whole NP. Broadly speaking, it can refer to concrete entities such as persons (man, sister, boy), objects (table, house, pen), animals (cow, tiger, bird), places (restaurant, London), institutions (government, department), materials (iron, glass), and also to names of actions (driving, laughter), relationships (marriage, oppression), qualities (beauty, speed), emotions (happiness, joy), phenomena (rain, death, luck), concepts (justice, truth) and many other classes of entities.

3.2 Heads in Assamese NP

The Noun Phrase in Assamese language is generally realized by the head word alone and sometimes the head word is preceded and followed by the morphological and syntactic dependents.

In the Table 3.1, the left-hand column lists the word classes (categories) of the headword constituting a noun phrase in Assamese language; the underlined expressions in the next column are the examples of the corresponding headword of the Noun Phrases.
Table 3.1 Word Class of Head word in Assamese NP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word class of the Headword of the NP</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noun, Count</td>
<td>চবাইবোন আকাশে উড়ি আছে (N+PL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/sprai-bor akax-ʊt uri ase/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(birds are flying in the sky)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun, personal</td>
<td>তোষেত গণ (PRN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/tekhet gɔl/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he.PRN went.V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(he went)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun, Adjectival</td>
<td>ধূলীআকাশী আহিহে (ADJ+DTV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/dʃunija-zɔni ahise/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>beautiful.ADJ-DTV came.V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(the beautiful one came) etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the word categories underlined in the right-hand column are noun-like, so in order to abbreviate and to simplify matters, we may refer to them all as nominals. Every NP, like every other phrase, must have a head, and any nominal can be the head of an NP.

3.3 Items or Word Classes at Head in the Assamese Noun Phrase

The commonest Head of a Noun Phrase is a Noun from which the term ‘Noun Phrase’ derives its name. In Addition to Nouns, various other word classes may occur at Head in Noun Phrases. The common Headwords of an Assamese Noun phrase are: Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, and Numerals. The following section will deal with the use of nouns, pronouns, Adjectives and quantifiers (numerals) functioning as heads in Noun Phrases.
3.3.1 Noun as Head in NP

Nouns are very large in numbers in Assamese. As they belong to the open word class, nouns can be classified into some sub-classes. Morphologically, words that inflect for number, gender, case or determinative suffixes are known as nouns. Depending on the form, nouns can be of two types: Primary and secondary. Semantically, nouns are grouped into five types (Bora 2004:40): Common, Proper, Collective, Material, Abstract noun. Apart from these, Verbal noun and Relational noun are also found in Assamese. These are discussed in the following section.

1. Common noun

Common nouns are words relating to any race or general definition of class or any names. For example: manuh /manuh/ (man), gōru /gōru/ (cow), nodi /nodi/ (river), pahar /pahar/ (hill) etc., instead of referring to any particular animal, river or mountain etc., they signify the whole class of them. Following examples can show how common noun can occur as the head in the different noun phrase constructions:

i.  manuh  māraṇxīl  (N+Ø)
    /manuh  māraṇxīl/
    Man.N-Ø  mortal.N
    (Man is mortal)

ii.  manuh-zon  bozara-loi  gōl  (N+DTV)
    /manuh-zon  bozara-loi  gōl/
    (the man went to market)

iii.  kripōn  manuh-yk  koneo  bhal  napai  (N+ACC)
    /kripōn  manuh-yk  koneo  bhal  napai/
    Miser.N  man.N-ACC  no one.PRN  like.ADJ  donot.V.NEG
    (no one likes the miser)
Here, the common noun মানুষ /manuh/ (man) occurs as the headword in the NP with zero inflection for case ending in the example (i). In the example (ii), it is followed by determinative –জন /-zon/, whereas in the example (iii) it is preceded and followed by adjective কৃপণ /kripon/ (miser) and accusative case markers –ক /-kn/ respectively.

2. **Proper noun**

Proper nouns refer to any particular thing, names of places, man or animals, hills or mountains etc. We can consider the following examples:

i. গুড়হাটী ব্রহ্মপুত্র পায়ত অবস্থিত। (PN+Ø)

/Guwahati PN Brahmaputra.PN-GEN bank.N-LOC situated.V

(Guwahati is situated at the bank of the river Brahmaputra)

ii. মনি গুড়হাটীলে গেলে। (PN+DAT)

/moni Guwahati-loi goisilo/

I.PRN Guwahati.PN-DAT went.V

(I went to Guwahati)

In the example (i), proper noun গুড়হাটী/guwahati/ (Guwahati) occurs as a single noun head taking null case marker, whereas in the example (ii) the proper noun গুড়হাটী (Guwahati) takes the dative case suffix -লে /-loi/.

It is to be mentioned here that inanimate proper nouns do not take plural forms, such as

i. *

/Guwahati-bor bōr letēra/

Guwahati.PN-PL very.ADV dirty.N

(Guwahati are very dirty)
In this example, the noun phrase ুবাহাটিবর /guwahatibor/ is ungrammatical. It does not take plural suffix -বর /-bor/, as it is an inanimate noun. On the other hand, plural suffix –ইত /-hōt/ is added to animate proper nouns, as in

i. প্রেরণাহোত (PN+PL+GEN)

/prerona-hōt-nt/

Prerana.PN-PL-GEN

(of Prerana’s.)

Here, animate proper noun /প্রেরণা/ prerona/ fills the head noun position in the noun phrase /প্রেরণাহোত/ (of Prerana’s), taking plural suffix –ইত /-hōt/ and also followed by genitive case marker –অর /-nt/.

3. Collective noun

It refers to words signifying group or collections such as সভা /x̌ōbha/ (meeting), সমিতি /x̌ōmiti/ (committee), সমাজ /x̌ōmaz/ (society) etc. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>সভা</th>
<th>আরাহ্ম</th>
<th>হৈছিল। (N+Ø)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/x̌ōbha-Ø</td>
<td>arambhōn</td>
<td>hoisil/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Meeting.N- Ø start.V has.V

(meting has started)

Here, the NP সভা /x̌ōbha/ (meeting) is collective noun occurring as the head in the NP and it takes null nominative case.

4. Material noun
These kinds of nouns belong to the common noun types, but the difference is that they signify constituents like soil, the material of the material itself, such as water, bamboo, sugar, gold, silver etc. For example:

দেশ বর্ষ মূল্যবান (N)

/Gold.N very.ADV precious.N

(Gold is very precious)

In this example, দেশ /xon/ (gold), the material noun occupies the place of head noun in the NP.

5. Abstract noun

Abstract nouns refer to any kind of feeling, emotion, quality or state etc. For example:

দূর্বীর্ণ প্রতি দৃঢ় হাসা (N)

/Poor.N to.PRTL kind.N should.V

(you should kind to poor)

Here, the abstract noun দৃঢ় /dojxil/ (kind) acts as the head in the NP.
There are, however, certain abstract nouns which are derived from adjective and nouns. These are discussed below:

a. Abstract nouns are derived from adjective by adding suffixes –/ta/ or –/tw/. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2 Abstract Nouns in Assamese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>सबल/xorol/ (simple)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>गुरु/guru/ (important)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can consider the following example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>तैब</th>
<th>सबलताई</th>
<th>सकलोके</th>
<th>सुख</th>
<th>करिले (N+NOM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/tai-r</td>
<td>xorolta-i</td>
<td>xnkloke</td>
<td>mugdh</td>
<td>kbriti/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

She.PRN-GEN simplicity.N-NOM all.PRN attract.V has.V

(Her simplicity attracted all.)

Here, abstract noun सबलताई/xoroltaai/ (simplicity) occupies the head noun position in this NP followed by nominative case marker –/i/.

b. Suffixes like –/ali/ and –/ami/ are added to noun to form abstract nouns. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.3 Abstract Nouns in Assamese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common noun</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>लाबा/lbra/ (boy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We can cite examples like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ভাব</th>
<th>পাগলামির্লেব</th>
<th>ভাল</th>
<th>নালাগে (N+PL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ta-r</td>
<td>paglami-bor</td>
<td>bfial</td>
<td>nalage/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He.PRN-GEN stupidity.N-PL good.ADJ not.V.NEG

(His stupidity is not accepted)

Here, the abstract noun পাগলামি /paglami/ (stupidity) is the head of the NP which is followed by the plural marker -বোব /-bor/.

6. Verbal noun

Verbal nouns are derived from the verb root or verb. These nouns are formed by adding suffixes to the verb roots. Therefore, depending on the form and function we can have three verbal nouns by adding three kinds of suffixes to the verbal roots. These suffixes are shown below (Goswami 2010:239):

a. –�ন/-он/ suffix

b. –আ/-a/ suffix

c. –ইন/-ibn/ suffix

a. –�ন /-он/ suffix: By adding –�ন /-он/ suffix to the verb roots, verbal nouns can be formed in Assamese. For example:

Table 3.4 Verbal Nouns in Assamese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb root</th>
<th>Vebal noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>থাঁ /kha/ (to eat)</td>
<td>থাঁ + –�ন = থাওন /kha+он=khawn/ (the act of eating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>শো / xo/ (to sleep)</td>
<td>শো + অন= শোরন /xo+-অন=xowন/ (the act of sleeping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example:


tেও মরণ আগমহুঠলেকে এই বেমারত ভুগিল (N+GEN)

/teo মরণ-র অগমহুঠলেকে এই বেমারত ভুগিল/  
He.PRN death.NV-GEN prior.N this.PRN illness suffer.V

(He was suffering from this illness prior to his death.)

Here, the verbal noun মরণ /mgon/ (death) acts as the head of the NP which is followed by the genitive case ending -ব /-রন/.

b. –অ /–a/ suffix: It can be added to the verb root to get a verbal noun. For example:

Table 3.5 Verbal Nouns formed by adding –অ /–a/ suffix in Assamese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb root</th>
<th>Verbal noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>পড় /porh/ (to read)</td>
<td>পড়+অ= পড় /porh+a = porha/ (the act of reading)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>লিখ /likh/ (to write)</td>
<td>লিখ+অ=লিখ /likh+a = likha/ (the act of writing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can cite example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>মিনাব</th>
<th>লিখাবোব</th>
<th>বব</th>
<th>সূদব (N+PL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/mina-r</td>
<td>likha-bor</td>
<td>bbr</td>
<td>xundবর/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mina.PN-GEN writing.N-PL very.ADV beautiful.ADJ

(Mina’s writings are very beautiful.)
Here, the verbal noun লিখা /likha/ (to write) is followed by plural suffix -বোষ /-bor/, which occurs in head noun position in the NP.

c. –এব or -এ /-ibn/ or /-bn/ suffix: It is added to the verb to form a verbal noun. As for example:

Table 3.6 Verbal Noun formed by adding –এব or -এ /-ibn/ or /-bn/ suffix in Assamese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb root</th>
<th>Verbal noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>কব/kar/ (to do)</td>
<td>কব+-এব=কবিব /kær+-ibo=körbi / (act of doing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>খাব/kha/ (to eat)</td>
<td>খাব+-এব=খাব /khab+-bho=khabho / (act of eating)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is illustrated with the following example:

আমাটা       খাবব       মন       গোই /goise/  
/am-to       khabor       mon       goise/  
Mango.N-ACC   eating.N-GEN  want.V   have.V
(I want to eat the mango)

Here, in the NP খাবব/khabor/ (the act of eating), the head noun position is occupied by the verbal noun খাব/khab / (act of eating) which is followed by the genitive case marker –এব /-reb/.

7. Relational noun

In Assamese, the relational nouns are marked for the person and cases. These types of nouns are categorized according to (Goswami 2004:142), viz.,

a. Birth factor: for example, মা /ma/ (mother), দেউড়া /deuta/ (father), মামা /mama/ (uncle)

c. Institutional/social: মিতা /mita/, সখী /xɔkhi/ (friend) etc.

For example:

/মামী, ভাত, বাক্ষিছে (N+NOM)/
/mami-je  bfiat  randiiise/

(Aunty cooked rice)

In this example, the NP মামী /mamije/ (aunty) consists of a relational noun মামী /mami/ (aunty), followed by the nominative case ending –ে /-e/. Here, the relational noun মামী /mami/ (aunty) occupies the head noun position in the NP.

3.3.2 Pronoun as head in NP

It is regarded that the pronouns are a special kind of noun phrase in Assamese. In other words, the pronouns are free forms that function alone to fill the position of a noun phrase in a clause. They normally have all the distributional properties of noun phrase. Within the major nouns a sub-class of pronouns needs to be posited. Like the nouns, pronouns in Assamese are also inflected for the grammatical category for case. It can also take suffixes for number and gender distinctions. In addition to this, pronouns manifest person. It is in fact the category of person that makes pronouns distinct from nouns. This is shown below:

Table 3.7 Persons of Pronouns in Assamese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>মামি, আমি /mam, ami/ (I, we)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd (Inf.)</td>
<td>তুমি /tum/ (you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd (For.)</td>
<td>তুমি /tumi/ (you)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Classification of Pronouns

Semantically, pronouns in Assamese are classified under following heads (Bora 2011:111):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal pronouns</td>
<td>মই /mói/ (I), আমি /ami/ (we), তুমি /tumi/ (you) etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative pronouns</td>
<td>ই /i/ (this), এই /eu/ (this person), এই /ei/ (this), সেই /xei/ (that) etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive pronouns</td>
<td>সকল /xóklo/ (all), সমূহ /xamuh/ (all), উভয় /ubhoj/ (both) etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative pronouns</td>
<td>যি /zi/ (that), যিহ /zih/ (that) etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite pronouns</td>
<td>একো /eko/ (nothing), কেউ /keo/ (anything), কোনো /kono/ (nothing) etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative pronouns</td>
<td>কি /ki/ (what), কিহ /kih/ (what), কোন /kon/ (who) etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive pronouns</td>
<td>নিজ /niz/ (self), আপুনি /apon/ (related to self) etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The discussion of the different types of pronouns is mentioned in the following section:

1. **Personal pronouns (ব্যক্তিবাচক সর্বনাম)**: Personal pronouns are of three kinds according to person. These are:

   1st person – মই, আমি /mói, ami / (I, we)

   2nd person – তুমি, আপুনি /tumi, apuni/ (you)
3rd person – সি, তাই/হে, তাই (he, she)

These pronouns can act as the head in any noun phrase construction in Assamese. For example:

আপুনি  কিতাপ  পড়ছে (PRN+Ø)

(You read book)

In this example, pronoun আপুনি /apuni/ (you) acts the head in the noun phrase slot আপুনি /apuni/ (you) and it takes null nominative case marker.

Personal pronouns in Assamese are classified into direct and oblique forms depending on their person, number and gender which are shown below:

Table 3.8 Direct & Oblique forms of Personal Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Oblique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>COM</td>
<td>মই /mī/ (I)</td>
<td>আমি /ami/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>COM</td>
<td>তুমি /tūmi/ (you)</td>
<td>তোমার /toma-/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>/tumī/ (you)</td>
<td>/apuni/ (you)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/aponaloŋk/ /
aponaxŋk/
In this table, singular direct forms of pronoun always take Nominative case marker, but it is in the null forms. On the other hand, here singular oblique forms /bn_ekaar.init/bn_ma/bn_aakaar/-, /bn_ekaar.init/bn_ta/bn_aakaar/-, /bn_ekaar.init/bn_ta/bn_aakaar/bn_ma/bn_aakaar/-, /bn_aa/bn_ekaar/bn_pa/bn_aakaar/bn_na/bn_aakaar/-, /bn_ta/bn_aakaar/- /mo-, to-, toma-, apona-, ta-/ and plural oblique form /bn_aa/bn_ma/bn_aakaar/- /ama-/ take all the other case endings, except the nominative case. Detail study of the case system in Assamese is not discussed in this section. For example:

i.  
/boi- Ø habit xumalohi/  
I.PRN- Ø forest.N enter.V  
(PRN+Ø)  
(I entered into the forest)

ii.  
/xi-Ø mur zokarile/  
He.PRN- Ø head.N shake.V  
(PRN+Ø)  
(He shakes head)
In the above examples, the NPs মৈ/মোই/ (I) and সি/সি/ (he) takes null nominative case markers and occur in the head noun position in these NPs respectively.

Again, For example:

典

/মোক/ সিইন্ধে মানবিন (PRN+ ACC)

/মোক/ xibote marile/

I.PRN-ACC they.PRN kill.V

(they killed me)

Here, the NP মোক/ /মোক/ (me) is headed by the pronoun মৈ/মোই/ (I) of সৌ- /মো-/, the oblique form of personal pronoun. This pronoun takes the accusative case ending -ক/–ক/.

1. Demonstrative pronouns (নির্দেশবোধক সর্বনাম):

These pronouns direct or signal near or distal animate or inanimate things. According to distance, demonstrative pronouns are of two kinds- Near demonstrative and Far demonstrative pronoun (Bora 2011:113).

i. Near demonstrative pronoun: These are used to indicate any animate or inanimate things of near distance. For example: এই/এই/, ই/ই/, এই/এই/, এই/এই/ (he/it/this).

ii. Far demonstrative pronoun: These types of pronouns indicate any animate or inanimate objects of far distance. For example: সৌ/সৌ/ /সেই/ /সেই/ (that one).

Number of Demonstrative pronoun:

Demonstrative pronouns are also inflected for grammatical category of number. The two types of demonstrative pronouns viz., Near demonstrative pronoun and Far demonstrative pronoun are always used with some singular definitive markers such as –খন /-খন/,-জন /-জন/,-জনী /-জনী/,-টো /-টো/,-ডাল /-ডাল/,-পাট /-পাট/ etc. It is to be mentioned here that এই /এই/ (he),
একটি /ekhart/ (this one) do not take any determinative markers. The choice of the appropriate determinative depends on the nature of the referent nouns (Kalita 2003). As for example:

এই /ei/ (this/he/she/it) as in

এইজিলী হোসালী (DEM+DTV)

/ei-zoni soali/

This.DEM-DTV girl.N

(This is a girl)

সৌ/xou/ (that) as in

সৌটা হোই (DEM+DTV)

/xou-to sprai/

That.DEM-DTV bird.V

(that is a bird)

In the above examples, demonstrative pronouns এই /ei/ (this/he/she/it) and সৌ/xou/ (that) act as the head nouns in the NPs এইজিলী /eizni/ (this one) and সৌটা /xouto/ (that one) respectively. Both the demonstrative pronouns take determinative –জিলী /-zi/ and -টা/-to/ to indicate definiteness.

The plural markers in Assamese such as, -বো /-bor/, বিলাক /-bilak/, -সকল/-skol/, -জাক/-zak/ etc., are also suffixed to both the types of demonstrative pronouns. These are shown with examples below:

এই /ei/ ‘this/he/she/it) as in

এইসকল মানুষ আখিন (DEM+PL)
These.DEM-PL people.N came.V

(these people came)

সৌ ‘sou’ (that) as in

সৌজাক ধুনীয়া গোবালী (DEM+PL)
/xou-zak dhunija sowali/
Those.DEM-PL beautiful.ADJ girl.N

(Those are beautiful girls)

In these examples, near and far demonstrative pronouns এই /ei/ (this one) and সৌ /xou/ (that one) take plural suffixes -কল /-xokol/ and -জাক /-zak/; and act as the head of the NPs respectively.

Gender and case of Demonstrative pronoun

Demonstrative pronoun can also be inflected for the gender. But it is limited in number. This is done by adding some definiteness to them generally –টো /-to/ or –জন /-zon/ is added to demonstrative pronoun to refer to masculine and –জনী /-zani/ to feminine, when referent nouns show gender distinction. Demonstrative pronouns also take case endings.

2. Inclusive pronouns (সাকল্যবাচক সর্ব্বস্মান):

Assamese possesses seven types of inclusive pronouns. These are used to refer to both animate and inanimate things. These are: সকলো /xokolo/ (all), সমূহ /xomuh/ (all), উভয় /ubhhoj/ (both), আটাই /atai/ (all), গোটেই /gotei/ (all), সব /xobb/ (all), সদৃ /xdou/ (all). It is to be noted here that সমূহ /xomuh/ (all), উভয় /ubhhoj/ (both), and সদৃ /xdou/ (all) refer to only animate objects. And the rest are used to refer to both animate and inanimate. But উভয় /ubhhoj/ (both) always means two persons.
Number and case of Inclusive pronoun

Inclusive pronouns are always used to signify plurality, except the pronoun /ubhoj/ (both). But sometimes to refer to the same person certain plural suffixes are added to the pronouns like /xopolo/, /atai/, /xob/ (all). Besides, Inclusive pronouns take all case endings.

For example:

আটাইবিলাক ছোবালী ধূলীয়া (INCL+PL)

/atai-bilak soali dfunija/

All.INCL-PL girl.N beautiful.ADJ

(all girls are beautiful)

Here, the inclusive pronoun আটাইবিলাক /ataibilak/ (all), forming the NP, consists of the head noun আটাই /atai/ (all) which is followed by the plural suffix /bilak/ (all).

3. Relative Pronoun (সমস্তনামক সর্বনাম)

Relative pronoun is used to connect a clause or phrase to a noun or pronoun. Assamese possesses relative pronouns. These are – যি /zi/ (who) and যিহ /zih/ (who).

যি /zi/ (who) is used for both animate and inanimate objects. যিহ /zih/ (who) is used only for inanimate things. These two pronouns act as the head of NP construction in Assamese.

Gender of relative pronoun

Though যি /zi/ (who) is used to signify common gender, gender distinction can be shown by adding some suffixes to it. For example:

i. যিজন আহিছে, যি তাইব ভাজক (REL+DTV)

/zi-zon ahise, xi tair bhajek/
Who.REL-DTV came.V he.PRN her.PRN brother.N

‘Who came, he is her brother’

ii. বিজলী ধুনীয়া, তাই নাচিয়ে (REL+DTV)

/zi-zoni/ dfunija, tai nasise/

Who.REL-DTV beautiful.ADJ, she.PRN dance.V

(Who is beautiful, she danced)

In the first example, determinative -জন /-zon/ is suffixed to the pronoun যি /zi/ (who) to show its masculine gender. It acts as the head in the NP and refers to সি /xi/ (he) in the second clause. In the second example, as যি /zi/ (who) is referring to তাই /tai/ (she), -জন /- zoni/ suffix is added to it to show its feminine gender.

**Number and case of relative pronoun**

যিহ /zih/ (who) is always singular in number. But singular and plural suffixes are added to যি /zi/ (who) to its number distinction. যি /zi/ (who) and বিহ /zih/ (who) inflect for case endings. যি /zi/ (who) always takes nominative case. When it takes other cases, it becomes যা- /za-/ (who).

4. **Indefinite pronoun (অবিশেষ বা অবিদিতভাবাচক সর্বনাম):**

In Assamese, there are mainly four types of indefinite pronouns. These are: একো /eko/ (nothing), কেজ /keo/, কেরে /kewe/ (no one/nothing), কোনো /kono/ (no one) and কোনো /konoba/ (someone). The indefinite pronouns একো /eko/, কেজ /keo/, কেরে /kewe/, কোনো /kono/ signify negative and কোনো /konoba/ indicates assertion.

**Gender of indefinite pronouns**

কেজ /keo/ or কেরে /kewe/ (no one/nothing), কোনো /kono/ (no one) and কোনো /konoba/ (someone) refer to common gender. একো /eko/ (nothing) is used to refer to inanimate thing. These pronouns occur as the head of a NP. For example:

ঘবত কোনো নাই (INDF)
(there is no one at home)

In this example, the NP কোন/ (no one) refers to common gender and also acts as the head of the NP.

**Number and case of indefinite pronoun:**

The indefinite pronouns are singular. Sometimes কোন/ (no one) and কোনো/ (someone) are used repeatedly to indicate plurality.

Some indefinite pronouns take cases. Indefinite pronoun কোন/ (someone) takes nominative case. But when it inflects for other case markers, it becomes oblique form কোনো/ (someone).

5. **Interrogative pronoun (প্রশ্নবাচ্ক সর্বনাম):**

Assamese possesses three interrogative pronouns — কি/ (what), কিন/ (what) and কোন/ (who). কি/ (what), কিন/ (what) are used only for inanimate things and কোন/ (who) is used for both animate and inanimate objects.

**Number and case of Interrogative pronouns:**

কি/ (what) and কোন/ (who) have singular and plural forms. For example:

কোনো খালে? (INTR+PL+NOM)

/kon-bor-e khale/

Who-PL-NOM eat

(Who have eaten)

Here, the interrogative pronoun কোন/ (who) occurs as the head noun in the NP, taking the plural suffix -বো/–bor/ followed by the nominative case -ো/–e/.
কি /ki/ (what) and কিছু /khi/ take only nominative case. If these two take other case markers, they become oblique form কো- /ka-. কোন /kon/ (who) only takes nominative case, if it is followed by plural suffixes such as -বোন /-bor/, -সকল /-xkol/, -বিলাক /-bilak/ etc.

6. Reflexive pronouns (আল্পবাচক সর্বনাম):

These kinds of pronouns indicate self. There are three types of reflexive pronoun in Assamese. These are – নিজ /niz/ (self), স্বয়ং /swyং/ (oneself) and আপন or আপুনি /apon/ or /apuni/ (self). It is to be noted here that the definite and plural suffixes are added to the pronoun নিজ /niz/ (self) directly. If the pronoun নিজ /niz/ (self) is followed by possessive case marker –ব /-বন/, then definitive and plural suffixes are automatically can be added to it.

**Number of Reflexive pronoun:**

নিজ /niz/ (self) has singular form. But to make it plural, it should be reduplicated. On the other hand, স্বয়ং /swyং/ (oneself) and আপন/আপুনি /apon/apuni/ (self) always show singularity under special condition. For instance,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>তেওঁ</th>
<th>স্বযং</th>
<th>ভাল</th>
<th>গোইল (RFLX)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/teo</td>
<td>swyং</td>
<td>ta-loi</td>
<td>goisil/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He.PRN self.RFLX there-DAT went.V

(he went there himself)

Here, the reflexive pronoun স্বয়ং /swyং/ (himself) forms the NP which acts as the head noun. It also shows singularity in this case.

**3.3.3 Adjective as Head in NP**

Adjective acts as one of the important constituents in noun phrase construction. An adjective is, generally, defined as a word that modifies the head noun in noun phrase both in the subject slot and the predicate slot. But in certain cases it plays its role as the head of a NP in the language taking all case, number and gender inflections. We can cite examples like,
In these examples, দৃষ্টিনিবাচনী (dhusitibazoni) (the beautiful) and শক্ত-আরোগ্যজনী (shakti-arogya-joni) (the healthy one) act as the noun head in these two NPs. The adjectives দৃষ্টিনিবাচনী (dhusitibaz) (beautiful) and শক্ত-আরোগ্য (shakti-arogya) (healthy) act as the nouns since suffix –জনী (-joni) is added to them respectively.

### 3.3.4 Numerals as head in NP

Numerals can act as a noun head in NP construction. We will mainly deal with Cardinal and Ordinal numerals in Assamese. These are discussed below.

#### 3.3.4.1 Cardinal numerals

Cardinal numerals in Assamese can occur as a head noun in any noun phrase. We can mention some of the cardinals in Assamese, such as

- **এক /ek/ (one)**
- **দুই /dui/ (two)**
- **তিনি /tini/ (three)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assamese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/sari/</td>
<td>(four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pas/</td>
<td>(five)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sdj/</td>
<td>(six)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/xat/</td>
<td>(seven)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ath/</td>
<td>(eight)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nd/</td>
<td>(nine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dnh/</td>
<td>(ten)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bix/</td>
<td>(twenty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/trix/</td>
<td>(thirty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sIllis/</td>
<td>(fourty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/exp/</td>
<td>(hundred)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cardinal numerals are used for both animate and inanimate things. These also can take certain determinative suffixes such as, -জন /-zūṇ/, -জী /-zūṇi/, -দাল /-dal/, -পাট /-pat/, -খিলা /-khila/, -খোর /-zor/ etc. Cardinals, in Assamese, take all the case inflections. But when cardinals take nominative and accusative cases, they are always followed by determinatives to indicate definiteness. For example:

```
/du-zūṇi-je kam-to kɔrile/
```

Two.NUM-DTV-NOM work.N-DTV did.V

(The two did the work.)
In this example, the cardinal numeral দুই /dui/ (two) becomes দু- /du-/, when it is followed by suffix -জোনি /-zoni/ and nominative case –রে /–je/. And it acts here as the head noun in this NP দুজোনীর /duzonije/ (the two).

Again, দোহাঁ /doh/ (ten) acts as a head noun which is followed by the plural suffix –বোন /–zor/ in this NP to make it plural.

3.3.4.2 Ordinal Numerals

Ordinal Numerals also occupy the noun head position in NP construction. In Assamese, ordinals take determinative, gender and case suffixes. Some of the ordinals are mentioned below:

প্রথম /prôthom/ (first)

দ্বিতীয় /dôtiyo/ (second)

তৃতীয় /trîtiyo/ (third)

চতুর্থ /sôturthô/ (fourth)

পঞ্চম /pôncôm/ (fifth)

ষষ্ঠ /ôstho/ (sixth)

সপ্তম /ôptom/ (seventh)
আয়ত্তম /dštʰm/ (eighth)

নবম /nDbm/ (ninth)

দশম /dχ₀m/ (tenth) etc.

We can cite example like:

কামটা কবিলে (NUM+DTV+NOM)

tritijp-zon-e   kam-to    kørile

third.NUM-DTV-NOM   work.N-DTV   did.V

(the third one did the work.)

In this example, the ordinal numeral তৃতীয় /tritijp/ (third) acts as the head noun in the NP.

It takes determinative -জন /-zon/ to make it definite and is followed by the nominative case suffix –এ /-e/.
B. HEAD OF NOUN PHRASE IN FRENCH LANGUAGE

3.4 Heads of Noun Phrase

The head of a noun phrase may be a noun, a pronoun, an adjective and a numeral. The function of the Head is to specify the entity that the NP refers to, and it is the element that is responsible for the different relations with all the other elements in the NP and in the sentence. It is, therefore, expresses the core meaning implied by the whole NP. Broadly speaking, it can refer to concrete entities such as persons (man, sister, boy), objects (table, house, pen), animals (cow, tiger, bird), places (restaurant, London), institutions (government, department), materials (iron, glass), and also to names of actions (driving, laughter), relationships (marriage, oppression), qualities (beauty, speed), emotions (happiness, joy), phenomena (rain, death, luck), concepts (justice, truth) and many other classes of entities.

3.5 Heads in French NP

In French also the head of NP slot can be filled up by a noun, pronoun, adjective and Numerals. But head noun is always accompanied by determiner in French, except in certain case which will be discussed in later chapter.

In the following table 3.9, the left-hand column lists the word classes (categories) of the headword constituting a noun phrase in French language; the underlined expressions in the next column are the examples of the corresponding headword of the Noun Phrases.

Table 3.9 Word class of Head word of NP in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word class of headword of NP</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noun, Common</td>
<td>la fille est intelligente (N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/la fij e īlizā/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the.ART girl.N is.V intelligent.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(the girl is intelligent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun, Personal</td>
<td>Je suis professeur (PRN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʒe suj prɔfɛsœʁ/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.PRN am.V professor.N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I am a teacher)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Il faut aider les pauvres (ADJ)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/il fo eðe le povr/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we.PRN must.V help.V the.ART poor.ADJ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(We must help the poor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the word categories in the right-hand column are noun-like, so in order to abbreviate and to simplify matters, we may refer to them all as nominal. Every NP, like any other phrase, must have a head, and any nominal can be the head of an NP.

### 3.6 Items or Word Classes at Head in French Noun Phrase

The Headwords of a French Noun phrase are: Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, and Numerals. The following section will deal with the use of nouns, pronouns, Adjectives and quantifiers (numerals) functioning as heads in Noun Phrases.

#### 3.6.1 Noun as Head in NP

Traditionally, noun is known as substantive (substantif) in French. But they also denote abstract concepts, quantity, proper names etc. Nouns belong to the open class. New words are created or borrowed in to the language. They also have gender and number distinctions. Depending on the semantic and syntactic features, nouns can be subdivided into the following types (Jones 200):

1. Common noun: chien /ʃjɛ/ (dog), espoir /ɛspwar/ (hope) etc.
2. Proper noun: Asie /azi/ (Asia), George, Lyon etc.
3. Nouns of Countability: stylo /stilo/ (pen), oxygen /ɔksɪˈʒen/ (oxygen), acier /aˈʃe/ (steel) etc.

4. Abstract noun: courage /ˈkɜːrʒ/ (courage), difficile /diˈfisil/ (difficult) etc.

5. Pluralia Tantum Nouns: gens /ʒɑ̃/ (people), moeurs /mœʁs/ (habbits) etc.

6. Collective Noun (Nom collectif): foule /ful/ (crowd), groupe /grup/ (group) etc.

7. Quantity noun: kilo /kiˈloʊ/ (kilo), douzaine /duˈzɛn/ (dozen) etc.

8. Compound noun: voiture de sport /vwaˈtʁ də spɔʁ/ (sports car), chemise de nuit /ʃɛmiz de nɥi/ (nightdress) etc.

1. Common Noun: In French, the words which describe classes of entities (person, things, and abstract concepts) are termed as common nouns. For example: chaise /ʃɛz/ (chair), medicin /meˈsɛn/ (doctor), chien /ʃje/ (dog), espoir /ɛspwar/ (hope), beaute (beauty) etc. the noun must be combined with a determiner in order to refer to specific individuals which indicate the way in which the individual is to be selected from the general class. For instance:

   i. Le crayon (ART+N)

   /lə ˈkrejɔ̃/ (the pencil)

   iii. Un crayon (ART+N)

   /œ ˈkrejɔ̃/ (a pencil)

Here, le crayon /lə ˈkrejɔ̃/ (the pencil) refers to a particular pencil which the addressee is expected to identify uniquely, while un crayon /œ ˈkrejɔ̃/ (a pencil) indicates an arbitrary member of the class of pencils which the addressee is not expected to identify. This common noun crayon /ˈkrejɔ̃/ (pencil) can occupy the place of head noun in both the NP constructions.
2. **Proper noun**: Proper nouns refer to particular entities directly. They are simply names associated with particular persons, places etc. For example: Asie /azi/ (Asia), George /ʒᴐᴚʒ/ (George), Lyon (Lyon) etc. For example:

le livre de Lyon (PN)

/ə livr də ljɔ/)  

The.ART book.N of.PREP lyon.PN  

(The book of Lyon)

Here, Lyon /ljɔ/ (Lyon) is a proper name acting as a head noun in this NP construction.

However, some proper names take definite article (such as names of countries or regions, names of river, mountain range, groups of islands). In this case, the presence of the determiner can be taken as syntactic requirement. But the determiner is always the definite article. For example:

la France (ART+PN)

/lə fʁɑ̃s/  

The.ART France.PN  

(France)

In this example, France /fʁɑ̃s/ (France) is a proper name referring to a country and it is preceded by the definite article le /lə/ (the). It is also the head in the NP construction.

3. **Countability**: Countability (+count) and non-count (-count) nouns come under the category of countability. Countable nouns refer to things that can be counted, while non-count nouns cannot be counted. Count nouns cover both animate and inanimate objects. For example, stylo /stɪlo/ (pen), garçon /ɡarɡɔ̃/ (boy) etc. but non-count nouns deal with substances (also known as mass nouns). For example: oxygen /ɔksɪʒen/ (oxygen), acier /asje/ (steel), beurre /boɛʁ/ (butter).
Both (+count) and (–count) nouns can occupy the head position in NPs. Syntactically, both these nouns take certain determiners. +count nouns can co-occur with singular plural forms and also items like plusieurs /plyzjør/ (several), quelques /kelkazœf/ (a few/some) and plural forms of determiners like les /le/ (them), ces /sa/ (these), mes /me/ (my). But (–count) nouns take du or de la (some) forms. (+count) nouns are plurals, while (–count) nouns are singular, it lacks plural forms. For example:

i. Le chocolat (ART+N)

/loʃɔla/

(The.chocolate)

ii. De la bière (ART+N)

/dɔ la bjɛr/

(Some.ART beer.N)

Here, in the example (i), chocolat /ʃɔla/ (chocolate) is (+count) noun which is preceded by a definite article le /lo/ (the) and which also occupies the head position in the NP construction. In the example (ii), bière /bjɛr/ (beer) is (–count) noun occurring in the head position of the NP, which takes singular definite article marker de la /dɔ la/ (some).

4. Abstract nouns: Abstract nouns in French can co-occur with indefinite article un /œ/ or une /yn/ (a), usually accompanied by an adjective. It is, in fact, the use of the indefinite article, qualified by the adjective, contributes to express degree rather than pointing out a particular instance of the phenomenon. For example:

Un courage extraordinaire (ART+N)

/œ kuraʒ ekstræordinate/
an.ART  courage.N  extraordinary.ADJ

(an extraordinary courage)

In this example, the abstract noun courage / kuraʒ/ (courage) occurs in the head noun position in the NP, preceded by an indefinite article un /œ̃/ and followed by an adjective extraordinaire /ɛkstrɔʁdiɲɛʁ/ (extraordinary).

5. Pluralia Tantum Nouns: In French, the term ‘pluralia tantum’ noun (Jones 1996) is derived from Latin. It refers to a noun which is inherently plural. In other words, we can state that a ‘pluralia tantum’ is a noun that appears only in the plural form and does not have a singular variant for referring to a single object. They denote a set in a collective manner and cannot be quantified by items which individuate the members of the set. For example: gens (people), moeurs (habbits), fringues (clothes) etc. This kind of noun can occur as the head of a noun phrase in French. As for example:

Beaucoup de gens (N)
/boku də ʒɑ̃/  
Lot of.ADJ people.N

(a lot of people)

Here, gens /ʒɑ̃/ (people) occurs at the head noun position of the NP, modified by the adjective beaucoup de /boku də/ (a lot of). (In this context, we can mention that ‘gens’ (people) cannot be modified by quelques /kɛlɛk/ (some), plusieurs /plyʒœʁ/ (many) cinq /sɛk/ (five) etc.)

It is to be noted here that there are another type of plural noun which is syntactically plural but refers to a single object and it is used in singular form. For instance: lunettes /lynet/ (glasses), ciseaux /sizo/ (scissors), menottes /mɔnɔt/ (handcuffs) etc. can occur as the head of a NP in French, such as

Une belle lunettes (N)
/yn bel lynet/

a.ART beautiful.ADJ glasses.N
Here, though the head Noun ‘lunettes’ /lʏnɛt/ (glasses) refers to a pair of glasses, it is modified by indefinite article ‘une’ /yn/ (a) and adjective ‘belle’ /bɛl/ (beautiful) in singular form.

6. Collective Noun (Nom collectif): A collective noun is a singular noun that represents a group of objects or people. For example: foule /fʊl/ (crowd), groupe /grp/ (group), bande /bɑ̃d/ (band) etc. though these have plural reference, they are used in singular form. In French, these type of nouns always take singular form of the verb and these are grouped under [+count] nouns. These nouns can occupy the head noun position in NP construction in French. We can cite example like:

Ce groupe (DEM+N)  
/sə/  
This.DEM group.N

(this group)

Here, collective noun ‘groupe’ /grp/ (group) occurring as the head noun in this NP and modified by the demonstrative pronoun ‘ce’ /sə/ (this) in the singular form.

7. Quantity Noun: Quantity noun comes under the category of collective noun. Some of the quantity nouns are like douzaine /duzɛn/ (dozen), kilo /kilo/ (kilogram), gramme /ɡʁam/ (gram) etc. It determines the number and gender of the other elements present in the NP. As for example:

Deux kilogrammes (NUM+N)  
/dɛ/  
Two.DET kilogram.N

(two kilograms)

Here, quantity noun kilogrammes /kilɔɡʁam/ (kilogram) occurs as the head noun in this NP, which is preceded by numeral determiner deux /dɛ/ (two).
8. Compound Noun: Compound nouns are very productive in French. These are made up of two or more words often connected by hyphens. Regarding compound nouns, N+de+N pattern is very common in French, such as, voiture de sport / (sports car), chemise de nuit (nightdress), chemin de fer (railway), vin d’honneur (wine reception) etc. For example,

Une   tasse  a   the (ART+N)

/yn   tas  a  te/

A.ART cup at tea.N

(a tea cup)

In this example, the compound noun ‘tasse a the’ /tas a te/ (a tea cup) is preceded by the indefinite article une /yn/ (a). It fills the head noun position in this NP.

3.6.2 Pronoun as Head in NP

Pronouns in French can be substituted for NP constructions. Pronoun can show its grammatical relation in relation number, case and gender. The different types of pronouns are discussed below (L’huillier 1999):

1. Personal pronoun: je/j’ /ʒ/ (before a vowel) ‘I’, il /il/, elle /el/ (he, she) etc.

2. Possessive pronoun: le mien /lə mjɛ̃/ (mine; singular, masculine), la mienne /la mjɛn/ (mine; singular, feminine) etc.

3. Demonstrative pronoun: celui /səlɛ̃/ (the one, this one; singular, masculine), ceux /sO/ (these ones; plural, masculine) etc.

4. Relative pronoun: qui /ki/ (who, which), que /kə/ (whom, which) and dont /dɔ̃/ (whose, of which) etc.

5. Interrogative pronoun: qui /ki/ (who), que/ qu’ /kə/ (what) etc.

6. Indefinite pronoun: personne /persɔ̃/ (no one, nobody), rien /ʁjɛ̃/ (nothing) etc.
1. **Personal pronoun (pronom personnels):** In French, personal pronouns refer to entities characterized by means of person, number and gender. These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>je/j’ /ʒ/ (before a vowel) ’I’</td>
<td>nous /nu/ ‘we’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>tu /tu/ ‘you.informal’</td>
<td>vous /vu/ ‘you.formal’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>il, on /il, ʾ/ (masculine) ‘he/it, one’</td>
<td>ils /il/ ‘they (masculine)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>elle (feminine) /el/ ‘she’</td>
<td>ells /el/ ‘they( feminine)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These pronouns can be the head of a NP in French, for example:

```
Je suis lasse (PRN)
```

\(/ʒ\) suʃ las/  
I.PRN am.V tired.V  
(I am tired)

Here, personal pronoun je /ʒ/ (I) occupies the position of N and function as the head word in the NP.

Personal pronouns can be classed under - Subject pronoun, Disjunctive pronoun, Direct Object pronoun, Indirect object pronoun and Reflexive pronoun.

---

Table 3.11 Subject, Disjunctive, Direct Object, Indirect object and Reflexive pronouns in French
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject pronoun</th>
<th>Direct Object pronoun</th>
<th>Indirect Object pronoun</th>
<th>Reflexive pronoun</th>
<th>Disjunctive pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je, j’ /ʒ/ (I)</td>
<td>me, m’ /mə/ (me)</td>
<td>me, m’ /mə/ (me)</td>
<td>moi /mwa/ (me)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu /tu/ (you)</td>
<td>te, t’ /tə/ (you)</td>
<td>te, t’ /tə/ (you)</td>
<td>toi /twa/ (you)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il /il/ (he)</td>
<td>le /la/ (him, it)</td>
<td>lui /lɥi/ (him, her)</td>
<td>se, s’ /sə/ (himself)</td>
<td>lui /lɥi/ (him)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elle /ɛl/ (she)</td>
<td>la /la/ (her, it)</td>
<td>nous /nu/ (us), vous (you) /vu/</td>
<td></td>
<td>elle /ɛl/ (her)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nous /nu/ (we)</td>
<td>nous /nu/ (us)</td>
<td>leur /lœr/ (them)</td>
<td>se, s’ /sə/ (himself)</td>
<td>nous /nu/(us)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vous /vu/ (you)</td>
<td>vous /vu/ (you)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vous /vu/ (you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ils /il/ (they)</td>
<td>les /la/ (them)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>eux /Ø/ (them)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ells /ɛl/ (they)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ells /ɛl/ (them)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Possessive pronouns (pronom possessif):Possessive pronoun indicates possession. It occurs independently taking all the number and gender inflections in relation to the object possessed. And also it agrees in person and number with the possessor. It is also preceded by the definite article (like le, la, les /la, la, le/ ‘the’) in French. The possessive pronouns listed below:

Table 3.12 Possessive Pronouns in French
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>le mien /la mjɛ̃/ (mine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>la mienne /la mjɛ̃en/ (mine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>le notre /la nɔtʁ/ (ours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>la notre /la nɔtʁ/ (ours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>le tien /la tijɛ̃/ (your)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FAM</td>
<td>la tienne /la tjɛ̃n/ (your)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>le votre /la votr/ (your)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>la votre /la votr/ (your)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>le sien /la sjɛ̃/ (his)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>la sienne /la sjɛ̃n/ (her)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>le leur /la lœr/ (their)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>la leur /la lœr/ (their)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above listed possessive pronouns can replace a noun and also fill the head noun position in an NP. For example:

Son frère est un enseignant, le mien est un artiste

(Her brother is a teacher, mine is an artist)
Here, Possessive pronoun ‘mien’ /mjɛ̃/ (mine), preceded by the definite article ‘le’ /lə/ (the), occupies the head noun position in this NP. It also agrees with number and gender of the possessed i.e, the masculine singular.

3. **Demonstrative pronoun (pronom demonstratif):** In French, demonstrative pronouns can be of two types (L’huillier 1999), such as, simple demonstrative and compound demonstrative pronouns. It belongs to the class of pronominal group and it can replace a noun and fill the position of a headword in a NP in the language.

**Simple Demonstrative Pronoun:** It occurs independently and agrees with gender and number of the noun it stands for. Usually, it is seen that these kinds of pronoun are accompanied by ‘de’ /da/ (of). Simple Demonstrative pronouns are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>celui /səlɥi/ (the one, this one)</td>
<td>ceux /Ø/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(these ones)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>celle /sɛl/ (that one)</td>
<td>celles /sɛl/ (those ones)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example:

```
Celui  de  john
/səlɥi  da  ʒɔn/
That.DEM of.PREP John.PN
```

That.DEM of.PREP John.PN

```
Ceui  de  john
/səlɥi  da  ʒɔn/
That.DEM of.PREP John.PN
```

In this case, the demonstrative pronoun celui /səlɥi/ (this one) is accompanied with preposition de /da/ (of) and together they precede the proper noun john /ʒɔn/ (John) in this NP.
Apart from these, there is another neuter form of demonstrative pronoun found in French. This is: ce or c’ (this, that, it). As for example:

Le livre de Lyon, C’est interessant

(The book of Lyon, it is interesting)

Here, the demonstrative pronoun ‘ce’ /sa/ (it) is a neuter form and it occurs in the head noun position in the NP. ‘ce’ /sa/ (it) changes to c’ /sa/ (it) as the vowel sound follows it.

**Compound Demonstrative pronoun**: These kind of pronouns are formed by adding hyphenated ‘-ci /-si/ (here) and ‘-la’/-la/ (there) to ‘celui’ /səlɥi/ (this) and ‘celle’ /sɛl/ (that). It also takes gender and number agreement according to its referent. It shows two way distinctions by adding ‘-ci’/-si/ (near to the speaker) and ‘-la’ (far from the speaker). This is shown below:

Table 3.14 Compound Demonstrative Pronoun in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>celui-ci /səlɥi-si/ (this one here)</td>
<td>ceux-ci /sə-si/ (these ones here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>celui-la /səlɥi-la/ (this one there)</td>
<td>ceux-la /sə-la/ (these ones there)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEM</td>
<td>celle-ci /sɛl-si/ (that one here)</td>
<td>celles-ci /sɛl-si/ (those ones here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>celle-la/sɛl-la/ (that one there)</td>
<td>celles-la /sɛl-la/ (those ones there)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEUTER</td>
<td>ceci /səsi/ (this), cela /sɛla/ (that), ça /sa/ (it)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For example:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{Tout} & \text{cela} & n'est & \text{sain (ADJ+DEMS)} \\
/tu & səla & ne & pa & sê/ \\
\end{array}
\]

(all that is not healthy)

In this example, the NP tout cela /tu səla/ (all that) is headed by the demonstrative pronoun cela /səla/ (that) which is modified by the adjective tout /tu/ (all).

4. **Relative Pronoun (pronom relatifs)**: Relative pronoun plays the role of introducing relative clauses in French. The relative pronouns can occur as the subject, direct object, possessor within a relative clause. The relative pronouns are of two types – Simple Relative pronoun - qui /ki/ (who, which), que /kə/ (whom, which) and dont /də̃/ (whose, of which), quoi /kwa/ (what), ou /u/ (where) and Compound relative pronoun – lequel /ləkel/ (which one), laquelle /ləkel/ (which one), lesquels /ləkel/ (which ones), lesquelles /ləkel/ (which ones).

Compound relative pronoun is preceded by a preposition (L’huiller 1999:13). Presently, our discussion focuses only on simple relative pronoun. As for example:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{Le} & \text{livre}, & \text{qui} & \text{aide} & \text{le} & \text{garçon} \\
/lə & livr, & ki & ɛd & lə & gars̃ \\
\end{array}
\]


(the book which helps the boy)

In this example, the relative pronoun ‘qui’ /ki/ (which) is the subject of the relative clause ‘qui aide le garçon’ /ki ɛd lə gars̃/ (which helps the boy). It refers to ‘le livre’ /lə livr/ (the book) in the main clause. This relative pronoun ‘qui’ /ki/ (which) occupies the position of head noun in this NP.

Again, for instance,
le livre dans lequel le garçon a écrit

In this case, the preposition dans /dâ/ (in) precedes the compound relative pronoun lequel /lakɛl/ (which). This pronoun replaces the noun le livre /lə livr/ (the book) and it acts as the head element in this NP.

5. **Interrogative pronoun:** Interrogative pronouns are used to ask question and they can replace a noun or a pronoun. In French, these pronouns can be of two kinds - Nominal and Representative Interrogative pronoun (L’huillier 1999:14). Nominal Interrogative pronouns are used to ask question. They are- qui /ki/ (who), que/ qu’ /kə/ (what), quoi /kwa/ (where). Qui /ki/ (who) refers to any animate and inanimate objects. que/ qu’ /kə/ (what) is used to only inanimate object.

Representative Interrogative pronoun refers to ask question regarding elements already mentioned in the context. These are - lequel /lakɛl/ (which one), laquelle /lakɛl/ (which one), lesquels /lekɛl/ (which ones), lesquelles /lekɛl/ (which ones). These forms of pronouns agree according to the gender and number of its referents. They are:

Table 3.15 Representative Interrogative pronoun in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>lequel /lakɛl/ (which one)</td>
<td>lesquels /lekɛl/ (which ones)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>laquelle /lakɛl/ (which one)</td>
<td>lesquelles /lekɛl/ (which ones)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For example:

John est l’homme, qui est le professeur d’anglais?

Here, the nominal interrogative pronoun ‘qui’ (who) refers to the subject of the main clause ‘John’ / ʒɔn/. It also forms NP and acts as the head element in this case.

Again, for example:

Lesquels vous préférez?

Which.INTR you.PRN prefer.V

Here, the compound interrogative pronoun lesquels /lekel/ (which ones) is used to ask question and forms a NP in which it is the head element.

6. **Indefinite Pronoun (pronom indefinis):** Indefinite pronouns in French occur independently and replace a noun. Some forms of indefinite pronouns are invariable and some are variable. Variable indefinite pronouns must agree with number and gender of the noun that they replace or refer to. Invariable indefinite pronouns are – personne /persɔn/ (no one, nobody), rien /rjɛ/ (nothing), quelque chose /kɛlkaʃɔz/(something), quelqu’un /kɛlkaʃœ/ (someone/somebody), plusieurs /plyzjœ/ (several). Variable Indefinite pronouns are such as – quelques-uns /kɛlkaʃœ/ (a few, masculine), quelques-unes /kɛlkaʃœyn/ (a few; feminine), chacun /ʃakœ/ (each one; singular, masculine), chacune /ʃakœyn/ (each one; singular, feminine), aucun /okœ/ (none; singular, masculine), aucune /okœyn/ (none; singular, feminine), certains /sertœ/ (some; plural, masculine), certains /sertœyn/ (some; plural, feminine), tous /tu/ (all, everybody; plural, masculine), toutes /tut/ (all, everybody; plural, feminine). For example:
Personne  n’est  la (INDF)
/ person  ne  la/
No one.INDF  not.NEG  there.DEM

(no one is there)

Here, ‘personne’ (no one) is an indefinite pronoun and its form is not changeable. It occurs in the head noun position in this NP. Again,

Tous  sont  presents (INDF)
/tu  sɔ̃  prezɔ̃/
All  are  present

(all are present)

In this example, ‘tous’ /tu/ (all) is an invariable indefinite pronoun and it occupies the head position of the NP. It takes the plural masculine form as it denotes a certain quantity.

Apart from these, there is another type of pronoun in French that is – Adverbial pronoun or Pronominal Adverb (Adverbes Pronominaux) (Danneen 1997:11). This kind of pronoun replaces a preposition + N/NP construction in French. It takes the position or acts as the direct and indirect object pronouns in the sentence. There are only two types of adverbial pronouns. They are – ‘y’ /i/ (there), ‘en’ /ɛn/ (from it, from that place, of it/ them).

‘Y’ /i/ (there): It can replace prepositional phrase preceded by à, sur, dans /a, syr, dɔ̃/ (to, on, in) etc.

As for example:

Les  livres  sont  sur  la  table.  Ils  y  sont. (ADVL)
/lɛ  livr  sɔ̀  syr  la  tabl.  Il  i  sɔ̃/
The.ART  book.N  are.V  on.PREP  the.ART  table.N  They.PRN  there.ADVL  are

(the books are on the table. They are there.)

In this example, adverbial pronoun or pronominal adverb ‘y’ /i/ (there) replaces the prepositional phrase ‘sur la table’ /syr la tabl/ (on the table). In the second sentence, ‘y’ /i/ (there) is a pronoun in the direct object position and it occupies the head position in the NP.
‘En’ /ɑ̃/ (of it, of them): In French, prepositional phrases, partitive and indefinite constructions can be replaced ‘en’ /ɑ̃/ (of it, of them).

For example:

J’ai acheter des livres. J’en ai acheté. (ADVL)

(I have bought books. I have bought them)

Here, the adverbial pronoun ‘en’ /ɑ̃/ (of them) refers back to the object of the first sentence ‘des livres’ /də livr/ (books). It also acts as the head word in this NP in the second sentence.

3.6.3 Adjective as Head in NP

Adjective, in French, precedes or follows a noun. It also agrees with the number and gender of the noun it modifies (Jones 1996:328). In fact, by the process of nominalization an adjective can play the role of a noun, preceded by an article. It is called nominalized adjective. This kind of nominal adjective can also fill the head noun position in NP construction in French.

For example:

un jeune joue le jeu (ADJ)

(A young is playing the game)

In this example, ‘jeune’/ʒœn/ (young) is an adjective. But when indefinite article ‘un’ /œn/ (a) is added to it, it acts a noun. It also occupies the head noun position in this NP.

3.6.4 Numerals (Numéraux) as Head in NP
In French, numerals are of two kinds, such as, Cardinal and ordinal (Dinneen 1997:33).

3.6.4.1 **Cardinal Numerals:** Cardinals have invariable forms, except for number 1 (one) that is ‘un (MASC)/une (FEM)’ /œ, yn/. Gender is marked on this numeral according to the noun they modify or precede. Moreover, these kinds of cardinals can also fill the head position in the NP construction in French. Some of the cardinal numerals are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Cardinal</th>
<th>Numerals</th>
<th>Cardinal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>zero /zeɔ/</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>onze /ɔz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>un /œ/, une</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>douze /duz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/yn/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>deux /du/</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>treize /trez/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>trios /trw/</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>quatorze /katɔrz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>quatre /katr/</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>quinze /kɛz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>cinq /sɛk/</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>seize /sez/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>six /sis/</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>dix-sept /dis-set/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>sept /set/</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>dix-huit /dis-qït/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>huit /qït/</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>dix-neuf /dis-nœf/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>neuf /nœf/</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>vingt /vœ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>dix /dis/</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>vingt et un /vœ e ɐ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>trente /taã/</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>cent /sã/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>quarante /kaaãt/</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>cent un / sã ẽ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>cinquante /sẽkãt/</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>deux cents /dÔ sã/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>soixante /swasãt/</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>mille /mil/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>soixante-dix /swasãt-dis/</td>
<td>1001</td>
<td>mille un /mil ẽ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>soixante et onze /swasãt e ẽz/</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>deux mille /dÔ mil/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>soixante-douze /swasãt-duz/</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>un mille ẽ mil/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>quatre-vingts /katr- vẽ/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>quatre-vingt-un /katr-vẽ- œ/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>quatre-vingt-deux /katr-vẽ-duz/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for example:

Nous avons invite dix filles. Cinq sont venus (NUM)

/nu avõ ẽvite dis fij. sẽk sõ vanyz/
(we invited ten girls. Five came)

In this example, the cardinal numeral ‘cinq’ /sɛk/ (five) fills the head position in this NP, occurring here as a pronoun. But in the first sentence cardinal ‘dix’ /dis/ (ten) modifies the noun ‘filles’ /fij/ (girls).

3.6.4.2 Ordinal Numerals: All the ordinals in French are invariable in form. But the ordinal ‘premier’ (first) has masculine and feminine forms depending on the noun they modify. Some of the ordinals in French are mentioned below:

Table 3.17 Ordinal Numeral in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Ordinal</th>
<th>Eleventh</th>
<th>onzième</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>premier /pɔ̃mjɛ/ (Masc.)</td>
<td>Twelfth</td>
<td>douzième /duzim/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>première /pɔ̃miʁ/ (Fem.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>deuxième /diøm/</td>
<td>Twentieth</td>
<td>vingtième /vɛtʁim/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>troisième /twazim/</td>
<td>Fiftieth</td>
<td>cinquantième /sɛkɑ̃tim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>quatrième /katʁim/</td>
<td>hundredth</td>
<td>centième /sɑ̃tim/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>cinquième /sɛkim/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>sixième /siksim/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>dixième /diksim/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example:

Le premier s’appelle John (ART+NUM)

/lə pɔ̃mjɛ sapel jɔ̃/
In this instance, the ordinal numeral premier /pəʊmjeɪə/ (first) acts as the head noun in the NP, which is preceded by the definite article le /lə/ (the/masculine).

3.7 Conclusion

The above discussion would provide a comparative study of the structural nature of Head (H) position in the Noun Phrase (NP) in Assamese and French language. There are similarities and dissimilarities in both the languages so far as Head is concerned.

SIMILARITIES:

- Head of an NP is an obligatory element in both the languages. It occurs independently and sometimes with other elements in both Assamese and French.
- In both Assamese and French, the Head of NP is occupied by a noun, pronoun, adjective and numeral.

DISSIMILARITIES:

- In French, determiner is an obligatory element that must precede a noun in NP. But in Assamese, the head noun may not necessarily take a determiner. In fact, in French, proper names (animate human) do not take determiner.
- The head noun in Assamese does not inflect for number and gender. But in French head noun must agree with the number and gender of the object it stands for.
References


