CHAPTER IV

CONSTITUENTS IN THE ORDER OF NOUN PHRASE CONSTRUCTION IN ASSAMESE AND FRENCH

CONSTITUENTS IN THE ORDER OF NOUN PHRASE CONSTRUCTION IN ASSAMESE (A)

4.1 Constituents in the Order of Noun Phrase Construction in Assamese

Like other phrases, noun phrase also comprises constituents in Assamese noun phrase. The position of the head element in NP may be a noun, pronoun, adjective or a numeral as discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter mainly focuses on the elements or constituents which may form a NP in Assamese language. The basic constituents of a NP comprise determiner, gender, number, case, preposition and postposition, adjectives. These are discussed with relevant examples from the language under study in the following sections:

4.2 Determiner in Assamese:

In Assamese, there are certain determinative morphemes which are added postpositionally to noun a sentence to fulfill any argument: subject, object or complement (Kalita 2011:173). In this regard, Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese, Bengali, Oriya are characterised by the presence of determinative morphemes added to nouns. These suffixes are added to nouns, pronouns, numerals and adjectives in these languages. Different scholars have interpreted this determinative element in different ways. Satyanath Bora in his Bahal Vyakaran has termed the determiner as ‘secondary suffix’ (Bora 2011). Debananda Bharali called it ‘particle’ (Bharali 2011), Kaliram Medhi used the term ‘particle’ for it (Medhi 1936). In Assamese, Its Formation and Development, Dr. Banikanta Kakati used term ‘Enclitic Definitives’ to represent determiner in Assamese. Kalita followed the comment made by Chatterji (1926) that these determinatives morphemes are ‘enclitic definitives’ or numeratives in Bengali. Later, Goswami and Tamuli (Goswami and Tamuli 2003: 416-417) in a joint work have stated that these kind of suffixes not only signal definiteness, but also categorize the entity noun, pronoun (third person of demonstrative, relative and interrogative pronoun), adjective on the basis of shared semantic properties such as, animate-inanimate, male-female, respectful-disrespectful, dimensionality (e.g.
long, short, round, flat etc.), size (normal, diminutive), emotional colouring (polite, neutral). Besides, they indicate number.

For the present study, the term ‘Determiner’ is used to refer to determinatives (Kalita 2011:175). In English and French, this term ‘Determiner’ refers to a set of closed class items which precede the head noun in a NP. But in Assamese, the system of determiner refers to certain suffixes which are added to the head noun in a NP. This feature has characterized Assamese which is absent in French or English.

In some literature, this term ‘determinative’ is regarded as ‘classifier’ which is present in languages like Bodo. Classifiers are added to nouns semantically in Bodo. But Assamese do not possess pure classifiers as sometime two different determinatives are used for the two entities which are similar in shape and form (Bora 2011:75). As for example,

कलमटो
/kolom-to/
Pen.N-DTV
(the pen)

পেনিলডাল
/pensil-dal/
Pen.N-DTV
(the pen)

Here, determinatives -टो/-to and -ডাল/-dal/ are suffixed to कलम/kolom/ and পেনিল/pensil/ respectively. Though both the nouns are same in size and shape, but we can not add –ডাল/-dal/ to noun कলম/kolom/ (pen) or –টো/-to/ to the noun (পেনিল/pensil/ (pencil).

For the present study we have taken the determiners as determinatives. Assamese possesses a large number of determinatives. Some of the common determinatives are illustrated below: -থন/-khon/, -থনি/-khoni/, -টো/-to/, -জন/-zon/, -জনী/-zonii/, -ডাল/-dal/, -পট/-pat/, -
-খন /-khun/: It is used to refer to inanimate thing that is something flat and broad. It is added with noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

i. কাপোরখন (N+DTV)

/kapor-khun/

Cloth-DTV

(the cloth)

ii. সৌখন (DEM+DTV)

/xau-khun/

That-DTV

(that one)

iii. ভালখন (ফিন্ড) (ADJ+DTV)

/bhal-khun (kitap)/

Good-DTV (book)

(the good one)

iv. চারিখন (NUM+DTV)

/Sari-khun/

Four-DTV

(the four ones)
In these examples, the determinative –খন /-khən/ is added to noun, pronoun adjective and numeral respectively. Again, the adjective ‘ভাল’ /bhal/ (good) acts here as a noun, when -খন /-khən/ follows it and refers to the noun (book) which is understood.

-খন /-khən/: It is also used to refer to inanimate thing that is something flat and broad. It is added with noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

i. তথ্য (N+DTV)

/noi-khən/

River.N-DTV

(the river)

i. এই (DE+DTV)

/ei-khən/

This.DEM-DTV

(this one)

In the above examples, the determinative -খন /-khən/ is added to the noun and demonstrative pronoun respectively. In both these NPs, the determinative -খন /-khən/ follows the head elements in both these Nps. In example (ii), the demonstrative pronoun actually refer to the noun নদী /noi/ (river) which is understood.

-টা /-to/: It indicates animate (human and non-human) and inanimate objects. It is added with noun, pronoun and adjective. It can be used with persons in a very informal context. For example:

i. পুষ্ট (N+DTV)
Here, in the example (i) determinative -\text{to} /-to/ follows the animate non-human being (cow). And in example (ii) -\text{to} /-to/ is added to person in a very informal way.

-\text{ज़ा} /-z\text{a}/: It refers to animate human beings. It signifies male person in a respectful manner. It can occur with noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

i. लङ्बाज़न (N+CL)

/\text{l}ङ्म\text{a}-z\text{a}/

Boy-CL

‘the boy’

Here, determinative -ज़ा /-z\text{a}/ is suffixed to the noun लङ्म /\text{l}ङ्म/ (boy) which signals definiteness and male.

-\text{ज़ी} /-z\text{ii}/: It is used to indicate females of human and animate non-human. It also occurs with noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:
In these examples, -জনী/zon/ is added to noun তিনি/tirot (woman) and pronoun সেই/xei/ (that) respectively to show definiteness and feminine.

-দাল/-dal: It is used to refer to long, round and solid objects (such as stick, rope, bamboo etc.). It indicates inanimate things. But sometimes it is used for persons also in a very disrespectful context. It can occur with noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

i. বাঁধদাল (N+DTV)

/Bah-dal/

Bamboo-DTV

(the bamboo)

Here, determinative –দাল/-dal occurring after the noun বাঁধ/bah/ (bamboo) to shows its definiteness.

-পাট/-pat: It is used to express something flat and narrow. It also indicates inanimate things. It is added with noun, pronoun, and numeral. For example:

i. চাবিপাট (N+DTV)
/sabi-pat/
key-DTV
(the key)

ii. এপাট (চাবি) (NUM+DEF)
/e-pat (sabi)/
One-CL (key)
(the one) (key)

iii. ডাঙ্গোপাট (গাছপাত) (ADJ+DEF)
/daŋor-pat (gospat)/
Big-DTV (tree leaf)
(the big one) (tree leaf)

In the example (i), the suffix –পাট /-pat/ is added to noun চাবি /sabi/ (key) which signals the definiteness of the object key. In the (ii), –পাট /-pat/ is suffixed to numeral এক /ek/ (one) which becomes এ- /e-/. It also refers to a particular key which is understood. In the example (iii), adjective ডাঙ্গো /daŋor/ (big), followed by the determinative –পাট /-pat/ (the), acts as noun (nominal). It actually refers to গাছপাট /gospat/ (tree leaf).

-কুবা /-kura/: It is usually used to indicate fire. It occurs with noun, pronoun and numeral. For example:

i. জুইকুবা (N+DTV)
It is used to show solid and liquid things. It is used after noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

i. বালিমি (পানী) (ADJ+DTV)

/bjal-khini (water)/

Good-DTV (water)

(pure water)

In this example, the adjective acts as the noun when determinative –থিমি /-khini/ is added to it. It actually refers to the definite quantity of water which is understood from the context.

-টা /-ta/: It is used with numerals. For example:

i. চাবিটা (কল) (NUM+DTV)

/sari-ta (banana)/

Four-DTV

(the four bananas)

Here, cardinal numeral চাবি /sari/ (four) takes definitive –টা /-ta/ which refers to banana that is understood. It signals only four numbers of bananas.

-কোসা /-kosa/: It is used to refer to long, loose or flexible, tight objects like hair, thread etc. It occurs with noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

i. চুলকোসা (N+DTV)
Here, कोशा /-kosa/ is suffixed to noun चूली /suli/ (hair) which indicates its definiteness as well as form i.e. long and loose one.

-खिला /-khila/: It is to indicate leaf like things such as, paper, leaves of trees etc. It can occur with noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

सबूखिला (গহপাড়)(ADJ+DTV)

/xpru-khila (gospat)/

small-DTV

(the small one) (tree leaf)

Here, determinative -खिला /-khila/ is added to adjective सবু /spru/ (small) which actually refers to গৃহপাড় /gospat/ (tree leaf). The adjective becomes noun in this example when the determinative is attached to it.

-গ্রাকী /-gpraki/: It can be used to indicate both male and female human beings in a respectful manner. It follows noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective. For example:

i. বাইদেউগ্রাকী (N+DTV)

/baideu-gpraki/

Elder sister-DTV

(the elder sister)

Here, by adding the suffix –গ্রাকী /-gpraki/ to the noun বাইদেউ /baideu/ (elder sister) refers to a particular elder sister in an honorific sense.
4.2.1 There are some determinatives which signify the indefiniteness of animate or inanimate things, of feelings or thoughts of person in the language, such as -মান /-man/, -চেষ্টক or -নিষেক /-serek/ or /-dijek) etc. These are discussed below:

-মান /-man/: It is added to numeral, when another determinative (definitive) follows the numeral. For example:

   তিনিজনমান (3'বা) (NUM+DTV+INDEF)
   /tini-zɔn-man (lɔra)/
   Three-DTV-INDEF (boy)
   (three boys)

   Here, তিনিজনমান /tinizonman/ (three boys) indicates ‘three boys’ which is understood. But as মান ‘-man’ suffix is added to this NP, it makes the number of boys indefinite.

-কেই /-kei/: It can be added after noun and pronoun. It is always followed by definitives. For instance:

   i. ফারালিকেইজনী (N+INDEF+DEF)

       /soali-kei-zɔni/

   Girl-INDEF-DTV
   (a few girls)

   Here, indefinite suffix -কেই /-kei/ is followed by definitive suffix -জনী /-zɔni/, which does not point out any definite numbers of girls.

4.2.2 Determinative with Numeral:
The determinatives like –जन /-जन/, -जली /-जली/, -टो /-टो/, -खन /-खन/, -दाल /-दाल/, -पाट /-पाट/, -गराकी /-गराकी/ etc. can also go with numerals in Assamese (Goswami 214). These kinds of determinatives can be suffixed to numerals and may precede or follow the head noun. If they precede the noun, it indicates number of nominal in definite sense. On the other hand, if they follow the noun, it signifies a definite sense not only the number but also the noun it refers to.

The order of occurrence of these determinatives with numerals in NPs is shown below:

NP = NUM+DTV+N (H)

For example:

दुग्ध  किताब (NUM+DEF+N)

/du-khon  kitap/

Two-DTV book

(three books)

Here, in this NP determinative -खन /-खन/ is attached to the numeral दूई /dui/ (two) of दूई /-du/. It represents the definiteness of the number of books. But it does not mean that the books are definite.

NP = N (H)+NUM+DTV

For example:

छोराली  तिनिजली (N+NUM+DTV)

/soali  tini-zoni/

Girl  three-DTV

(the three girls)
In this example, determinative -জনী/-অ /-অ is attached to the numeral তিনি/তিনি (three), follows the head noun পালালী/পালালী (girl). This determinative makes a definite sense not only the numbers but also the girls.

4.3 Number in Assamese

Number is another significant morphological element or constituent of noun phrase construction in Assamese. It consists of two types: Singular and Plural. There is one more type of number called Number Neutral (Goswami 2010:207). These are discussed in the following:

4.3.1 Singular Number

To indicate singularity there is not a single definite marker or suffix in the language. In fact, some of the determinative suffixes (like -জনী/-অ /-অ, -জনী/-অ /-অ, -টো/-টো, -খন/-খন, -ডাল/-ডাল, -চটা/-চটা etc.) are added after noun, some kinds of pronoun, adjective and numeral to signal singular number. For example:

i. গাছ্ডাল (N+SG)

/gps-dal/

Tree-SG

(the tree)

Here, -ডাল/-dal/ is suffixed to the noun গাছ /gps/ (tree) to refer to one particular tree in this NP.

4.3.1.1 Again, there are a number of ways to make singular in Assamese. These are:

1. Sometimes proper name, some of personal and demonstrative pronouns occur independently without taking any suffix to refer to their singularity. For example:

i. রিটা আছে (PN)

/rita ahise/

Rita came

(Rita came)

ii. সি গাল (PRN)
He went

In these examples, the NPs /rita/ (Rita) and /xi/ (he) do not take any determinative suffixes. Yet, we can assume that these two NPs refer only to two particular persons respectively.

2. Often determinatives are added to proper names to indicate singular as well as definiteness. For example:

   i. /asiโร.าน.กาน.ตาน.า.กาน.จาน.าน.กาน./ (PN+DTV)

      /rita-zหนอน.กาน./ ahise/

      Rita-DTV came

      (Rita came)

      Here, -นู /-zหนอน/ is suffixed to the proper name /rita/ to refer to a particular girl in this NP.

3. To make singular, we can add numeral – /e/ of /ek/ to certain nouns. For instance:

   i. /e-ปองตาน.กาน./ (NUM+N)

      One-year

      (one year)
In this example, the NP এক বছর /ekʰɔr/ (one year) takes numeral এক /ek/ (one) which becomes ১- /e-/, when it is prefixed to the noun. Though it signals indefinite, but refers to singular number.

4.3.2 Plural Number

In Assamese, there are certain plural suffixes like -বাদ /-bor/, -বিলাক /-bilak/, -হৃদ /-hɔrd/, -লাক /-lok/, -খন /-khɔn/ etc. are added to noun, pronoun, numeral and adjective (Goswami 218). They do not indicate any gender distinction of the object of entity to which these are suffixed. These are illustrated in the following:

1. -বাদ /-bor/, -বিলাক /-bilak/: These two plural suffixes are suffixed to animate and inanimate entities. They do not indicate any gender distinction. These are added to noun, pronoun and adjective. -বাদ /-bor/ indicates some kind of inferior sense, however, -বিলাক /-bilak/ is used in a formal context. For example:
   i. ছাগলীবাদ  
      /sagoli-bor/  
      Goat-PL  
      (goats)
   ii. ডিওডাবিলাক  
      /tirota-bilak/  
      Woman-PL  
      (women)

2. -হৃদ /-hɔrd/: It indicates some kind of closeness or love in an informal context. It is added to animate human being. There is no male and female distinction. It is very limited in use. Only
nouns (common and relational nouns) and pronouns (personal pronouns) take this suffix to make plural. For example:

i. ল্যাবাইড

/ল্যাবাইড-

Boy-PL

(boys)

Here, the noun ল্যাব/ (boy) takes the suffix –ইড/-
 to show plural number.

4 -লোক /-lok/: This plural suffix is used only to some kinds of pronouns in an honorific sense. For instance:

i. টেউঁলোক

/টেউঁলোক-

He-PL

(men or women)

In this example, -লোক /-lok/ is suffixed to the pronoun টেউঁ /টেউঁ (he) to make it plural. It also signifies some kind of respect.

5 -খন /-khন/: To show plurality of nouns, this suffix is used. The same form is used to signal singular definite number. But both the suffix differs from each other depending on their use in different context. It is used for animate beings in a very derogatory sense. It is added to noun to abuse persons. For example:

i. হোবালীখন

/হোবালীখন-

Girl-PL
Here, the suffix -খন/-khôn/ is added to noun ছোবালী/soali/ (girl) to make it plural. It refers to the girls in a disrespectful manner.

There are, however, certain words which indicate collectiveness in Assamese. These kinds of words are added to some particular nouns (both animate and inanimate) and pronoun which express plurality. They are: সকল/xôkôl/, বুন্দ/brindôl/, গণ/gôn/, বাঁশ/raxi/, বাঁজ/razi/, মালা/mala/, ওষ্ঠ/gussô/, মথা/môkha/, জাক/zak/ etc. (Goswami 218). For example:

i. চীবাইজাক
/sôrai-zak/
Bird-PL
(the birds)

ii. সিসকল
/xi-xôkôl/
He-PL
(they)

Here, -জাক/-zak/ and –সকল/-xôkôl/ are suffixed to noun চীবাই/sôrai/ (bird) and pronoun সি/xi/ (he) respectively to indicate plurality.

4.3.3 Number Neutral

Number neutral is a form found in Assamese where a noun can be used without a number distinction. Especially, common noun can be used without any number marking. It only takes number identity (either singular or plural) when it points out to a specific reference. For example:

i. মানুহ আহিষে (N)
/manuh ahise/
Man.N came.V
ii. /sɔrai urise/

In these examples, the common nouns /manuh/ (man) and /sɔrai/ (bird) do not take any overt number markers. These are number neutral forms. These nouns may indicate either singular or plural number, but it is not definite.

4.4 Gender in Assamese

Gender is one of the important morphological aspects of Assamese language. It plays a significant role in the construction of NP in the language. Gender distinction is shown in noun, pronoun, and adjectives in the language. In Assamese, the gender system is not grammatically marked. It classifies animate (human and non-human) beings as masculine and feminine depending on their sex. Therefore, there are only two genders found in Assamese, viz., Masculine and Feminine. Besides, there are certain nominal words which denotes both male and female beings termed as Common Gender (Goswami 2004:112).

Masculine gender refers to beings of male sex. There are certain words which always signal masculine gender. For example: /bepari/ (businessman), /halowa/ (ploughman), /bonuwa/ (worker) etc. Feminine gender denotes beings of female sex. It also possesses some words which denote only feminine. For example: /gabhɒru/ (grown-up girl),  ‘raṇḍhali’ (lively),  ‘ajpti’ (a woman with a living husband) etc. Common gender refers to beings which are both male and female, for instance, /manuh/ (people), /hati/ (elephant), /sɔrai/ (bird) etc.

However, there are some ways to express male female distinction in Assamese. These are:
1. **By using separate words or bases (nouns) for male and female beings.**

2. **By using qualifying words separately either preceding or following the common gender.**

3. **Using various kinds of suffixes.**

4. **Using certain determinatives added to noun bases.**

1. **By using separate words or bases (nouns) for male and female beings:** To show gender distinction in Assamese, separate words can be used. Relational nouns are used in this regard. These kinds of words indicate male female status. For example:

   Table 4.1 Gender distinction in Relational noun in Assamese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>পো/পো/ (son)</td>
<td>জী/জি/ (daughter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>দৌড়া/দৌড়া/ (father)</td>
<td>মা/মা/ (mother)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মামা/মামা/ (uncle)</td>
<td>মামী/মামী/ (aunty)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **By using qualifying words separately preceding the common nouns:** There are qualifying words used before the common nouns to indicate masculine and feminine gender in Assamese. The qualifying terms like মণ্ডা/মণ্ডা/ (male) and মাইক/মাইক/ (female) occur before the common noun bases. As for example:

   Table 4.2 Qualifying Terms Used to indicate Gender in Assamese
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>মাতা হাতি /mota hati/ (male elephant)</td>
<td>মায়ের হাতি /maiki hati/ (female elephant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>মাতা মানুষ /mota manuh/ (male)</td>
<td>মায়ের মানুষ /maiki manuh/ (female) etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table, the common nouns হাতি /hati/ (elephant) and মানুষ /manuh/ (male) are qualified by the terms মাতা /mota/ (male) and মায়ের /maiki/ (female) respectively to indicate male female status.

3. **Using various kinds of suffixes:** In Assamese, there are some suffixes added to the words of masculine nouns to signal feminine gender. These kinds of suffixes are known as feminine suffixes. These are: -ঈ /-i/, -অনি /-oni/, -এরি /-eri/.

-ঈ /-i/ suffix: It is suffixed to masculine forms of noun and adjective of consonant or ending in -া /-a/ to make feminine gender. As for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>বাসুণ (N) /bamun/ (male Brahmin)</td>
<td>বাসুণী /bamuni/ (female brahmin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>হরিনা (N) /horna/ (male deer)</td>
<td>হরিনী /hroni/ (female deer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>বুঝ /ADJ) /rupoh/ (beautiful man)</td>
<td>বুঝী /rupohi/ (beautiful woman) etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these examples, the noun (animate) বাসুণ /bamun/ (male Brahmin) takes the -ঈ /-i/ suffix to make it feminine gender. Again, the the -ঈ /-i/ suffix is added to the noun (inanimate) হরিনা /horna/ (male deer) and the adjective বুঝ /rupoh/ (beautiful man) to make them feminine gender.

-অনি /-oni/suffix: This -অনি suffix is added to masculine forms of personal proper names, animate human relation to show feminine. For example:
Here, -অণী suffix is added to the masculine forms of the animate nouns নাপিত /napit/ (a barber) and উকীল /ukil/ (an advocate) to make them feminine respectively.

-এৰী /-eri/: This feminine suffix is very limited in Assamese. It is used after adjective base of masculine forms. For instance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ডেকা /deka/ (young man)</td>
<td>ডেকী /dekeri/ (young woman)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this instance, -এৰী /-eri/ is suffixed to the masculine form ডেকা /deka/ (young man) to make ডেকী /dekeri/ (young woman) which shows its feminine gender.

4. **Using certain determinatives added to noun bases:** To make male female distinction in Assamese, we can add certain determinative such as –অন /-zon/, -ডী /-zoni/, -টো /-to/ etc. to noun, pronoun and numeral. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>মানুহজন (N+DTV)</td>
<td>মানুহজনী (N+DTV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/manuh-zon/</td>
<td>/manuh-zoni/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the man)</td>
<td>(the woman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>হাতীটো (N+DTV)</td>
<td>হাতীজনী (N+DTV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/hati-to/</td>
<td>/hati-zoni/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elephant.N-DTV</td>
<td>elephant.N-DTV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the male elephant)</td>
<td>(the female elephant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>দুজন (NUM+DTV)</td>
<td>দুজনী (NUM+DTV)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 Case in Assamese

Case is another important element in the study of the morphology of NP in Assamese. It is a grammatical category determined by the syntactic and semantic function of a noun or pronoun or adjective in a NP. Case, in Assamese, is a kind of affixes that are suffixed to the noun or NP to show the grammatical relation of that NP. Case inflections are reflected on noun, pronoun and adjective with or without determinatives, singular or plural markers. There are six case affixes in Assamese (Bora 2011:92). They are:

Table 4.4 Case forms in Assamese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Forms ending in consonant</th>
<th>Forms ending in vowel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>-o, -e /-Ø, -e/</td>
<td>-o, -e, -i /-Ø, -e, -i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>-o, -ak /-Ø, -ak/</td>
<td>-o, -ak /-Ø, -ak/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>-ere /-ere/</td>
<td>-ere /-ere/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>-plo /-plo/</td>
<td>-plo /-plo/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>-n /-n/</td>
<td>-n /-n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>-nt /-nt/</td>
<td>-nt /-nt/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Nominative case** (-o, -e, -i /-Ø, -e, -i/): It presents the subject function of NP in a sentence. Nominative case can be added to noun, pronoun and adjective. For example:

   i. [si] गाल (PRN+Ø)
      /xi/ g firewall
      He.PRN-φ went.V (He went)

   ii. [baase] पड़ (N+NOM)
In the examples (i), the pronoun সি /xi/ (he) takes the null (zero) nominative case ending in this NP. In the example (ii), the NP রাম /ram/ (Ram) takes –অ /-e/ case ending. But in the example (iii), the adjective বড় /রোহা/, acting as the noun, takes nominal case marker –অ /-e/ which is preceded by the determinative (definitive) –জন /-zɔn/.

2. Accusative case (-০, -ক, -ক /-Ø, -ক, -kn/): The accusative case ending is added to animate noun, pronoun and adjective. Zero case marker occurs, when the referent is inanimate. Accusative case is also known as objective case as it represents a NP as object in the syntactic level (Kalita: GU). As for example:

i. সি ভাত খালে (N+Ø)
    /xi bhat.Ø khale/
    He.PRN rice.ACC ate.V
    (he ate rice)

ii. মই বীতাক দিলা (N+ACC)
    /moi rita-k dilo/
    I.PRN Rita.PN-ACC gave.V
    (I gave to Rita)

iii. সি ডাঙ্গলোক (চোখালী) দিলে (ADJ+DTV+ACC)
He.PRN big.ADJ-the-ACC (girl) gave.V  
(he gave to the elder one) (girl)  

Here, in example (i) the NP /bhat/ (rice) takes zero case affix as it is inanimate object. In the (ii), the NP /rita/ takes accusative case ending –/k-/. And in the example (iii), accusative –/k-/ case marker is added to the adjective डाँढर /daŋpr/. But the case ending should be preceded by the determinative (definite marker) /-zoni/.

3. **Instrumental Case** (-/ere/): The instrumental case is marked by -/ere/ or -/re/ which is added to noun and adjective. For example:

i. कलमवें  लिखिले (N+INST)  
/kolm-ere  likhile/  
Pen.N-INST  wrote.V  
(wrote with pen) (someone)

Here, the NP कलमवें /kolmere/ consists of noun कलम /kolm/ and case marker -/ere/.

ii. वज़ाड़लाब  लिखिला (ADJ+DTV+INST)  
/raŋa-dal-ere  likhilo/  
Red.ADJ-DTV-INST  wrote.V  
(wrote with the red one) (pencil)

In this case, the adjective वज़ा /raŋa/ (red) takes the determinative डाल /dal/ which is followed by the instrumental case ending -/re/ in this NP.

4. **Dative Case** (-/loi/): the dative case marker is realized by -/loi/ or -/loi/. It expresses movement to certain destination, for something/ someone’ etc. For example:
1. **জৈম গুহাটীতে গেছি (N+case)**

/moi guahati-loi goiso/

(I went to Guwahati)

Here, the NP /guahatilo/ is headed by the noun /guahati/ (Guwahati) and the dative case marker -/loi/ suffixed to it.

5. **Genitive case (-অর /-nr/, -ব /-nr/):** It refers to the sense of ownership of men and things. It is realized by -অর /-nr/ or -ব /-nr/ (of). For example:

   i. **ফিতাপ (N+GEN)**

      /kitap-nr/

      Book.N-GEN

      (of book)

   ii. **ধুনিয়াজনী (ADJ+DTV+GEN)**

      /dfunija-zoni-t/  

      Beautiful.ADJ-DTV-GEN

      (of the beautiful one)

   In the example (i), the NP ফিতাপ /kitapnr/ (of book) consists of the head noun ফিতাপ /kitap/ (book) and the genitive case ending -অর /-nr/ (of). In the (ii), the NP is headed by the adjective ধুনিয়া /dfunija/ (beautiful) which is followed by the determinative -জনী /-zoni/ and genitive case ending -ব /-nr/ (of) respectively.

6. **Locative Case (-অত /-nt/, -ত /-tn/):** Locative case is marked by -অত /-nt/ or -ত /-tn/ which shows place, location and time. It is added to noun and adjective. For example:

   i. **ভাই পথার্থত আছে (N+LOC)**
She.PRN field.N-LOC is.V

(He is in the field)

In this example, in the NP /pôthar-ott/, the head noun position is filled by the noun /pôthar/ (field) which takes the locative case marker –ott /-ott/.

ii. /sati-to /rônga-khon-ott (mona) is.V

Umbrella.N-DTV red-DTV-LOC (bag) is.V

(the umbrella is in the red one) (bag)

Here, the adjective /rônga/ (red) acts like a noun which is followed by the determinative –khôn /-khon/ (the) and after it the locative case ending –ott /-ott/ (in) is added.

4.5.1 Case marker for Relational Nouns

Relational nouns take case inflections, before they undergo certain personal inflections. It is a distinguishing feature of Assamese language in particular. Personal inflections for relational nouns in Assamese are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Affixes</th>
<th>After forms ending in –/a/</th>
<th>After forms ending in –/i/, –उ /-u/ and consonant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above mentioned personal suffixes are attached to the relational nouns. After suffixing these suffixes to nouns of relationships, case markers are added to those nouns. This is illustrated with the following examples:

i. তোমাকে মাদাই
   /toma-r  ma-da-loi/
   You.PRN-GEN  mother.N-2ndP-DAT
   (To your mother)

Here, the relational noun মা /ma/ (mother) takes the 2nd person (formal) marker -বা /-ba/ which is followed by dative case ending –লৈ /-loi/. The 2nd person তুমি /tumi/ (you) becomes তোমা- /toma-/ as it takes genitive marker –ব /-ba/.

ii. তেওরকে মাদাই
    /teo-r  ma-da-noi/
    He.PRN-GEN  mother.N-3rdP-GEN
    (of his mother’s)

In this example too, the relation noun মা /ma/ (mother) takes 3rd person marker –ক /-ko/, followed by the genitive suffix –অব /-ar/. The 3rd person তেও /teo/ (he) also is followed by the genitive ending –ব /-ba/.
4.6 Preposition and Postposition in Assamese

Preposition and postposition are together termed as adposition (Matthews1997:9). They are not variable in form and occur in with noun or pronoun in a NP. In Assamese, preposition and postposition are discussed below:

4.6.1 Preposition in Assamese: Prepositions are very rare in Assamese. They occur before nouns (Goswami 2010:312). For example:

i. /proti din-ɒr/ Each.PREP day.N-GEN (of each day)

ii. /bina poisa.-t/ Without.PREP money.N-GEN (of without money)

In the above NPs, prepositions /proti/ (each) and /bina/ (without) occur before the head nouns which are followed by the genitive marker /-r/ (of).

4.6.2 Postposition in Assamese: Postpositions occur after the nominals in Assamese. Usually, most of the postpositions like /ppra/, /dara/, /hntuwi/, /xoite/ etc. follow noun, pronoun and adjective which take genitive case ending -v /-r/ or -v /-t/ (of). For example:

i. /bnzar-ɒr ppra/ Market.N-GEN from.POSTP (From market)

ii. /bndfiu-zɒn-ɒr xoite/
(with the friend)

In the NP (i), the postposition প্রাচ /prora/ (from) follows the head noun বাজার /bozar/ (market) and in the example (ii), the head noun বন্ধু /bondhu/ (friend), taking the singular number suffix -জন /-zorn/ and genitive marker -ব /-rôn/ (of), is followed by the postposition সৈতে /xoite/ (with).

i. তে৩৩  দ্বাৱা  আনিবা  (PRN+GEN+POSTP)
    /teo-r    dwara    aniba/

He.PRN-GEN        with.POSTP  bring.V

(it is to be brought by him)

Here, postposition দ্বাৱা /dwara/ (by) occurs with the pronoun তে৩৩ /teo/ (he), when genitive –ব /-rôn/ follows the pronoun.

ii. দুৰুীনীয়াজুনীয়া  সৈতে  (ADJ+SG+GEN+POSTP)
    /dhunija-zoni-r    xoite/

Beautiful.ADJ-SG-GEN        with.POSTP

(with the beautiful one)

In the example, postposition সৈতে /xoite/ (with) follows the adjective দু০ীনীয়া /dhunija/ (beautiful) only when genitive –ব /-rôn/ (of) is suffixed to the adjective in this NP. The adjective here acts as the noun, when singular marker –জনী /-zorni/ is suffixed to it.

4.7 Adjectives in Assamese
Adjectives are one of the important elements in the construction of the NP in Assamese. The function of the adjective in a NP is to modify or qualify the head noun. In fact, some kind of adjectives often acts as a noun in a NP, taking number, gender and case inflections. Usually, most of the adjectives in Assamese are invariable in form (Goswami 2010:259). For example, adjectives like বালু /bongo/ (white), রঙ /roŋ/ (red), কালী /kɔla/ (black), ঠাঁকু /danɔr/ (big), সরু /spuru/ (short), ছুটি /suti/ (short), দীর্ঘ /dhydr/ (long), বড় /bodɔ/ (fat), ভাল /bfal/ (good), বয়া /beja/ (bad) etc. can modify a noun in a NP as shown below:

i. ভাল কিতাপ (ADJ+N)
   /bfal kitap/
   Good.ADJ book.N
   (good book)

Here, adjective ভাল /bfal/ (good) qualifies the head noun কিতাপ /kitap/ (book) in this NP.

4.7.1 Adjectives can be classified under the three heads depending on the form and usage (Goswami 2010:260), viz.,

1. Adjectives of Nouns or Pronoun
2. Verbal Adjectives, and
3. Adjectival adjectives

Verbal adjectives are not dealt with in our present study. Adjectives of nouns or pronouns and adjectival adjectives are discussed in the following:

1. **Adjectives of Nouns or Pronoun**: These kinds of adjectives modify a noun in a NP both in the subject slot and in the predicate slot. It may qualify a noun attributively or predicatively. While an adjective used attributively, it precedes the head noun and when used predicatively, it follows a head noun in a NP. As for example:

   **Adjective of Noun Used Attributively:**
   বড় ছোবালী (ADJ+N)
Fat.ADJ girl.N

(Fat girl)

Here, in this NP adjective /xɔkt/ (fat) modifies the head noun /soali/ (girl) attributively. It precedes the noun.

**Adjective of Noun Used Predicatively:**

/phulɔni-khɔn  dhunija/

Garden.N-DTV beautiful.ADJ

(the garden is beautiful)

In this example, the head noun /phulɔni/ (garden) is qualified by the adjective /dhunija/ (beautiful) predicatively. That means, the adjective follows the head noun in the NP. But in this case the head noun is accompanied by the determinative –�ন /-khɔn/ to make it definite.

**Adjectives of Pronouns:** Adjectives of pronouns qualify a pronoun in Assamese. While an adjective qualifies a pronoun, it usually follows a pronoun. For example:

/xi  budhįjk/  

He.PRN intelligent.ADJ

(he is an intelligent)

Here, in this NP adjective /budhįjk/ (intelligent) occurs after the pronoun as it modifies the pronoun /xi/ (he).
In fact, sometimes adjectives of pronouns may precede a pronoun in certain circumstances like expressing one’s feeling or emotion etc. For example:

বদমাচ সিহট! (ADJ+PRN)

/bədmas xihɔt/

Wicked. ADJ they. PRN

(they are wicked!)

In this example, the adjective বদমাচ /bədmas/ (wicked) precedes the pronounসিহট /xihɔt/ (they), since one expresses one’s emotion in this NP.

4.7.2 Gender of Adjectives: Some of the adjectives of nouns have gender distinctions. For example:

Table 4.6 Gender of Adjectives in Assamese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>বৃদ্ধ লা/বা/rupoh lɔra/ (beautiful boy)</td>
<td>বৃদ্ধী ঘোষালী/rupɔhi soali/ (beautiful girl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>বৃদ্ধিমান লোক /buddhiman lok/ (intelligent man)</td>
<td>বৃদ্ধিমটী ভিবোটা /buddhimoti tirota/ (intelligent woman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>পগলা মানুহ /p̪aŋgola manuh/ (mad man)</td>
<td>পাঙ্গলী ভিবোটা /pangli tirota/ (mad woman)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above examples, the adjectives like বৃদ্ধ, বৃদ্ধিমান, পগলা/rupoh, buddhiman, p̪aŋgola/ change its form to বৃদ্ধী, বৃদ্ধিমটী, পাঙ্গলী / rupɔhi, buddhimati, pangli/ in accordance with the gender of the nouns they modify in these NPs.

Apart from these, there are certain adjectives of nouns which do not show any gender distinctions. They are used invariably. For example:
Table 4.7 No Gender distinction in Adjective of Nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>धूनिया  लबा (ADJ+N)</td>
<td>धूनिया (हाबली (ADJ+N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dhunija lbra/</td>
<td>/dhunija soali/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beautiful boy</td>
<td>beautiful girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(beautiful boy)</td>
<td>(beautiful girl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>बृथियुक   मानुष (ADJ+N)</td>
<td>बृथियुक   तिरोटा (ADJ+N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/budhijok manuh/</td>
<td>/budhijok tirot/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intelligent man</td>
<td>intelligent woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(intelligent man)</td>
<td>(intelligent tirot/a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>असमीया   श्वामी (ADJ+N)</td>
<td>असमीया पात्री (ADJ+N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nxpmienda swami/</td>
<td>/nxpmienda ptni/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assamese husband</td>
<td>Assamese wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assamese husband)</td>
<td>(Assamese wife)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>भाल   छात्र (ADJ+N)</td>
<td>भाल   छात्री (ADJ+N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bfial satrn/</td>
<td>/bfial satri/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good student</td>
<td>good student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(good boy student)</td>
<td>(good girl student)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the adjectives like धूनिया/dhunija/, बृथियुक/budhijok/, असमीया/nxpmienda/, भाल/bfial/ (good boy student) do not show any gender distinction in their forms while they modify nouns of both feminine and masculine genders.

4.7.3 **Number of Adjectives:** In Assamese, no number agreement is marked on adjectives (Goswami 2010:264). It is evident from the following examples:
Table 4.8 No Number Marked on Adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>भाल</td>
<td>ब्याल (ADJ+N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bfial</td>
<td>kitap/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(good book)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>धूनीया</td>
<td>ब्याल (ADJ+N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dfunija</td>
<td>soali/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beautiful.ADJ</td>
<td>girl.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(beautiful girl)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these examples, the adjectives like भाल /bfial/ (good), धूनीया /dfunija/ (beautiful) do not show any number agreement for the plural nouns like ब्यालबोर /kitapbor/ (books), ब्यालबोर (ADJ+N+PL) /soali-bilak/ (girls) they modify. The same form of adjectives is used for both the singular and plural numbers.

However, it is to be noted here that sometimes adjectives can be reduplicated to modify plural nouns so as to keep the number concord with the head nouns. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>भाल</th>
<th>भाल</th>
<th>ब्याल (ADJ+ADJ+N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/bfial</td>
<td>bfial</td>
<td>kitap/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good.ADJ</td>
<td>good.ADJ</td>
<td>book.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(good books)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this NP, the adjective /bial/ (good) is reduplicated modifying the noun /kitap/ (book) to indicate the sense of plurality of the nominal. But reduplicated adjective is not an obligatory feature to modify plural noun.

3. Adjectival Adjectives or Adjectives of Adjectives: There are certain adjectives which modify other adjectives in a NP in Assamese. These kinds of adjectives qualify nouns or pronoun. For example:

i. /tiktikija/ (bright) modifies another adjective /rɔnja/ (red). These two together modify the head noun /sola/ (shirt) in this NP.

ii. /tai/ (she) is modified by the adjective /budfijnk/ (intelligent) which qualify another adjective /bɔr/ (very). But in this case the both the adjectives occur after the personal pronoun.
4.8 Constituents in the order of noun phrase construction in French

Like Assamese, in French also the noun phrase is headed by the noun, pronoun, adjective and numeral. However, there are other constituents which may form a NP. These are: Determiner, number, gender, postposition, adjectives which are illustrated below.

4.9 Determiner in French:

The determiner system in French is an obligatory element or constituent in NPs. In other words, NPs must have a determiner in French. But there are certain exceptions in this regard which will be studied in the following sections. It is also to be mentioned that the determiner occupies the initial position in the NP in French. In fact, determiner can be of the following types (Dinneen 1097:22):

1. Definite Article
2. Indefinite Article
3. Partitive Article
4. Possessive Adjective
5. Demonstrative Adjective
6. Interrogative Adjective
7. Quantifiers

1. **Definite Article (l’article défini):** The definite article in French is used to refer to object or entity or person that is already known or referred to. The definite articles in French are mentioned below:
Table 4.9 Definite Article in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definite article</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le /la/ (the)</td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Masculine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la /la/ (the)</td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’ /el/</td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Masculine/Feminine (begin with vowel sound)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>les /le/</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>Masculine/Feminine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above mentioned definite articles occur in front of the nouns in the following examples:

i. Le lapin (ART+N)
   /lə/ lapɛ̃/
   The.ART rabbit.N
   (the rabbit)

ii. La pluie (ART+N)
    /la/ plɥi/
    The.ART rain.N
    (the rain)

iii. L’âge (ART+N)
    /laʒ/ 
    The.ART age.N
    (the age)

iv. Les toits (ART+N)
    /le/ twa/
It is to be mentioned here that certain types of proper noun do not take definite determiner (article) in French (Jones 1996:208). The names of persons, towns etc. do not require definite article, as for example, we can say Jeanne /ʒan/ (Jeanne) and Inde /ɛd/ (India) without adding any article to them.

2. **Indefinite Article (l’article indéfini):** The indefinite article refers to indefiniteness. Interestingly, indefinite article can be placed before nominal depending upon the gender of the nominal. The form of the indefinite article is presented below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indefinite article</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>un /œ/ (a)</td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Masculine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>une /yn/ (a)</td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>des /de/ (some)</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>Masculine/Feminine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following examples are cited to illustrate the position of the indefinite articles in a NP in French:

i. Un   vice (ART+N)
   /œ/   vis/
   a.ART  defect.N
   (a defect)

ii. une   voix (ART+N)
   /yn   vwa/
   a.ART  voice.N
   (a voice)

iii. des   livres (ART+N)
In the example (i) and (ii), indefinite articles Un /œ/ (a) and Une /yn/ (a) occur in the initial positions of the nouns vice /vis/ (defect) and voix /vwa/ (voice) respectively depending on the number and gender of the nouns. But in the (iii), the plural article des /dɛ/ (a) is placed before the plural noun livres /livr/ (books).

3. **Partitive Article (l'article partitif):** Partitive article is another kind of determiner which occupies the initial position of a noun in a NP. Partitive article is used in the case of mass or uncountable nouns. The partitive articles are mentioned below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partitive article</th>
<th>Number &amp; Gender</th>
<th>Meaning in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>du /dy/</td>
<td>Singular, Masculine</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de la /dø la/</td>
<td>Singular, Feminine</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de l’ /dø la/</td>
<td>Singular, Masculine/Feminine (in front of a vowel sound)</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de, d’/dø/ (used in negative construction)</td>
<td></td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example:

i.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Du</th>
<th>sort (ART+N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/dy</td>
<td>sɔʁt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some.ART</td>
<td>fate.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(some fate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>De la</th>
<th>vie (ART+N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/dø la</td>
<td>vi/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11 Partitive Article in French
iii. De l’eau (ART+N)
/də lɔ/ (some water)

In the example (i), the partitive article du /dy/ (some) occur initially to the noun sort /sɔʁ/ (fate) depending on the singular number and masculine gender of the head noun in this NP. In the example (ii) also de la /də la/ (some) occur in front of the head noun vie /vi/ (life) i.e., singular number and feminine gender. In the example (iii), the head noun eau /o/ (water) takes the partitive article de l’ /də la/ as the noun is singular and feminine in gender.

4. Possessive Adjective (l’adjectif possessif): The possessive adjectives indicate possession. These adjectives must agree with number and gender with the noun they modify in a NP. The following are the possessive adjectives in French:

Table 4.12 Possessive Adjective in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine Singular</th>
<th>Feminine Singular</th>
<th>Masculine/Feminine plural</th>
<th>Meaning in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mon /mɔn/</td>
<td>ma /ma/</td>
<td>mes /me/</td>
<td>my</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ton (Inf.) /tɔn/</td>
<td>ta /ta/</td>
<td>tes /te/</td>
<td>your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son /sɔn/</td>
<td>sa /sa/</td>
<td>ses /se/</td>
<td>his, her, its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notre /nɔtʁ/</td>
<td>notre /nɔtʁ/</td>
<td>nos /no/</td>
<td>our</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>votre (Hon.) /vɔtʁ/</td>
<td>votre /vɔtʁ/</td>
<td>vos /vo/</td>
<td>your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leur /lœr/</td>
<td>leur /lœr/</td>
<td>leurs /lœr/</td>
<td>their</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As for example:

i. mon stylo

\[\text{mon} /\text{mɒ}/ \text{stylo/} \]

My.POSS pen.N

(my pen)

ii. votre amie

\[\text{votre} /\text{vɔʁt} \text{ ami/} \]

Our.POSS friend.N

(our friend)

iii. leurs livres

\[\text{lœr livr/} \]

Their.POSS book.N

(their books)

It is to be mentioned in this context that possessive adjectives are not used to denote body parts in French. The definite articles occur with the body parts.

5. **Demonstrative Adjective (l’adjective démonstratif):** These kinds of adjectives also agree with the noun they modify in number and gender. The demonstrative adjectives in French are mentioned below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.13 Demonstrative Adjective in French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrative adjective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ce /sɔ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cet /sə/  Singular, Masculine (in front of vowel sound)  this

cette /sə/  Singular, Feminine  this

ces /sə/  Plural, Masculine/Feminine  these

For example:

i. Cette  chemise  
   /sə ʃəmiz/  
   This.DEM  shirt.N  
   (this shirt)

ii. Ces  femmes  
    /sə fam/  
    These.DEM  women.N  
    (these women)

6. **Interrogative Adjectives (l’adjectif interrogatif):** These kinds of adjectives come in the initial position of a noun in a NP. It also signals question. The forms of interrogative adjectives are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interrogative adjective</th>
<th>Number &amp; Gender</th>
<th>meaning in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>quel /kel/</td>
<td>Singular, Masculine</td>
<td>what/which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quelle /kel/</td>
<td>Singular, Feminine</td>
<td>what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quels /kel/</td>
<td>Plural, Masculine</td>
<td>what/which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quelles /kel/</td>
<td>Plural, Feminine</td>
<td>what</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **Quantifiers:** Quantifiers can also be used before nouns which refer to objects that can be counted. There are certain quantifiers like quelques /kelk/ (some), plusieurs /plyzjœr/
(several) etc. which act like determiner before a head noun in a NP construction. For example:

i. Quelques gens

/kelk zɛn/

Some.Q people.N.PL

(some people)

ii. Pluisieurs poème

/plyʒœr pœm/

Several.Q poems.N.PL

(many poems)

4.10 Number in French

The number system, in French, comprises two kinds, viz., Singular and Plural. To make plural number, the form ‘-s’ is added to nouns and pronouns. In fact, the plural marker ‘-s’ is not pronounced. Though the plural marking is not pronounced, we can recognize whether a word is plural or singular as the articles agree with the nouns or pronouns. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le livre</td>
<td>les livres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/lə livr/</td>
<td>/le livr/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the.ART book.N</td>
<td>the.ART.PL books.N.PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the book)</td>
<td>(the books)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la fille</td>
<td>les filles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/la fij/</td>
<td>/le fij/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the.ART girl.N</td>
<td>the.ART.PL girls.N.PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the girl)</td>
<td>(the girls)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the above examples, the plural form ‘-s’ is added to the nouns livre /livr/ (book), fille /fij/ (girl), mère /mɛr/ (mother) to get the plural number. The articles le /lə/ (the), la /la/ (the), un /œ/ (a) also change their forms into les /, les and des respectively, when they accompany plural forms of nouns.

Besides, the pronouns, in French, may vary according to their number as seen below:

Table 4.15 Pronouns Vary According to Number in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>je /ʒ/ (I)</td>
<td>nous /nu/(we)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>tu /tu/ (you)</td>
<td>vous /vu/ (you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>il /il/ (he)</td>
<td>ils /il/ (they)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>elle /ɛl/ (she)</td>
<td>elles /ɛl/ (they)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on ɹ (someone)</td>
<td>on /ɹ/ (they)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is an interesting point to be noted here that if the singular form of nouns already possesses ‘-s’, ‘-x’, ‘-z’ in the end, they do not require an additional ‘-s’. As for example:
Apart from this, most of the nouns take ‘-aux’, which end in ‘-al’. The nouns endings ‘-ail’, ‘-eu’, ‘-ou’ take ‘-x’ in the plural. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le fils /la fîj/ (the girl)</td>
<td>les fils /le fîj/ (the girls)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, there are certain words in French which are inherently plural. For instance:

i. Les bagages
   /Le bagaʒ/ 
   The.ART baggage.N.PL
   (the baggage)

ii. Les gens
    /le ʒɑ̃/ 
    The.ART people.N.PL
    (the people)

iii. Les lunettes
     /le lynɛt/ 
     The.ART glasses.N
     (the glasses)

4.11 Gender system in French language

Gender system is a morphological aspect of the language. French language is characterized by the grammatical gender system. It has two distinct genders: Masculine and
Feminine (Bloomfield 1996:192). All animate and inanimate objects are classified as either masculine or feminine gender. But in a natural gender, animate beings and inanimate things are classified as masculine, feminine or neuter according to their sex or lack of sex.

Grammatical gender or a noun class can be defined as a system in which the class to which a noun is assigned is reflected in the forms that are taken by other elements syntactically related to it (Comrie 1999). Grammatical gender is determined by the type of noun (masculine and feminine) and is not based on sex. Besides, nouns are divided according to their gender class and typically, articles and adjectives possess different forms to agree with the gender of the noun (Yule 2006:76). Grammatical gender system is the grammatical classification of nouns, pronouns and other referential devices (Payne 1999:107).

The two genders in French are generally determined by formation of the stem, adding of suffixes to the stem, semantic and syntactic criteria. Animate human and non-human beings are described easily either as masculine or feminine. But it is interesting to mention here that in French the choice of gender in case of inanimate objects is arbitrary and without any logical foundation as far as our knowledge. As for example, table /tabl/ ‘table’ in French is feminine but avion /avjɔ̃/ (plane) is masculine.

In French language, the distinction of gender may be expressed mainly by the following ways:

1. Using separate noun bases for male and female beings including both human and non-human.
2. Using separate gender based qualifying words before and after the noun.
3. Using separate third person personal pronouns for animate objects.
4. Using different suffixes.
5. Using separate gender based determiners before the noun.

1. Separate noun bases for male and female:

French language possesses variety of noun bases which indicate male and female status in case of animate beings. Most of the nouns of relationship fall under this category. For example:
2. Using separate gender based qualifying words before and after the noun:

The qualifying words like adjectives in French language are marked for gender distinction which qualifies the noun bases occurring before and after them. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. beau</td>
<td>belle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bo</td>
<td>/bel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handsome. ADJ boy. N</td>
<td>beautiful. ADJ girl. N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(handsome boy)</td>
<td>(beautiful girl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. joli</td>
<td>jolie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʒɔli</td>
<td>/ʒɔli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretty. ADJ book. N</td>
<td>pretty. ADJ picture. N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pretty book)</td>
<td>(pretty picture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. livre</td>
<td>maison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/livr</td>
<td>/mezɔ̃</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the above examples (i) and (ii), the adjectives like beau /bo/ (handsome) and joli /ʒɔli/ (pretty) qualify the head noun garçon /garsɔ̃/ (boy) and livre /livr/ (book) to indicate the masculine gender, whereas the adjectives belle and jolie are used to modify the noun fille /fiːl/ (girl) and image /imaʒ/ (picture) to show their feminine gender respectively. In the example (iii) the adjective cher /ʃɛr/ (expensive) modifies the head noun livre /livr/ (book) of masculine gender by following it and chère /ʃɛʁ/ (expensive) qualifies the head noun maison /mezon/ (house) to show its feminine status.

3. Using separate third person personal pronoun for animate objects:

In French, separate third person personal pronouns are used to signify male and female distinction in case of animate beings, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>il /i/ 'he'</td>
<td>elle /ɛl/ 'she'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, the third person personal pronoun il /i/ (he) is used to show masculine gender and elle /ɛl/ (she) is used to indicate feminine.

4. Using different suffixes: There are certain suffixes used in the language specifically attached to the masculine noun. These suffixes are called feminine suffixes.

**Suffix added to nouns:** French possesses the following feminine suffixes added to noun bases: -e, -ne, -se, -te etc.

i. **–e suffix**: It is suffixed to the words of masculine gender to get feminine forms. For example :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ami /ami/ (male friend)</td>
<td>amie /ami/ (female friend)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>français /faʁɑ̃ke/ (French man)</td>
<td>française /faʁɑ̃ke/ (French woman)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
anglais /ɑ̃ɡle/ (English man)  

Here, suffix –e is added to the masculine forms of nouns like ami /ami/ (male friend),  
français /fʁɑ̃ke/ (French man), and anglais/ɑ̃głe/ (English man) respectively to make them  
feminine.

ii. –ne suffix : It is used to noun bases to form feminine gender. For instance :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>indien /ɛ̃djɛ/</td>
<td>indienne /ɛ̃djɛn/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canadien /kanadjɛ/</td>
<td>canadienne /kanadjɛn/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, -ne suffix is added to the masculine form of nouns indien /ɛ̃djɛ/ (Indian man) and  
canadien /kanadjɛ/ (Canadian man) to make them feminine respectively.

iii. –se suffix : This suffix is added to words to get the feminine forms. For example :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chauteur /ʃoʊtœə/</td>
<td>chauteuse /ʃoʊtœz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>danseur /dɑ̃sœə/</td>
<td>danseuse /dɑ̃sœz/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these example, the masculine nouns chauteur /ʃoʊtœə/ (male singer) and danseur /dɑ̃sœə/  
(male dancer) can be made feminine by adding –se suffix to them respectively.

iv. –te suffix: This suffix is added to nouns to make them feminine gender. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chat /ʃa/</td>
<td>chatte /ʃa/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, -te suffix is added to the masculine noun chat /ʃa/ (male cat) to make it feminine  
i.e., chatte /ʃa/ (female cat).

Suffix added to adjectives: Adjectives also take feminine suffixes to agree with the gender  
status of nouns in French language such as -e, -ne, -se, -ve etc.
i. **–e suffix**: It is added to the adjective of the masculine form to make it feminine. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>joli</td>
<td>jolie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>livre</td>
<td>image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʒɔli</td>
<td>/ʒɔli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretty.ADJ</td>
<td>picture.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pretty book)</td>
<td>(pretty picture)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, the adjective joli /ʒɔli/ (pretty) modifies the feminine noun livre /livr/ (book). By adding feminine suffix –e to the masculine form of the adjective joli /ʒɔli/ (pretty), we can make it feminine i.e. jolie /ʒɔli/ (jolie) which qualifies the head noun image /imaʒ/ (picture).

ii. **–ne suffix**: This suffix is added to the adjective of the masculine form to make it feminine. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bon</td>
<td>bonne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>livre</td>
<td>boisson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bɔ̃</td>
<td>/bɔn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good.ADJ</td>
<td>drink.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(good book)</td>
<td>(good drink)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the masculine form of adjective bon /bɔ̃/ (good) becomes feminine i.e., bonne /bɔn/ (good) by adding suffix –ne to it which modifies the masculine and feminine forms of nouns livre /livr/ (book) and boisson /bwɔsɔ̃/ (drink) by preceding them respectively.

iii. **–se suffix**: This suffix is added to the following adjective to make it feminine:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gros</td>
<td>grosse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cadeau</td>
<td>affaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɡro</td>
<td>/ɡro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big.ADJ</td>
<td>affair.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cake.N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| big.ADJ | affair.N |
Here, the masculine form of adjective gros /gro/ (big) becomes feminine i.e., grosse /gro/ (big) by adding suffix –se to it which modifies the masculine and feminine forms of nouns cadeau /kado/ (cake) and affaire /afɛʁ/ (affair) by preceding them respectively.

**iv. –ve suffix:** It is added to the following adjective to show its feminine gender:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>homme /ɔ̃m/</td>
<td>femme /fam/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sportif /spɔʁtif/</td>
<td>sportive /spɔʁtif/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man.N sportive.ADJ</td>
<td>woman.N sportive.ADJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sportive man)</td>
<td>(sportive woman)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the masculine form of adjective sportif /spɔʁtif/ (sportive) becomes feminine i.e., sportive /spɔʁtif/ (sportive) by adding suffix ‘–ve’ to it which modifies the masculine and feminine forms of nouns homme /ɔ̃m/ (man) and femme /fam/ (woman) by following them respectively.

**Number marking suffixes added to adjectives:**

It is important to note here that there are number-marking suffixes in French to show male and female distinctions added to adjectives. French possesses two kinds of numbers – singular and plural. Plural masculine suffix is ‘–s’ and plural feminine suffix is ‘–es’. Plural number in French takes various suffixes to indicate masculine and feminine gender of the adjective classes. These suffixes are generally attached to the adjectives preceding and following the nouns. As for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the above examples, the plural suffixes –s is added to the adjectives jolis and grands which modify the masculine nouns stylos and livres respectively. On the other hand, plural suffix –es is attached to the adjectives as in jolies /ʒɔli/ (pretty) and grandes /ɡʁɑ̃/ (big) which modify the feminine nouns villes /vil/ (towns) and maisons /mezɔ̃/ (houses) respectively.

5. Using separate gender based determiners before the noun:

Determiners like articles (definite and indefinite), demonstratives, possessors, quantifiers agree with the gender of the noun class in French language.

**Article:** In French, the definite article like le /lə/ (the), la /la/ (the) and Indefinite article un /œ̃/ (a), une /yn/ (a) show the male and female status occurring before the nouns. As for example:

**Definite articles:** The definite article like le /lə/, la /la/, les /le/ (the) indicate gender status of the noun they modify. For instance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stylos</td>
<td>Villes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretty.ADJ pen.N</td>
<td>Pretty.ADJ town.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandes livres</td>
<td>Grandes maisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big.ADJ book.N</td>
<td>Big.ADJ house.N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 4.18: Definite Article used for gender distinction in French |
In the above examples, the masculine nouns garçon and café are preceded by the masculine definite articles le /lə/ (the) respectively. On the other hand, the feminine form of definite article la precedes the feminine nouns fille /fij/ (girl) and soupe /sup/ (soup) respectively.

**Indefinite articles:** The indefinite article like un, une, des (a) indicate gender status of the noun they modify. For instance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>un cinéma</td>
<td>une rue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/œ sinema/</td>
<td>/yn ry/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.ART cinema.N</td>
<td>a.ART street.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a cinema)</td>
<td>(a street)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the indefinite article un /œ/ (a) is masculine as it occurs before the masculine noun cinéma /sinema/ (cinema) and une /yn/ (a) signals feminine gender since it precedes a feminine noun rue /ry/ (street).
**Demonstratives:** Demonstratives again show the agreement with the gender distinction between male and female status of the nouns in the French language. In the following examples demonstrative pronoun ce /sə/ (this) occurs before the masculine nouns père / pɛʁ/ (father) and livre /livr/ (book) and they becomes cette /sɛt/ (this) when they are followed by the feminine nouns mère /mɛʁ/ (mother) and table /tabl/ (table) respectively. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. ce</td>
<td>père</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sə</td>
<td>pɛʁ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this.DEM</td>
<td>father.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(this father)</td>
<td>(this mother)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. ce</td>
<td>livre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/sə</td>
<td>livr/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This.DEM</td>
<td>book.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(this book)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Possessors:** In French, some of the possessive pronouns such as, mon /mɔs/, ma /ma/ (my); ton /tɔn/, ta /ta/ (your) etc. also show masculine and feminine distinctions. Masculine possessive pronouns inflect for feminine possessive pronouns, if the following noun base begins with a consonant. Otherwise, these remain the same in the feminine possessive pronouns. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. mon</td>
<td>père</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/mɔs</td>
<td>pɛʁ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My.PRN</td>
<td>father.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(my father)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. ton</td>
<td>stylo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here, the masculine forms of possessive pronouns mon /mɔ̃/ (my) and ton /tɔ̃/ (your) modifying the nouns père /pɛʁ/ (father) and stylo /stilo/ (pen) change to feminine forms of ma /ma/ (my) and ta /ta/ (your) when followed by mère /mɛʁ/ (mother) and maison /mɛzɔ̃/ (house) respectively.

**Quantifiers:** The quantifiers like du /dy/ (some), de la /dɔ la/, de l’ /də lə/ (some) in French also inflect for male and female gender distinctions of the noun class. Du occurs with the nouns of masculine gender whereas de la occurs with the feminine nouns. De l’ occurs nouns beginning with before vowel sounds. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>du /dy/</td>
<td>de la /dɔ la/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thé</td>
<td>bière /bjeʁ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tea.N</td>
<td>beer.N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these above examples, quantifier du /dy/ (some) occurs before the head noun thé /te/ (tea) of masculine gender in this NP, but the head noun bière /bjeʁ/ (beer) is feminine so it is preceded by the quantifier de la /dɔ la/ (some).

### 4.12 Case System in French

In modern French, cases are almost getting disappeared in course of time since Vulgar Latin times (Comrie 2009:181). In fact, personal pronouns may be used as subject, direct and indirect objects of the verb using the following forms:

Table 4.22 The forms of personal pronouns used as the subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above forms demonstrate the subject pronoun. They can replace a noun which is already mentioned or referred to. They act as the grammatical subject of the verb. For example:

Je voudrais danser (PRN)

(I would like to dance)

Here, the personal pronoun je /ʒ/ (I) acts as the subject in this sentence. It forms the NP and je /ʒ/ (I) is the head element of this NP.

Again, nous travaillons trop (PRN)

We.PRN work.V too much.ADV

In this example, the personal pronoun nous /nu/ (we) takes the subject form and also occupies the head position in the NP.

Table 4.23 Forms of personal pronouns used as direct object

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>me, moi /mə, mwa/ (me)</td>
<td>nous /nu/ (we)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table presents the forms of direct object pronouns. In fact, direct object pronouns are placed in front of the verb in the sentence. But in imperative constructions, the indirect object pronoun follows the verb. As for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>te, toi /tɔ twa/ (you)</td>
<td>vous /vu/ (you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>la /la/ (he. It)</td>
<td>les /le/ (them)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>le /la/ (him, it)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IIs</th>
<th>nous</th>
<th>aimaient (PRN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/il</td>
<td>nu</td>
<td>eme/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They.PRN</td>
<td>us.PRN</td>
<td>love.V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(they loved us)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this instance, the personal pronoun nous /nu/ (we) acts as the direct object. It is also the head constituent of the NP noun /nu/ (we).

Besides,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ferme</th>
<th>le (PRN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ferme</td>
<td>la/</td>
<td>it.PRN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close.V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(close it!)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the above example is an imperative sentence where the personal pronoun le /la/ (it) is the direct object. It follows the verb ferme /ferme/ (to close) in this case. It also forms the NP in which le acts the head noun in this NP.
The above shows the forms of indirect object pronouns in French. The forms lui /lɥi/ (to him, her) and leur /lœr/ (to them) are used for masculine and feminine genders. This ambiguity is solved by the context. The indirect object pronoun represents the person to whom or for whom something is done. In English, the indirect object pronoun takes ‘to’ form infront of it. Unlike English, there is no ‘to’ form used before an indirect object pronoun in French. It is to be noted here that the same verb can take both direct and indirect object pronoun. Like direct object pronoun, indirect object pronoun can occur before the verb in the sentence. For example:

```
Elle  nous  parle (PRN)
/el  nu   paal/
She.PRN us.PRN speak.V
```

(she is talking to us)

In this example, personal pronoun nous /nu/ (us) acts as the indirect object pronoun. It forms the NP in this construction. This indirect object nous /nu/ (us) is the head element in this NP.

Again, in imperative constructions, the indirect object pronoun follows the verb, like direct object pronoun. For example:

```
Parle    lui!
/paal    lɥi/
Talk.V   him.PRN
```

(talk to him!)
The above is the imperative sentence. Here, the personal pronoun lui / lɥi/ (to him) follows the verb. It acts the head element in this NP lui / lɥi/ (to him).

4.13 Prepositions in French

Prepositions are often regarded as grammatical particle. It helps in introducing a NP in French. It occurs before a noun and pronoun. Morphologically, they do not inflect for number and gender. They are invariable in nature (Jones 377). Prepositions are of Simple and Compound Prepositions (L’Huillier 1999:15). Unlike Assamese, French does not possess any instances of postpositions. Some of the simple prepositions and Compound prepositions are mentioned below:

Table 4.19 Forms of simple and compound prepositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple Preposition</th>
<th>Meaning in English</th>
<th>Compound Preposition</th>
<th>Meaning in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>à /a/</td>
<td>to, at, in</td>
<td>à côté de /a kote da/</td>
<td>next to, beside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de /da/</td>
<td>of, from</td>
<td>au sujet de /a syzə da/</td>
<td>about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avec /avek/</td>
<td>with</td>
<td>d’après /daprə/</td>
<td>according to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contre /kɔtʁ/</td>
<td>against</td>
<td>en face de / a fas da/</td>
<td>facing, across from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dans /dâ/</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>hors de /ɔʁ da/</td>
<td>outside of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devant /dʌvə/</td>
<td>in front of</td>
<td>près de /pʁə da/ etc.</td>
<td>near</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en /ə/</td>
<td>in, on, to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entre/ətr/</td>
<td>between</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malgrè /malgre/</td>
<td>despite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>par /par/</td>
<td>by, through</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some of the above mentioned prepositions are discussed below:

à /a/ (to, at, in): It is very frequent preposition found in French. It is used with names of cities, countries (Feminine or masculine) and other geographical locations. For example:

à Inde
/a/ ë̃d/
to.PREP India.PN

(to India)

Here, the preposition à /a/ (to) occur before the proper noun Inde / ë̃d/ (India) which indicates location or direction in this NP.

It is to be noted that when à /a/ (to, at, in) is followed by definite articles le /lə/ (the) and les /le/ (the), it changes to the following forms:

à + la = à la /lə la/ (to, at, in)
à + l’ = à l’ /lɛl/ (to, at, in)
à + le = au /o/ (to, at, in)
à + les = aux /o/ (to, at, in)

Some of the examples with à /a/ (to, at, in) followed by the definite articles are given below:
à la ville /a la vil/

to.PREP the.ART town.N

(to the town)

Here, in this NP, the head noun ville /vil/ (town) takes the definite article (feminine) la /la/ (the) and preposition à /a/ (to) precedes the head noun and the article.

à l’hôtel /a lɔtel/

To.PREP hotel.N

(to the hotel)

In this example, the preposition à becomes à l’ /lɛl/ (to the) and it precedes the head noun in this NP as the head noun hôtel /ɔtel/ takes the definite article (masculine) le /lɛl/ (the).

But here le /lɛl/ changes to l’ /lɛl/ as the next word begins with a vowel.

Again, Au parc /ɔ paʁk/

to.PREP park.N

(to the park)

Here, preposition à /a/ (to) becomes au /o/ (to) becomes the head noun parc /pask/ takes the definite article (masculine) le /lɛl/ (the) before it. In this case too, the contracted form of preposition au /o/ (to) occurs before the head noun.

Aux maisons /ɔ maizɔ̃/


In this case, preposition à /a/ (to) becomes aux /o/ (to) when it is followed by the plural definite article les /le/. This contracted form of preposition (PREP+ART) precedes the head noun maison /meζɔ/ (houses) in this NP.

**De /da/ (of, from):** It is another frequent preposition found in the French language. The preposition de /da/ (of, from) becomes d’ /da/ when it preceeded a word that begins with a vowel, ‘h’ or the word ‘y’. The use of de /da/ denotes possession, relation and direction. As for example:

\[
\text{Le roman de Maupassant} \\
/lə ʁɔmɔ̃ də mɔpɑ̃sɔ/
\]

(the novel of Maupassant)

It is to be mentioned here that like preposition à /a/ (to), du /da/ (of, from) contracts its forms, when followed by the articles, shown in th efpllowing:

\[
\text{De+ la= de la /da la/ (of the, from the)}
\]

\[
\text{De + l’ =de l’ /ɛl/ (of the, from the)}
\]

\[
\text{De+ le= du /du/ (of the, from the)}
\]

\[
\text{De +les= des /da/ (of the, from the)}
\]

Some of the examples contracted forms of preposition de /da/ (of, from) are mentioned below:

\[
\text{Des lois sereines de la vie} \\
/də lwa səʁeɛn də la vi/\]
the.ART laws.N serene of.PREP life.N

(the serene laws of life)

Here, the NP is headed by the noun vie /vi/ (life) which is preceded by the preposition de la /də la/ (of), the contracted form of de /də/ (of).

La date de l'anne

/lə dat də lani/

the.ART date.N of.PREP year.N

(the date of the year)

In this instance, the form de /də/ (of) changes to de l’ /el/ (of) when followed by the head noun anne /an/ (year) in this NP. This preposition occurs before the head noun in this instance.

Again,

Au bord des flots

/o bɔʁ də flo/

at.PREP edge.N of.PREP waves.N

(at the edge of the waves)

Here, in the NP des flots /də flo/ (of the waves), the preposition des /də/ (the) is the contracted form of de /də/ (of) since it is followed by the definite article (masculine, plural) les /le/ (the). This preposition occurs before the head noun flots /flo/ (waves) in this NP construction.

avec /avɛk/ (with): This preposition can occur with noun or pronoun in French. Example is given below:

avec les matelots
/avek le matlo/

with.PREP the.ART sailors.N

(with the sailors)

Here, the preposition avec /avek/, followed by the definite article les /le/ (the), occurs before the noun matelots /matlo/ (sailors)

dans /dâ/ (in): This preposition can precede a head noun in NP. Form example:

dans la pleine

/dâ la plen/

in.PREP the.ART plain.N

(in the plain)

In this case, dans /dâ/ (in) occur before the head noun plein /plen/ (plain) and it is followed by the definite article (feminine) la /la/ (the) in this NP.

Par /pa/ (by, through): This preposition can occur with noun or pronoun in a construction. For example:

Philosophe par tempérament

/filɔzɔf pa tâpaamô/

philosopher.N by.PREP temperament.N

(philosopher by temperament)

In this example, the preposition par /pa/ (by) occurs before the head noun temperament /tâpaamô/ (temperament) in this NP

Pour /pœ/ (for): This preposition can occur with noun or pronoun in a construction. For example:

Une fille pour elle
(a daughter for her)

Here, preposition pour /pwr/ (for) precedes the pronoun elle /el/ (her). This pronoun acts as the head element in this NP pour elle /pwr el/ (for her).

à côté de /kote dɔ/ (next to, beside): It is a compound preposition used in French to refer to mean ‘next or beside’. For example:

la  maison  à côté de  la  forêt

/la  mezɔ  a kɔt du  la  foʃɛ/

The.ART house.N  next to.PREP the.ART  forest.N

(the house next to the forest)

Here, the compound preposition à côté de /kɔt du/ (next to) precedes the head noun forêt /foʃɛ/ (forest) in this NP. The preposition is followed by the definite article (feminine) la /la/ (the).

près de /pʁɛ dɔ/ (near): It is a compound preposition used in French to refer to mean ‘near’. For example:

vous  habitez  près de  la  mer

/vu abite  pʁɛ du  la  me margins

You.PRN live.V  about.PREP the.ART  sea.N

(you live near the sea)
In this example, the compound preposition près de / paʁ da/ (near) occurs before the definite article la /la/ (the) and the head noun mer /mer/ (sea) in this NP construction.

4.14 Adjectives in French

An adjective is used to modify a noun in a NP. It expresses the equality of the noun. Adjectives, in French, agree with the gender and number of the noun they qualify.

4.14.1 Gender of Adjectives: In French, feminine gender is indicated by adding an ‘–e’ form to the masculine form of adjectives. The ‘–e’ is not pronounced in the spoken language, it is only seen in writing. In fact, the distinction between masculine and feminine forms can be noticed when the final consonant (if any) sound is pronounced, when it is followed by the ‘-e’ form. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intelligent /ɛ̃teliʒɑ̃/ (Intelligent)</td>
<td>intelligente /ɛ̃teliʒɑ̃t/ (Intelligent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grand /ɡʁɑ̃/ (big)</td>
<td>grande /ɡʁɑ̃d/ (big)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, ‘-e’ is suffixed to the adjectives intelligent /ɛ̃teliʒɑ̃/ (Intelligent) and grand /ɡʁɑ̃/ (big) to get the feminine gender of them.

There are, however, certain forms in which feminine gender of adjectives is formed by changing the masculine form ‘–x’ /-iks/ to ‘-se’ /-sa/, ‘-f’ /-ɛf/ to ‘-ve’ /-vɔ/, ‘-er’ /-ɛ/ to ‘-ère’ /-ɛʁ/, ‘-et’ /-ɛ/ to ‘-ère’ /-ɛʁ/ or ‘-ette’ /-ɛt/ and ‘-ien’ /-jɛ̃/ to ‘-ienne’ /-jɛn/. As for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sérieux /sɛʁʒf/ (serious)</td>
<td>sérieuse /sɛʁʒfɛz/ (serious)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
roux /ru/ (red) rouse /rus/ (red)

actif /aktif/ (active) active /aktiv/ (active)

fier /fjɛʁ/ (proud) fière /fjɛʁ/ (proud) etc.

In these examples, the masculine gender of the adjectives like sérieux /sɛʁje/ (serious), roux /ru/ (red), actif /aktif/ (active) and fier /fjɛʁ/ (proud) can be made feminine by changing ‘-x’ /-iks/ to ‘-se’ /-sæ/, ‘-f’ /-ɛf/ to ‘-ve’ /-vɛ/, and -er /-e/ to ‘-ère’ /-ɛʁ/ respectively in the endings.

Apart from these, if masculine gender of adjective ends in a silent ‘-e’, the feminine form remains the same as the form of masculine gender. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sincère /sɛsɛʁ/</td>
<td>sincère /sɛsɛʁ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rouge /ruʒ/</td>
<td>rouge /ruʒ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domestique /dɔmɛstik/</td>
<td>domestique /dɔmɛstik/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.14.2 Number of Adjectives: If an adjective modifies a plural noun in a NP, we can add plural marker ‘-s’ to both masculine and feminine form of the adjectives. For instance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine, Plural</th>
<th>Feminine, Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grands</td>
<td>grandes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>livres</td>
<td>peintures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɡaː/</td>
<td>/ɡaː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>livr/</td>
<td>pɛtyɑ̃/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big.ADJ books.N</td>
<td>big.ADJ paintings.N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(big books)</td>
<td>(big paintings)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, adjective grand /ɡaː/ (big) modifies the plural nouns livres /livr/ (book) of masculine gender and peintures /pɛtyɑ̃/ (paintings) of feminine gender. In both the cases, the
adjective grand /ɡʁã/ (big) takes the plural suffix marker ‘-s’ to qualify the plural nouns in these NPs.

Moreover, we can cite examples, like

Table 4.21 Number marked for adjectives in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine/Feminine, Singular</th>
<th>Masculine/Feminine, Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jeune /ʒœn/ son.N</td>
<td>jeunes /ʒœn/ filles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young.ADJ</td>
<td>young.ADJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(young son)</td>
<td>(young daughters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large /larʒ/</td>
<td>larges /larʒ/ pièce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wide.ADJ</td>
<td>wide.ADJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(wide wall)</td>
<td>(wide rooms)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.14.3 Position of Adjective: In French, adjectives follow the head noun in a NP most frequently. It may also precede the noun. The positions of the adjectives modifying a noun signal the difference in meaning.

For example:

Un film intéressant
/e film êterese/
a.ART movie.N interesting.ADJ

(an interesting movie)
Here, the head noun film /film/ (movie) is followed by the adjective intéressant /ɛ̃terese/ (interesting) in this NP.

However, there are certain nouns which often occur before the noun they modify. There are adjectives like, belle, grand, petit, jeune, bon, pauvre etc. regularly precede the noun. But they may follow the noun very frequently. As for example:

i. Une grande fille /yn grâd fij/  
   a.ART tall.ADJ girl.N  
   (a tall girl)

ii. Une fille grande /yn fij grâd/  
   A.ART girl.N great.ADJ  
   (a great girl)

In the example (i), the adjective grande /grâd/ (big) modifies the head noun fille /fij/ (girl) which signals the quality of the girl who is tall. But in the example (ii), the adjective grande /grâd/ (big) follows the noun. But in this case the adjective denotes the greatness of the noun fille /fij/ (girl) in a very context.

4.15 Conclusion

In this chapter it is trying to discuss the constituents that form a noun phrase in Assamese and French language. There are certain grammatical categories that come in the ordering of the noun phrases in both the languages Assamese and French. These categories comprise determiners, number, gender, case, prepositions and postpositions, adjectives. The comparative analysis of these constituents of noun phrases in Assamese and French language reveals resemblances and differences of some of the morphosyntactic features of these languages.
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