CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This is an introductory chapter intended to give an overview of the meaning of noun phrase by analyzing some of the definitions. It also provides relevance and objectives of the study, methodological issues and review of important literature.

1.1 Definitions of Noun Phrase

The term ‘Phrase’ is used to mean sometimes groups of words and sometimes a single word (Shuja 1999:16). A phrase is a syntactic unit headed by a lexical category like noun, adjective, adverb, verb or preposition. The syntactic unit headed by these categories is known as Noun Phrase, Adjective Phrase, Adverb Phrase, Verb Phrase and Prepositional Phrase. The proposed present study deals only with the Noun phrases in Assamese and French language.

Pushpinder Syal and D.V. Jindal have defined a noun phrase in his work entitled An Introduction to Linguistics: Language, Grammar and Semantics, that a Noun Phrase may be a single word, a single noun or pronoun, or a group of words that belong with the noun and cluster around it. It can be defined as a nominal head preceded by one or more modifiers. It may function as a subject or object (indirect or direct) predicative complement or as direct object of a postposition. A noun or a pronoun can be minimum constituent of a noun phrase modified by a variety of modifiers, numerals, emphatic markers, limiters and comparative, equative and superlative markers etc. Generally, a noun in a noun phrase (optionally) possesses certain modifiers appearing before it like: Restrictor (words like, especially, only, merely, just, etc.), Pre-determiners (such as half, double, both, one-third, twice etc.), Determiners (like Article, Demonstratives, and Possessives), Ordinals (like first, second, third etc.), Adjective phrase, intensifier or adjectives (like tall, good, long), determinatives etc.

Georgr Yule, in his The Study of Languages, states that Noun Phrase (NP) contains noun plus other constituents. For example: in English ‘the girl’ is a noun phrase where ‘girl’ is the head noun and ‘the’ is the constituent (i.e., article).
Paul R. Kroeger in his *Analyzing Grammar* states that a Noun Phrase is a phrasal constituent whose head is a noun or pronoun accompanied by a set of modifiers. According to him, Noun Phrases in most languages can function as subject, primary or secondary object and objects of prepositions. Kroeger talks about various kinds of non-head constituents occurring in a noun phrase in most of the languages of the world. The most important constituents are determiners, complements and adjuncts (or modifiers).

In *Describing Morphosyntax*, by Thomas Payne has mentioned that Noun Phrase elements include determiners, numerals, genitive (possessors), modifiers, relative clauses, noun classifiers and the head noun. In a large number of languages of the world, the Noun Phrases may include various kinds of dependents (i.e. non-head constituents). However, languages vary considerably in the number and type of complements and modifiers that may occur within a single Noun Phrase.

Thomas E. Payne defined noun phrase as a clump of constituent structure which is head by a noun and that may or may not contain other elements. In his work *Exploring Language Structure: A Student’s Guide*, Payne mentions that noun phrase gains their grammatical and semantic properties from their head nouns.

### 1.2 Significance of the Study

The proposed topic “‘Noun Phrase in Assamese and French: A Comparative Study’” has a great significance in Assamese and French linguistics domain in analyzing and preserving the language characteristics. In all probabilities into the best of our knowledge, no comparative research work between Assamese and French language has been worked out yet. This type of comparative study would be a torch bearer for the coming researcher in this field of study since we assume that this work is a virgin effort. As a matter of fact, many research works have been done on various linguistic aspects of Assamese language in comparison to that of many Indo-Aryan languages (like Bengali, Oriya, Hindi etc.). Apart from this, Assamese language has also been compared with Non-Aryan languages (such as Bodo, Garo, Rabha etc.). As far our knowledge is concerned, no one has taken initiative to compare Assamese language with the Romance languages, especially with French. Therefore, it is hoped that this comparative study
will help in the linguistic and socio-cultural studies which would enable the reader to peep into other world’s culture and civilization.

It is to be noted here that comparative study occupies a significant place in field of linguistics. The purpose of such studies is to suggest similarities and dissimilarities between two languages under investigation. Apart from these, being a native speaker of Assamese I had a keen interest to learn French language and accordingly, I had completed two years of Diploma Course in French language, in the Deptt. of Foreign Languages under Gauhati University. I was very much attracted and inspired by the French language and its linguistic structure. So, we decided to compare these two beautiful languages of the world i.e., Assamese and French.

Besides the genealogical relationship between these two languages: Assamese and French attracted me as a researcher to study the common and uncommon grammatical relationship between them. There are around 6000 thousand languages in the world today (Comrie: 2011:1). These languages are classified into different language families depending on their genealogical status. There are estimated around 141 different top-level language families, out of which six of them are regarded as the major languages families. In fact, Indo-European language family is the most comprehensive language families of the world. It has about 141 living languages in the world, according to the estimation made by Ethnologue (Ethnologue). As a matter of fact, it is found that Assamese belongs to the Indo-Aryan language, descended from Sanskrit and French belongs to the Romance language families, directly descended from Latin. Interestingly, both the languages come from the same genetic origin i.e., Indo-European language group. The genealogical classification of Assamese and French languages descended from the proto Indo-European language family is shown below (Short, 2002):

![Indo-European Language Family Diagram](image-url)
The above diagram demonstrates the classification of Assamese and French languages which genetically related to the proto Indo-European Family of languages. As it is observed that Assamese belongs to Satem group and French comes under the Centum group of languages. And it is assumed that due to genetic relatedness both the languages may share some features in common in relation to grammatical constructions. Thus, the present proposed study has brought out certain linguistic affinities and differences between the two languages in relation to noun phrase construction apart from the distinctive characteristics of their own.
Besides, at the time of globalization many translation works between languages are taking place. Translation of the literary and non-literary documents from French to Assamese and vice versa is a very challenging issue at present times. However, it is hoped that the present study would be very useful and effective for the translators for better output. Apart from this, such comparative work would really help in the acquisition of foreign language like French. Since grammar is an important component to study and learn a language for a non-native speaker, this comparative would aim describe the grammatical aspect of languages very clearly. So, such research work really helps in preparing a pedagogical grammar in order to develop native speaker’s ability to recognize and produce sentences.

Thus, we personally feel that our proposed work would really cater to need of the society and the existing as well as upcoming researchers in the same field.

1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aims and objectives of proposed research work are mentioned below:

a. To observe and assess the usage and function of noun phrases in Assamese and French language.

b. To study the head element of noun phrase in both the languages.

c. To investigate the constituents in the structure of noun phrases in Assamese and French.

d. To find out grammatical and structural similarities and dissimilarities in relation to noun phrases in both these two languages.

e. To enrich and develop Assamese and French language, and also to make this work useful and accessible to others.

1.4 Methodology of Research

This section gives a general discussion on the methodological techniques used for this research work. Since the present study is a comparative work between two languages: Assamese and French, the data has been collected from both these two languages. For these purpose, the written genres of the two languages are the sole source of data collection. We did not go for the spoken data that come under the primary data collection as we found it difficult to interact with
native speaker of French language here so frequently. And at the same time it seemed to be very expensive to go to France for data gathering. Therefore, decision has been taken to delimit our research work within the secondary data only.

1.4.1 Data Collection

Data collection is a very important task in planning the present study on noun phrases. For this, we accessed libraries, internet, books etc. For collecting data, we have visited K.K. Handique Library, Gauhati University, Library of the Department of Foreign Languages, G.U., Lakshminath Bezbaroa Central Library of I.I.T., Guwahati, National Library of India, Kolkata, Anundoram Borooah Institute of Language Art and Culture (ABILAC), Assam, North Eastern Hill University Central Library, Shillong, Meghalaya, Pub Bongsor College Library, Pacharia, some of the Village libraries etc. The sole written documents of the two languages comprise various literary books, journals, articles, textbooks, monographs, dictionaries and grammar etc. For Assamese data, we mainly dealt with Syed Abdul Malik’s Pora Gawot Pohila Bohag (novel, written in 1930), Lakshminath Bezbaroa’s Burhi Aair Xadhu (Folk Tales, written in 1911) and Hemkosha: Assamese-English Dictionary by Hem Chandra Barua published in 2007 etc. The French data was collected from the texts like Une Vie (novel) written by Guy de Maupassant in 1883, Albert Camus’ Le Malentendu (play, written in 1944), Harrap’s Mini Dictionnaire: francais-anglais and anglais-francais published in 2010, Oxford Beginner’s French Dictionary published in 2008 etc.

It is to be mentioned that some of the data for noun phrases in Assamese language have been cited from my intuitive knowledge too as I am the native speaker of this language. Besides, data extracted from Assamese and French are represented by using International Phonetic Alphabets.

1.4.2 Presentation of Data

Examples given from the source languages are presented using their own orthography. Then, phonetic representation of the examples is given by using International Phonetic Alphabet along with morphemic break. Along with morphemic or lexical gloss and free translation in English are also given. The morphemic break is shown by using hyphen.

1.4.3 Research Methods Used
To carry out this research work, mainly Historical method, Comparative method and Descriptive method have been followed. Historical method is used to study the background information on Assamese and French language like history, origin and development. Since the present work is a comparative work between two languages, comparative method is useful in this context. It helps in comparing the grammatical structure of both the languages in relation to noun phrase construction. Descriptive method is helpful to describe the relative structure of noun phrases in Assamese and French. For this, first we collected data and then analysis is done on these data. After analyzing the data, we described the similarities and dissimilarities found in both these two languages.

It is to be mentioned here that since the present study is concentrated on grammar i.e., the noun phrases, the various findings at the phonetic or phonological level have not been presented here. However, an overview of phonemes of Assamese and French is given only in order to use to transcribe the example data in the text.

1.5 Literature Review

Review of important literature is a very essential part in pursuing any research work. It is the identification of the material that is to be helpful in understanding the subject matter under study. To review the available literature on the present research work, we have made library work, access internet sources, published and unpublished works, journal, thesis, dissertations etc. In order study relevant literature on Assamese and Bodo languages, visits have been made to K. K. Handique Library, Gauhati University, Library of the Department of Foreign Languages, Gauhati University, Lakshminath Bezbaroa Central Library of I.I.T., Guwahati, National Library of India, Kolkata, Library of Anundoram Borooah Institute of Language Art and Culture (ABILAC), Assam, North Eastern Hill University Central Library, Shillong, Meghalaya, Tezpur University Library, Tezpur, Pub Bongsor College Library, Pacharia, Assam, and some of the Village libraries etc. Besides, we access internet sources like JSTOR, Inflibnet (Shoshganga) etc. to look at the available literature on the present topic under study. Unfortunately, so far our knowledge is concerned the proposed research work i.e., the comparative study of noun phrases in Assamese and French language has not been worked out yet. There are evidences that scholars have done a lot of works on noun phrases in different natural languages from different perspectives. Moreover, scholars and researchers have made attempts to study nouns or noun
phrases in Assamese as well as in French separately or with other languages. As a matter of fact Assamese has been compared with languages like, English, Hindi, Bengali, Bodo, Garo, Rabha etc. in relation to the various aspects of the language on the basis of the researcher’s knowledge, experience and exposure to linguistic analysis. Accordingly, we try to discuss available literature of the present research topic under three sections. In section 1.4.1, we have reviewed literature on the present research topic specific. Then, we have concentrated on the closely related available literature on the topic in section 1.4.2. Lastly in section 1.4.3., we have provided a discussion on the miscellaneous literatures found in relation to the present proposed research work.

1.5.1 Research Topic Specific Literature

There are various articles, research papers, books, dissertations, thesis etc. which provide a study on the noun phrases in different languages of the worlds (covering Assamese and French) from various different perspectives.

Gangopadhyay in *The Noun Phrase in Bengali* (1990) aims to describe the Bengali noun phrase. The author deals with the inflexion of the noun and the nominal compound. His work on Bengali noun phrases tries to describe the additive segments, the structure of the noun phrases and also semantic and functional aspects of it, and the similarities and differences between Bengali and English noun phrases in similar construction. However, the author delimits his study within syntactic and semantic aspects of the languages. He mainly focuses on the case system or the *Karaka* of both the languages which shows the relation between noun and verb in a sentence. The case relation determines the positions of nominal expressions in a sentence. To analysis his study, the author follows the descriptive and traditional approaches. Thus, this study would helpful in identifying the semantic and syntactic consideration for the case roles assigned to noun phrases. Again, in *A Contrastive Analysis Between the French Noun Phrase and the English Noun phrase* (1991), Salim focuses on the analysis of one constituent of both English and French i.e., the noun phrase. The prime objective of this study is to make complete analysis of the noun phrase in both the languages. The author is mainly concerned with the simple noun phrases. This study examines the constituents of both the English and the French noun phrases, and also to observe the similarities and dissimilarities in structure and other features. This study is done by analyzing the three main elements of noun phrase- the noun, the noun specifiers, and the
adjectives in English and French. Both these two languages share the common head element that is noun. The French noun phrase differs from the English in respect of the grammatical gender which is an important feature of the French language. Moreover, adjective must agree with the number and gender of the noun they modify, which is absent in English noun phrases. Apart from these similarities and dissimilarities between these two languages, structurally English noun phrase is similar to that of French. This work is very resourceful for the present proposed work on noun phrases of Assamese and French.

The paper on *Some Speculations about the Syntax of Noun Phrases* (1999) by Tang Sze Wing aims to present typological study on the structure of noun phrases with illustrative examples from different languages. For this, the author proposes a parametric theory which will determine the variation of word order of noun phrases in the languages under study. This study also tries to show the major syntactic features of noun phrases in two Indo-European languages, i.e., English and French, and three East Asian languages like, Chinese, Vietnamese and Thai. The data has been taken from these five languages to make typological differences among these languages regarding the structure of noun phrase. In this paper, the relative order of various constituents of noun phrases like head element, adjectives, numerals, classifiers etc. among these languages are shown. This paper is very useful in understanding the structure of noun phrases for the present proposed study. The book entitled *Noun Phrase Structure of English and Urdu* (1999) by Shuja is a very illustrative book in the study of noun phrases in both English and Urdu languages which came from the same language family- the Indo-European. This is a comparative study that has been carried out to distinguish similarities and dissimilarities of the aspects of noun phrases between these two languages. It mainly focuses to find out the features of the structural properties of the two languages at the surface level. First it tries to mentions certain aspects of the structure of noun phrase in both these languages independently, and then compares to show resemblances and differences between them. Two chapters are devoted to explain the noun phrases in English and Urdu: the basic structure, head element of noun phrases. It also mentions the modifiers (adjectives, determiners, adverb, verbal etc.) of head noun in noun phrases in both the languages. The last section is concerned with the comparison of the English and Urdu noun phrase in relation to Head and modifier positions.
Kalita’s *Noun and Nominalizations in Assamese: A Microlinguistics Study* (2003) aims to study the Assamese nouns and the process of nominalization. It also deals with pronoun and pronominalizations. Apart from these, the chapter 3 is devoted to the study of noun phrase in Assamese- its constituents order, and the elements that modify noun phrase. He also considers the syntax of noun phrases covering the issues like complementation, apposition, coordination and government etc. In short, Kalita’s work is a systematic study on noun phrases in Assamese. The paper entitled *Structure of English Noun Phrases* (2004) by Nguyen Thi Van Lam deals with basic and complex structure of noun phrases in English. Under basic structure of noun phrase, pronouns, numerals, or head nouns along with determiners are discussed. Complex structure covers pre-modification, head noun and post-modification. The author summarizes that English possesses both basic and complex noun phrases after analyzing the data. The basic noun phrase contains one overt head element that can be replaced by either pronoun or numerals in English. Besides, determiners play an important role to modify the head element in noun phrase. Complex noun phrases are very complex ones as it deals with pre-modification, head noun and post-modification. Pre-modification includes determiners, adjectives, numerals, participial etc. Post-modification consists of finite or non finite clauses, adjectives, noun, prepositional and adverbial phrases. Thus, this paper very successfully presents both basic and complex noun phrases in English which is seemed to be very crucial as so far as our research work is concerned.

*The structure of the Bantu Noun Phrase* (2007) is a paper written by Rugemalira made a discussion on the syntax of the noun phrase in several Bantu languages. It mainly focuses on the elements modify the Bantu noun and also the order of occurrence of these elements. This paper examines the elements of a noun phrase on the basis of morphological, syntactic and semantic criteria. The data for analysis the noun phrases has been taken from languages like Mashami, Swahili, Ha, Nyakyusa, Safwa, Nyambo, Sukuma and so on. The author here attempts to present the structure of noun phrase in Bantu along with its various constituents like determiners, numerals, adjectives, possessive, relative and demonstrative pronoun. There is, however, variation in the ordering of the elements in a noun phrase and also limit of the Bantu noun phrase. Daniel Wood’s paper on *An Initial Reconstruction of the Proto-Boro-Garo Noun Phrase* (2011) has studied an initial reconstruction of the Proto-Boro-Garo (PBG) noun phrase and various categories of noun phrase. The author has presented data from languages like Boro,
Deuri, Dimasa, Tiwa, Riang, Kokborok, Kachari, Garo, Megam, A’tong, Koch, Rabha and Ruga to show affinities among these languages. Examples of pronouns (personal and demonstratives) have been listed out in these languages to make a correlation among those languages. Besides, this paper also focuses on the elements like numeral classifiers, relator nouns, case markers, adjectives etc. and also the order of these elements in noun phrases. Another paper entitled *The Referring Systems and the Determinative Elements of Noun Phrases* in Assamese (2011) by Kalita is very illustrative for the present study of noun phrases. He shows the determiner system in Assamese which is counted as one of the important elements of noun phrases in all other Indo-European languages. He considers the term determiner as determinative in Assamese. Again, he compares Assamese determinative with Boro classifiers. Kalita also mentions the different types of determinatives in Assamese, such as, pronouns, cardinal numerals, ordinal numerals, general ordinal, quantifiers, genitive forms taking into account the morphological, syntactic and semantic aspects. Morey in his paper *The Marking of noun phrases: Some observations on the languages of North East India* (2013) has focused on the accusative and dative which are marked in the classical languages Latin and Sanskrit, belong to the Indo-European language family. He mentions that ‘anti-agentive’ is also marked languages like Turung, Phake and Cholim Tangsa and in some cases in Assamese too. Thus, paper gives the idea regarding case marking on nouns in Assamese in relation to other languages which is an essential constituent of noun phrases.

**1.5.2 Closely Related Literature on the Topic**

Under this section we mainly concentrate on the literature that deals with the issues like origin and development of the language, phonological representation of the languages under study i.e., Assamese and French. Apart from these, literature review was done on the general linguistics books that guide in pursuing the present work in right direction.

*The French Language* (1969) by Ewert deals with French language. It presents the historical background of the language in the preceding chapters including the phonological representation of different sounds in the language from Vulgar Latin to modern French. Apart from the orthography of the language, the author strives to present the morphology, syntax, vocabulary, and semantics of French language. This book is a very valuable resource for the students to have a better understanding of linguistic form and structure of French language.
The prolific scholar, linguist, critic Dr. Banikanta Kakati (1972) contributed immensely to the Assamese language in the field of literature, linguistics, culture and comparative religion. His *Assamese, Its Formation and Development* is a complete treatise on the history and philology of the Assamese language. This work brings into light the history and development of Assamese language, culture and literature from the earlier times to modern Assamese period. It also shows close affinities with other Aryan and non-Aryan languages along with the study on phonology of Assamese sounds. Another section of this book is based on morphological features of Assamese language. It talks about affixes, verbs roots, enclitic definitives, pronoun, case system etc. As the proposed research topic is discussed under morphological consideration of the language, Kakati’s works gives the idea regarding the structure of noun phrases along with its various constituents like pronoun, case ending, definitives etc. Besides, this is considered as a root work of Assamese language. Historical issues of Assamese language were also touched upon by Kakati. His work is, in fact, very much influenced by the Dr. Chatterji on the origins of the Bengali Language. Kakati also lays down the description of Assamese phonology very scientifically which helped me in preparing a section on phonology of Assamese sounds in our research work in a right way.

*Structure of Assamese* (1982) is regarded a monumental research work dealing with the standard Assamese language by Goswami, a prominent linguist scholar. It is a descriptive work that studies not only the history, origin, development of the languages, but also provides a scientific description on the phonology of Assamese language in detail. This book is too concerned with the morphology and syntactic analysis of Assamese. For the present study, this book is seemed to be a guiding star in understanding the history as well as phonology of Assamese language. Since the structure of noun phrase deals with the morphosyntactic features of the language of Assamese, this work is proved to be illustrative in this regard. Later, Goswami (1990) also gives description on Assamese alphabets and its pronunciation, word formation, affixes, nouns, pronouns, number, gender, case, verbs, adverbs, particles etc. This work again gives a detail discussion on Assamese language, its origin and developments. The syntactic analysis of Assamese is also discussed by Goswami in this work. Jones’s *Foundations of French Syntax* (1996) is meant both for the researcher and students of advanced level. It studies the French linguistically. The author explains the grammatical aspects of the language with illustrative notes. It touches upon morphological and syntactic forms of the language
comprehensively. This book is able to give a clear idea on Noun Phrase and Verb Phrase with suitable examples from the French language. The author presents different aspects of noun phrases in French languages in this work. It deals with the types of noun and pronoun, determiners, gender, number, preposition, adjectives and its types etc. It is a comprehensive work on French language and grammar which is very helpful in carrying out present research work very systematically.

Campbell (1998) provides general discussion on history of language change. He provides reasons for linguistic change, syntactic change, grammaticalisation, and sociolinguistics. As a matter of fact, to study any grammatical construction in any language, first of all the knowledge of the historical development of that language is must. This work is worth mentioning in our present discussion on development of the language. The author cites examples from different languages like French, English, German, Russian etc. to make the concepts very realistic and to show how languages are related genetically.

Kaliram Medhi (1999), prominent scholar and linguist, presents a discussion on the development of language, culture and literature of Assamese language since early to modern period in his work Assamese Grammar and Origin of the Assamese Language. The other part of the book deals with the phonological and morphological constructions of the language which is very relevant so far as present study is concerned. In our present study on Noun phrases, gender is taken as one of the constituents of noun phrases in both Assamese and French language. Gender is an important grammatical category in the study of morphology of the language. Corbett (1999) has provided a discussion on gender found in the most of the languages of the world. The author tries to study almost 200 languages and finds the grammatical gender very frequently in the languages. This kind of work is not only meant for the students of linguists but is also beneficial to the scholars in linguistics. Assamese Verbs: A Study in the Structural Paradigm (1995) by Runima Chowdhary attempts to categorize Assamese verbs in the context of phonology, morphology and syntactic structure of the language under study. It is an exploratory study on word-class verb in standard colloquial Assamese. The author again analyses verbs depending on the grammatical categories like negation, interrogation, voice, time-tense and so on. In fact, this study comprises eight chapters where the author tries to describe almost all the aspects of verb system in Assamese and at the same time has paved the way for further research.
Asamiya Bhasar Uccaran (2002) emphasizes on the scientific study of Assamese phonemes like Consonants, Vowels, and Diphthongs etc. along with its phonetic representation very systematically. As the present study includes a section on phonology of Assamese sounds, this work is very helpful and resourceful at the same time. Payne, in the book entitled Describing Morphosyntax: A Guide for Field Linguistic (2002), deals with the morphosyntactic description of languages. This book is written to fulfill the taste of the field linguists who try to describe the morphological and syntactic features of most of the under-documented languages of the world. The author tries to describe many linguistic features with suitable examples from various languages. This book provides a comprehensive idea regarding the meaning and structure of noun phrases in general under the Chapters 4 and 5 of this book. In short, this book is very useful one to the reader, especially for a field linguist.

Asamiya, Bangla and Oriya: An Anthology of Comparative Study (2004) by Dipti Phukan Patgiri has made a modest attempt to compare three related languages, namely, Assamese, Bangla and Oriya. Thus, three languages belong to the same language group. The author basically, make a comparison among these languages in tems of morphological features like noun, pronoun, adjectives, number, gender, case markers, determinatives, verbs, nouns of relations etc. The first two chapters are devoted to the history and development of these languages and the phonological pattern. Besides, a list of words in these languages is also given to make this work very resourceful to the reader and scholars in this field of study. In Analyzing Grammar: An Introduction (2005) Kroeger, an active writer and linguist, has provided a comprehensive study on the different aspects of the languages of the world. His other writings like Phrase Structure and Grammatical Relations in Tagalog (1993) and Analyzing Syntax (2004) are worth mentioning. This book entitled Analyzing Grammar: An Introduction (2005) is a preliminary work on language for the beginner who takes language as a subject of study. It touches not only the morphology and syntax of languages, yet talks about the techniques used to analyze grammatical features in any language. The author also provides a platform to make a comparison between languages on different criteria like case, tense, aspect, mood, word order, noun and pronoun system, clitic element, number, gender etc. The chapter 6 of this book mainly deals with the Noun phrases in general along with its different constituent structure. It is very useful for the researcher to have a clear idea on the noun phrase with the illustrative examples from various languages (like English, Portuguese, Malay, Dyirbal, Chinese Swahili etc.).
Payne’s *Exploring Language Structure: A Student’s Guide* (2006) is meant for the students of higher education in the United States of America. This book can be termed as a general book on linguistics. It tries to describe the morphological and syntactic structure of language in general. This book seems to be helpful in understanding the constituent structure of noun phrases. The author has also discussed about nouns, adjectives, pronouns and adposition with suitable examples from languages.

### 1.5.3 Miscellaneous Literature on the Research Topic

Though our primary concern is on noun phrases, dictionaries play a role in understanding the meaning and function of words. We simply mention a list of dictionary work without giving any critical note on these. *Larousse: Mini Dictionnaire (francais-anglais and English-French)* (2005) is prepared for the readers with around 3000 references and 40,000 translations. This mini dictionary provides a huge number of vocabularies in the language. It also provides meanings along with phonetic representation of the words using IPA symbols. *Oxford Beginner’s French Dictionary* (2006) is very helpful which gives information on the parts of speech, meaning of the vocabulary with its usages, meaning of phrases and so on. Another dictionary named *Harrap’s Mini Dictionnaire (French-English and English-French)* (2010) is very fruitful in understanding the meanings of the vocabulary and phrases and idiomatic expressions. It also gives phonetic transcription of words, idea on French and English verbs.

*Hemkosh* (2007) by Baruah is an Assamese-English Dictionary which provides information on the etymology of words, meaning and usage of words and phrase and also the idiomatic expressions in Assamese as well as in English.

The above mentioned works by various scholars are seemed to be very effective in understanding and pursuing the present research work on noun phrase in Assamese and French languages.

### 1.6 Structure of the Present Work

The chapter scheme of the research work is as follows:

**Chapter I: General Introduction**
Chapter II: Introduction To Assamese And French Language: History And Development

Chapter III: Heads of Noun Phrase in Assamese and French

Chapter IV: Constituents in The Order of Noun Phrase Construction in Assamese and French

Chapter V: Summary and Conclusion

Bibliography

CHAPTER ONE presents the scope and importance of the present work, objectives of the study, review of literatures, methodological considerations. It also discusses the definitions of noun phrase put forward by linguists and scholar with suitable examples. This provides a literature review on noun phrase and its constituents. Under methodology, data collection, presentation of the data and methods used for carrying out the present study are mentioned.

CHAPTER TWO gives an introduction to Assamese and French language. It focuses on the background information of the two languages – their history, development, dialect issues, number of speaker etc. This section is crucial as it lays down the phonology of Assamese and French language.

CHAPTER THREE deals with the head position of noun phrases in both Assamese and French. The head is the main obligatory element in a noun phrase in languages. It studies that the head position is occupied by noun, pronoun, adjective and numeral in both the languages. This is illustrated with the help of example data taken from both these languages. The analysis of the data brings out some of the important point of grammatical similarities and dissimilarities between these two languages.

CHAPTER FOUR is concerned with the constituents taken by noun phrases in both Assamese and French language. The constituents like determiner, number, gender, case, adjective, prepositions and postpositions etc. are the important elements taken by a noun phrase in both these languages. At the same time, this study examines the similarities and differences between these two languages regarding the constituents taken by the noun phrases.

CHAPTER FIVE presents the summary and conclusive comment on the study of noun phrase. It attempts to make a descriptive assessment of the nature of the current work.
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