CHAPTER - 2

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

2.1. Works on Adi

There have been a number of research works done on the Tani languages by different scholars but no satisfactory description of the Adi language is available so far. The works and books that have been written on the Adi people are mostly about the culture and the society and those that have dealt with the language, are concerned mainly with the genetic classification.

The first work on Adi is found in the Linguistic Survey of India by Grierson (1904). In it he made brief sketches of Abor (Adi), Miri (Mising) and Dafla (Nishi). In this work, Grierson treated Adi and Mising together. However, the differences in the lexicon and phonology are also mentioned with examples. The nominals described include Gender, Number, Case, Numerals and pronouns. The verbals include the tenses, the aspects and the participles.

He started out by giving a brief introduction of the people and their habitat followed by the section in the phonology of the languages.

Lorrain, a Baptist Missionary, made an impressive contribution by producing a comprehensive Abor-Miri (i.e. Padam-Mising) dictionary entitled ‘A Dictionary of Abor-Miri Language with illustrative sentences and notes’ (Lorrain 1907).
The dictionary was compiled during the author's stay at Sadiya (June 1900-Feb, 1903). The main language treated in this work seems to be an unidentified variety of Mising, but the entries were also meant to cover the closely related Padam, and sometimes also other forms of Adi (e.g. Pasi-Minyong). When different dialect forms exist for the same gloss, disambiguating labels are used (A for Padam; P for Pasi-Minyong, and absence of marking for Mising).¹

However, Lorrain's description has a number of limitations as pointed out by Ju Namkung (1996). He states that 'Abor and Miri (Padam and Mising), two closely related varieties of Eastern Tani, are treated together in Lorrain's dictionary. Global phonological differences between the two varieties, though not mentioned by Lorrain, most certainly exist. Separate Padam and Mising forms are provided only when Lorrain detected a linguistic (usually lexical) difference'. After Lorrain, some attempts have been made to describe the language by various researchers like Simon (1972), Dasgupta (1977), etc., but a thorough expert analysis on the language is still lacking.

A. Tayeng, an Adi, who worked as an Assistant Director of Research in the department of Philology, under the Government of Arunachal Pradesh published a Phrase Book in Padam (1983). The book contains a number of phrases and lexical items with their English gloss. The book has been a good source of data collection.

¹ Tianshin Jackson Sun, *A Historical Comparative Study of the Tani (Mursh) Branch in Tibeto-Burman*, 1993, A Ph D Disseration, University of California, Berkeley p 17
Tamo Mibang and P.T. Abraham (2001) have also brought out a book entitled 'An Introduction to Adi Language'. The book contains sample discourses for various imaginary situations as well as explanations of some aspects of the grammar of the Adi language.

2.2. Survey of Related Literature

2.2.1. Structuralist Models (Hockett)

As the concept of the morpheme was developed in structuralist theories of language, so word formation came to be viewed as the disposition of morphemes in a word. Morphology came to be dominated by the metaphor of word analysis rather than word formation as linguistic theory sought to provide techniques for decomposing words into their compound morphemes. According to Hockett (1958) 'Morphology includes the stock of segmental morphemes, and the ways in which words are built up out of them. He proposes three models.

Following are Hockett's (1958) models for language description-

(a) Item – and- arrangement (IA) Theory

This is the clearest of Hockett's models. This model took the morpheme as its basic unit- 'morphemes' including roots, inflections, derivational affixes, and so on. These items form what is called the surface structure. Hockett discusses the ablaut in the formation of strong past tenses in English verbs, as compared with the regular formation consisting of
affixation of -ed to the basic form (as bake – baked). He points out that descriptive linguistics up to that time had a variety of means for describing the fact that took is the past tense form take, and proceeds to compare them.

Hockett’s list (1958a:393) are as follows:

i. took is a single morpheme <…>

ii. took is a portmanteau representation of the two morpheme sequence ‘take’ and /ed/.

iii. took is an allomorph of the morpheme which appears elsewhere as ‘take’, plus a zero allomorph of /ed/.

iv. took is a discontinuous allomorph /t..k/ of ‘take’ and an infixed allomorph /u/ of /ed/.

v. took is ‘take’ plus a replacive morph /u/ <- /ey/ (read ‘/u/ replaces /ey/) This citation is itself self-explanatory except for the term portmanteau which means a type of fusion of two morphemes into one.

All of these solutions have their drawbacks. But the option Hockett seems to prefer is that of (iv), though he explicitly denies that this means that the form take is comprised of /t..k/ plus an infix /ey/. However, this preference is relative to IA theory. As Hockett points out, in a different theoretical framework we would expect different solutions to be favoured. Hockett mentions one other approach in passing the Word-and-Paradigm theory, and devotes much of his discussion to what he sees as the main alternative to IA, the Item-and-Process (IP) Theory.
The IA Theory attempts to retain at all costs the idea of a one-one correspondence between form and function but poses a great difficulty in providing a satisfactory solution to these problems.

(b) Item – and – Process (IP) Theory

The IP Approach historically precedes the IA approach described by Hockett (1958). In an IP account we would distinguish between basic or underlying forms of a morpheme and forms derived after the application of certain processes. Thus, we would say that *bake* and *take* were underlying forms and that two distinct processes applied to them in the formation of the past tense. In the first, the process is affixation of *-ed* (or perhaps of the allomorph */t*/), in the second, the process is phonological in that the vowel of *take* is replaced by */u*/.

There remains a class of phenomena which neither IA nor IP seem well equipped to handle and that are the fusional nature of inflectional systems. Both IA and IP are fundamentally agglutinative. In IP word structure need not necessarily look agglutinative on the surface, but it is assumed to be agglutinative at the underlying level. This difficulty becomes apparent when asked how the IA or IP theories would handle the problem posed by Russian adjectival forms such as *bol’shomu* 'big (masc/neut. Dat. Sg. Adj)'

Large masc/NEUT DAT SG ADJ
Bol’sh omu

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Both the IA and IP Theories are fundamentally agglutinating theories and are therefore relevant for typologically agglutinating languages.

(c) Word-and-Paradigm (WP) Theory

Hockett only mentioned this briefly. This is an approach to inflectional morphology, first presented in an articulated form in Robbins (1959) and defended meticulously within a generative framework by Matthews (1972; also Matthews, 1974). Robbins pointed out that there are certain generalizations, which can only be stated at the level of the whole word. His proposal was to revamp a much earlier tradition of word analysis devised from classical grammarians.

The key to the WP approach is our notion of the morphosyntactic word. Each inflected form has (at least) one morphosyntactic description (e.g., Past tense form or dative singular of the masculine/neuter adjectival form) and the grammar then makes available paradigms that specify the formation, which corresponds to these categories. In other words, the relation between morphological form and morphosyntactic function is, many to many and not one to one.

The structuralists also talk about morphophonemics; they likened morphological structure to allomorphic variation. This connects morphological theory (what is known in structuralism as phonemics), and for certain schools of structuralism the result was an intermediate morphophonemic level.
As the structuralist models presented by Hockett are rather outdated and impractical, none of them are found to be suitable for the analysis of Adi morphological processes.

2.2.2. Principles of Descriptive Analysis (Nida)

Nida is of the opinion that a descriptive analyst must be guided by “very fixed principles” in order to be accurate and objective in the description of language.

The fundamental principles for linguistic description listed by Nida (1949: 1-3) are:-

a) Descriptive analysis must be based on what people say, i.e., the primacy of spoken over written language, and the necessity to record what people actually say, not what they should say.

b) The forms are primary and the usages secondary, i.e., a descriptive linguist should start with the form, and then describe the grammatical positions in which the forms occur.

c) No part of a language can be adequately described without reference to all other parts, i.e., phonetics, morphology and syntax of a language can be described with reference to each other.

d) Languages are constantly in the process of change, i.e., there are fluctuations in the use of alternative forms (e.g. proven vs. proved).

Language change is an attested fact of all human languages, but the rate of change varies at different times in the history of a language.
In addition to the above fundamental principles, Nida states that “the science of descriptive linguistics should be concerned with structural relations in any and all languages” (p. 4). Hence, whenever the existing terms are applicable they should be used. In other words, Nida cautions against the use of technical words which are applicable only in specialized areas.

Since Nida’s book deals primarily with Morphology and the descriptive analysis of words, he put forward six important principles for the identification of morphemes:

Principle 1. Forms which have a common semantic distinctiveness and an identical phonemic form in all their occurrences constitute a single morpheme (e.g. –er in singer, dancer, walker, runner, etc.). Comparative Degree –er in taller, bigger, smarter, etc. is a different morpheme (p. 7).

Principle 2. “Forms which have a common semantic distinctiveness but which differ in phonemic forms... may constitute a morpheme provided the distribution of formal differences is phonologically definable.” (p. 14) (e.g. plural s~z~iz) which is phonologically definable.

Principle 3. “Forms which have a common semantic distinctiveness but which differ in phonemic form in such a way that their distribution cannot be phonologically defined, constitute a single morpheme, if the forms are in complementary distribution”, (in accordance with some restrictions) (p. 4).
Principle 4. "An overt formal difference in the structural series constitutes a morpheme if in any member of such a series, the overt formal difference and a zero structural difference are the only significant features for distinguishing a minimal unit of phonetic-semantic distinctiveness" (p. 54).

Principle 5. "Homophonous forms are identifiable as the same or different morpheme on the basis of (some) conditions" (p. 55). For examples, same morphemes: fish (n), to fish (v); different morphemes: pear, pare, pair.

Principle 6. "A morpheme is isolatable if it occurs under the following conditions:
1. In isolation (i.e., free morphemes like 'boy', 'run', etc.)
2. In multiple combinations in at least one of which the unit with which it is combined, occurs in isolation or in other combinations. (e.g. conceive, consume; receive, resume).
3. In a single combination, provided the element with which it is combined occurs in isolation, or in other combinations with non-unique constituents. (e.g. 'cranberry', 'raspberry' because the element 'berry' occurs in isolation) (p. 60)

Nida’s six principles have provided basic guidelines to field linguists dealing with morphological analysis especially those working on “unknown”, undescribed languages. Obviously, some of the principles for identification of morphemes are for more thorough, exhaustive research. Since this is a preliminary research on Adi Morphology, many of these
principles have not found a place in the analysis, for example, allomorphs based on phonological environment (Principle 2) have not been considered in the present study, nor homophonous forms (Principle 5). However, the fundamental principles a, b, c listed above have been followed, including the use of known, traditional terminology. It is because of principle c that Phonology has been included as a chapter, and that whole sentences sometimes have been presented in the data.

2.2.3. Morphological Processes (Matthews)

In his *Morphology* (1991), Matthews talks about Sandhi Processes. He mentions that Sandhi are processes which correspond to the more familiar notion of Assimilation. It is a process in which a word-form emerges by the interaction and influence of one basic form on another. He makes a distinction between *external sandhi* (sandhi ‘external’ to the phonological word or operating across word boundaries) and *internal sandhi* (sandhi operating within them).

In the chapter on Morphological Processes, Matthews defines Morphological Process as ‘... a means of changing a stem to adjust its meaning to fit its syntactic and communicational context.’ He puts forward the following processes:-

1. Affixation- Affixation is the morphological process whereby an affix is attached to a root or stem. He further divides affixation into three-
(a) Prefixation: A morphological process whereby a bound morpheme is attached to the front of a root or stem.

(b) Infixation: A morphological process whereby a bound morpheme attaches within a root or stem. And

(c) Suffixation: A morphological process whereby a bound morpheme is attached to the end of a stem.

(2) Modification, a morphological process which produces an alteration within a root or stem. This process includes-

(a) Suppletion, the replacement of one stem with another, resulting in an allomorph of a morpheme, which has no phonological similarity to the other allomorphs. The process suppletion, though not strictly morphological, typically encodes the same type of information as the other morphological processes already mentioned. It is often discussed in conjunction with them.

(b) Subtraction is a morphological process of modification that removes one or more segments from a root or stem.

(3) Reduplication- Matthews also mentions the process of reduplication, a morphological process in which a root or stem or part of it is repeated. Reduplication is further sub-categorized into:
(a) Complete reduplication, where the whole word is reduplicated and

(b) Partial reduplication, where only part of the operand is reduplicated.

This study has drawn on Matthews understanding of Morphological processes, with data from Adi (Ch. 7). However, other morphological processes like vowel change and stress change, replacement, have not been dealt with for lack of data.

Abbi (1992) too has dealt extensively with the morphological process of reduplication, since this is an important areal feature of South Asia, her work has been consulted to verify the existence of reduplication in Adi, and to show if the process is similar to other South Asian Languages.

For the Morphological Process of affixation, Napoli’s (1996) sets of criteria for distinguishing derivational from inflectional affixes, proves to be useful. This study of Adi has made some use of Napoli’s classification of Nominal Suffixes to indicate Person, Number, Gender, Class and Case, in chapter 5. Similarly, her discussion of verbal affixes to indicate Tense, Aspect, Mood and Modal affixes, have been helpful to analyse verbal affixes in Adi.

2.2.4. Linguistic Analysis (J. Andrews Bickford)
According to his own words, J. Andrews Bickford’s book *(Tools for Analyzing the World’s Languages: Morphology and Syntax. 1998.)* is intended as a ‘bridge builder.’ Its intended audience is people who want to learn how to do basic linguistic analysis, particularly on languages about which little information is available. The book makes an introduction to morphological and syntactic analysis, which covers both general characteristics of language and specific theoretical formulations and does so through rich exposure to diverse data from the whole world. This book also tries to bridge the gap that often exists between language description and formal linguistic theory. Linguistic theory approaches explanatory adequacy, it can help guide a descriptive analyst in fruitful directions. On the other hand, if descriptive linguists are aware of theoretical claims and find conflicts with facts in particular languages, they then have an opportunity to make a theoretical contribution and thus further refine our understanding of universal language structure. The book, thus, aims at contributing to this symbiosis of linguistic description and linguistic theory.

Bickford has included a number of very practical suggestions about how to go about doing descriptive linguistics, especially in chapters 24–27. His work has been especially helpful during the initial period of the study in helping the researcher to organize data in a meaningful way.

The principle frameworks he draws from are Transformational Grammar (starting with the Extended Standard Theory but with some more recent material from Government-binding Theory), A-morphous Morphology, Relational Grammar, Lexical Functional Grammar, Generalized Phrase...
Structure Grammar, Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar, as well as the literature on linguistic typology, language universals, and functional approaches to linguistic structure. Since the book is structured around linguistic phenomena, it does not reflect the specialties of any one framework.

Conclusion

The above discussion is by no means a complete coverage of all the sources consulted. However, they constitute those that are most heavily relied upon. This study will take an eclectic approach; it will mainly be guided by the nature of the data rather than by any particular theory. However, the field methods for descriptive analysis of morphemes suggested by Nida and Bickford have been used while analyzing data, wherever applicable.