CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION
It is generally said that the patterns of the language one first internalizes for active use tend to interfere with the acquisition of the patterns of a second language learnt later. By 'patterns' we mean highly abstract linguistic relations underlying the constituents of our utterances. If the learner is exposed for the first time to a second language, he will find himself in a difficult situation. The situation will be difficult not because he will have to say two different things but because he will have to represent the same thing he has already experienced in his mother tongue in an entirely different or unfamiliar manner. In doing so, he will naturally fall back on the rules of his language which he knows, and use them in the production and understanding of the second language. By applying the old rules of his mother tongue where the new ones of the second language are called for, he will surely make mistakes. The process will continue so long as the learner does not know the full nature of the difference between his mother tongue and the second language.

This theory of 'interference' — the negative transfer of 'language habits' of the mother tongue to the second language — is said to be related to the notion of 'difficulty' in learning a second language. The notion of difficulty, on the other hand,
has been correlated with that of difference between the mother tongue and the second language. This is the position of Lado in his *Linguistics Across Cultures* (1957):

We assume that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult. (P.2)

Applied comparative linguistic studies are, therefore, generally made to discover the differences between the mother tongue and the second language with a view to predicting the areas of difficulty of the learner where the mother tongue may interfere in his learning.

But, it is not self-evident that differences between the mother tongue and the second language will pose difficulty to the learner. In fact, there is evidence that something totally different from the mother tongue may prove easier to learn than something which is slightly different. Difficulty is a psycholinguistic matter but difference is essentially linguistic. Hence, it cannot be asserted that we can relate them in a principled way, on the other hand, a knowledge of the difference (as well as similarity) between the mother tongue and the second language is known to facilitate second language learning and teaching.
Second language teaching normally starts after the learner has already achieved a command of his mother tongue. He has in most cases learnt to read and write in his mother tongue. In doing so he has acquired an 'implicit' knowledge of the nature of human language. Further more, the learner has already discovered and makes use of a major part of the total range of communicative functions of language and can perform a vast range of speech acts in his mother tongue. Depending on the age and social background of the learner he will already have become aware of, and able to exploit, some part of the social, situational and stylistic variability of his own language. From a functional point of view, thus, the learner does not approach the task of learning the second language from scratch.

What part does the learner's knowledge of the mother tongue play in acquiring the second language? The task of the learner is not acquiring language but learning a new code, a particular realization of human language. He has to use this new code in achieving a selected range of already familiar functions for which he uses the mother tongue. The learner, therefore, comes to the class room with an implicit knowledge of the target language in so far as it shares a range of communicative functions with his mother tongue. Further, no two human languages are totally different from each other formally and share, in varying degrees, features in common. Hence, the learner's task is to make explicit his 'knowledge' of the target language.
by discovering for himself more of such similarities between the target language and his mother tongue. One of his learning tasks is, thus, to learn what he needs to know about the second language. The other task he has to perform is to learn the differences between the two languages.

Comparative linguistic studies, between the target language and mother tongue, therefore, aim at discovering the similarities and differences between the two languages for the purpose of improving second/foreign language teaching. The result of such studies can be used in designing the linguistic syllabus and preparing teaching materials for the learner's twin tasks of learning what he needs to know and what he has to learn in the target language. The two tasks go together to make the learner acquire the communicative competence in the target language which is the objective of second language teaching.

The aim of the present work is to make a comparative study of the modifiers of English and Oriya Noun Phrases and to point out similarities and differences between them in terms of their categorical structure, their order of occurrence, concord with the head and mutual exclusiveness.

Modification is an important syntactic process whereby noun phrases acquire complexity of structure and heavy semantic load because of the amount of information content that can be encoded by the modifiers. Modifiers are elements —
words, phrases and clauses — that pattern with the noun-head in an endocentric construction occurring before and after the head noun. Their function in the noun phrase is to specify or identify or give further information about the noun head. Thus, they are not only source of structural and semantic complexity of the noun phrase but also constitute a very interesting field for the study of language use.

Like Bengali and Assamese, Oriya too is a member of the eastern or Magadhi group of the Indo-Aryan family of languages. Oriya is spoken by about 25 million people who are spread along the north-eastern sea-coast of India. To the north of its territory lies the region of the Bhojpuri tongues and to the south that of Telugu of the Dravidian family of languages. On the West, Oriya extends to quite a good distance, gradually merging into the dialects of Bhatri, Halvi and Chhatisgadi in Madhya Pradesh. There are still thousands of Oriya speaking people beyond the political borders of the Orissa state.

Though English and Oriya are genetically related to each other by being members of the Indo-European family of languages and share many syntactic features in common, yet there are significant differences between the two languages. Whereas the word-order in English is fixed and it follows the pattern of subject-verb-object in the sentence structure, Oriya, on the other hand, does not have a fixed word-order and favours subject-object-verb sentence pattern in general.
In both the languages, noun phrases pattern with the verb as subject, object and complement though Oriya has a tendency to delete its verb in certain structures—a feature that has no parallel in the equivalent English structures.

Within the noun phrase itself, both the languages have a head noun as the nucleus of the phrase and a number of modifiers preceding and following the head. But Oriya favours to place the modifiers before the head whereas, in English, the order of occurrence of modifiers as pre-head and post-head is particularly fixed for separate categories. English and Oriya have broadly the same categories of modifiers but there are interesting absence of some types in Oriya like the articles. Thus, there is an overall similarity in form and function between the English and Oriya noun phrases but there are delicate and interesting differences as well. The aim of the present study is to identify these subtle differences between the two languages by drawing attention to the similarities at the same time.

The method followed in the study is the accepted applied linguistic principle of description first and then comparison. Accordingly, Chapter-2 is devoted to a description of the different categories of modifiers in the English Noun Phrase, their order of occurrence, concord with the head, and mutual exclusiveness. Chapter-3 follows the same plan in the description of the modifiers of Oriya. After describing the modifiers of English and Oriya separately, in Chapter-4...
an attempt has been made to find out the similarities and differences between the two languages in terms of the categories of modifiers, their order of occurrence, their concord with the head, and their mutual exclusiveness. In the final chapter suggestions are advanced regarding the possible areas of difficulties in matters of modification in the English Noun Phrase for the Oriya learner of English as a second language. It is hoped that this investigation will be useful to persons engaged in the study of bilingual behaviour in general and to the teachers of English and designers of English language materials in the Oriya-speaking areas of India in particular.