CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The Indian subcontinent is inhabited by a large population of approximately 970 million. Most of the Indian languages belong to three major language families: Indo-Aryan (a sub branch of Indo-European), Dravidian and Munda. In 1931 Indo-Aryan speakers numbered about 255 million (Emeneau 1964:632). The same author (p.650) states "India ... may be defined as a [linguistic area] which includes languages belonging to more than one family but showing traits in common which are found not to belong to the other members of at least one of the families."

1.1 Origin of the Chodri people

The term **Chodri** is the name of a tribal group as well as the name of the language spoken by the Chodri people living in the southern part of Gujarat state in India. The following information[1] is translated by the writer of this thesis from the book *Chodhri and Chodhri Dictionary* by Acharya (1969:5,6).

> The Chodri people descended from the *Rajput* race through a man named *Gokul* of *Pavagadh* in *Panchmahal* district. When *Mohammed Begda* conquered *Pavagadh* in 1484, *Gokul* fled to a village called *Naldara* in *Mahuva taluk*[2] of *Surat* district of *Gujarat* state in India, where he married a Chodri woman.
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> Originally, the Chodri people had no class division among themselves. Later, they were identified by four classes: *nana tʃodri*[3] 'small Chodri', *mota tʃodri* 'big Chodri', *valvai* or *valavḍa* and *bonḍa tʃodri*. [The latter two names are proper nouns and thus cannot be glossed.] The *nana tʃodri* people are considered to have higher status

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[1] Paragraph divisions have been inserted in the translated information for the purpose of clarity.

[2] *Taluk* is a division of a district.

[3] For the benefit of the Chodri reader, the author places the Chodri word before its English translation.

than the *moʈa ʧodri* and *valavɖa*. The *bonɖa ʧodri* live exclusively in *Mandvi taluk* of *Surat* district.

The story of the division of 'small' and 'big Chodri' is quite interesting. When all the Chodri were united together as a single class, two brothers were living in a village. One day a heifer died in their house. After the brothers removed the carcass and buried it in an appropriate place, the younger brother bathed himself whereas the elder brother just sprinkled water over his body. This action caused a division among them which was passed on to their descendants. The one who bathed was considered 'pure' and the other was considered 'sprinkled'. Thus the generations which descended from the younger brother were called *nana ʧodri* 'pure Chodri' or 'small Chodri', and the generations which descended from the elder brother were called *moʈa ʧodri* 'sprinkled Chodri' or 'big Chodri'.

In practice, only two terms are used to refer to the Chodri people: *nana ʧodri* and *moʈa ʧodri*. Acharya did not discuss the terms *valvai* (*valavɖa ʧodri*) or *bonɖa ʧodri* in his book *Chodhri and Chodhri Dictionary*. From personal conversation with the Chodri people, the writer of this thesis understands that the Chodri people who live in the *Laldara* village of the *Surat* district, are called *valvai ʧodri* (*valavɖa ʧodri*) and are neither *nana ʧodri* nor *moʈa ʧodri*. The *bonɖa ʧodri* have never been located by the writer.

1.2 Demography of the Chodri people

The Chodri tribe resides only in the state of Gujarat, India. They live in secluded areas away from the lowest castes [i.e. the *Scheduled*[4] castes] in *Surat* district of *Gujarat* state. They have settled mostly in the *Valod, Vyara* and *Mandvi taluks* of the *Surat* district in the southern part of *Gujarat* state. According to the 1961 census, there were 143,576 Chodri. Of these 141,507 lived in the *Surat* district and only 1,865 lived

[4] The Indian government categorizes some people groups as the "Scheduled castes." These castes are considered to be of the lowest rank in the Indian caste system.

in the *Bharuch* district. The rest were scattered in adjoining districts. The most recent figure available on the Chodri population (not including the *Chodhara* people) is 219,897 as recorded by K. S. Singh (1994:210) in his book *Scheduled Tribes*.

The Chodri people speak their mother tongue with their relatives, with other Chodri people and with other tribal people who live with them in other hamlets. They use the state language *Gujarati* with outsiders for trading and other purposes. The literacy rate among the Chodri is approximately 30%. In school they must speak the *Gujarati* language. Usually children attend school until the fifth grade, and then they drop out. The Chodri people are an '*involuntary minority group*'[5] in *Gujarat* state.

Different authors use different terms to describe this people group or tribe. Some of the Gujarati books refer to them as '*Chodhra*'. An unknown author refers to them as '*Choudhry*' in the book called *The Tribes of Gujarat* (1966). Acharya (1969:4), however, prefers the term *Chodhri*. He states that from his discussion with Kanji Bhai Chodhri (August 1968) at Vedchi, the latter reported that he and some other leaders of his community altered the term *Chodhra* to *Chodhri*.

From my interaction with the Chodri people (1981 to 1996), I noticed that they use the term *tʃodri* 'Chodri' when referring to themselves. The phonology system of this language supports this consideration in two ways: 1) the vowel system of Chodri does not have the glide *oᵘ*; and 2) secondly, there are no voiced aspirated consonants in this language.

1.2.1 Life among the Chodri people

Formerly each Chodri village had its own respected headman. He was appointed by

[5] The Indian government generally classifies all tribal people as 'ethnic minority' groups, and it provides for them various benefits such as bank loans and subsidies for their development. A tribal person inherits this status whether he likes it or not and is therefore considered an '*involuntary minority group*.'

the local police department, and his responsibility was to enforce law and order. He had a *pantʃ* 'council' consisting of a few village leaders who assisted him to settle disputes and other local administrative issues. Currently, a *gram pantʃajat* 'village administrative council' is responsible to maintain law and order. This council consists of a president and five council members who are elected by the people every five years. Depending on the size of the population a *gram pantʃajat* 'village administrative council' may rule over one or more villages which may vary in population from five hundred to three thousand.

The Chodri people are animistic, believing in the worship of ancestors. They bathe early in the morning during all seasons before they start to work. They are not allowed to drink a cup of tea before they bathe. They eat twice a day. Their staple foods consist of maize, rice and beans, supplemented (rarely) by chicken, goat-meat and fish. They do not eat beef because of the high value they place on cattle for plowing the fields and cattle's dung for fertilizing. The Chodri people are very careful in dealing with others in order not to offend them.

Drinking *daruvə* 'liquor' made from the *movɽə* 'the blossom of a tree' is common among the Chodri people. Some Chodri distill their own liquor in their homes, and others use *ədʑa* 'the distillery'. They collect *movɽə* during the winter season in order to make a year's supply of liquor.

1.2.2 Kinship and the social life of the Chodri people

The writer and her husband have found that the kinship system of the Chodri people can be classified according to the *Hawaiian* system (Murdock 1949). The Chodri people use the same terms for siblings, and parallel and cross cousins. They have separate terms for the siblings of father and mother as they traced through patrilineal

descent. For the Chodri people it is the male line of descent from father to son that is important.

Originally, the Chodri people lived together as an extended family. The present generation, however prefers to live separately as a nuclear family consisting of husband, wife and their dependent offspring. The marriage pattern of the Chodri people is exogamous. They are not allowed to marry their consanguineal relatives who are traced either patrilineally or matrilineally. Chodri men prefer to marry non-relatives from another village.

The Chodri people consider engagement, marriage and funeral ceremonies to be very important. Seldom would they avoid attending one of these ceremonies. Formerly, they preferred arranged marriages, but nowadays men prefer to choose their own wives with their parents' permission. Men can find a potential wife by attending a Chodri engagement or marriage ceremony.

The Chodri people have two systems of marriage: 1) giving a daughter to a man in marriage, or 2) bringing a man to a daughter in marriage. In the first system the bridegroom pays the bride-price to the bride on their engagement day. This bride-price is fixed by the elders of the general Chodri society. Every groom whether rich or poor must pay the same bride-price. The present bride-price is forty-five Indian rupees, plus one hundred and fifty grams of silver. In addition on the wedding day, the bridegroom must provide a set of clothing for the bride.

In the second system, the bride's parents pay the bride groom's parents forty-five Indian rupees as the price for the son. The bridegroom will not inherit any land from his parents, and he must live with the bride's family for the rest of his life. In the first system, the bride does not inherit anything from her parents while in the second system she does. The Chodri people prefer the second system for two reasons: 1) either they

have many sons and little land to give to their sons, or 2) they lack the money to pay for the wedding expenses.

All the Chodri people in the village are invited to attend weddings either by formal invitation or by word of mouth. Some guests present monetary gifts to the couple or non-monetary gifts to their parents on their wedding day, but cash is not considered a 'gift' as such. The parents of the bride-groom are responsible for the wedding expenses which often exceed their resources.

Ideally a couple will live together for a life time, but divorce is common. The one who asks for divorce must have some complaint about the spouse such as sickness, laziness or unfaithfulness. The person seeking divorce must then repay the marriage expenses as fixed by the *pəntʃ* 'council of elders' in consultation with the spouse's parents. The spouse can remarry anyone who is not a consanguineal relative. The children of this spouse can be assigned to either their father or mother. The children usually prefer to live with their father since their mother would likely remarry a man who would not fulfill his responsibility as father.

1.3 The Chodri language

The Indo-Aryan languages are a sub-branch of the Indo-European language family. According to Hoernle (1880, in Masica 1991:447) Chodri was classified as a subgroup of the western dialect of Old Indo-Aryan languages. Later, Grierson (1903) of the Linguistic Society of India (in Masica 1991:447) classified Chodri as a *Bhili* language. This *Bhili* language group is a branch of the central group of the inner sub-branch of the New Indo-Aryan languages.

Chodri is a *Bhili* 'dialect' of a Scheduled tribe[6] in Surat district of Gujarat. Masica

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[6] A Scheduled tribe is a people group who are different from Scheduled castes, belonging to a region from earliest times.

(p.424) claims that *Bhili* is a group of thirty dialects each with a separate name. These dialects are spoken in the hill areas of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and the Aravallis of Rajasthan in India. In the *Anthropological Survey of India* (ca. 1960), the Indian government regards Chodri as a separate language even though it shares a high percentage of cognates with the state language of *Gujarat*.
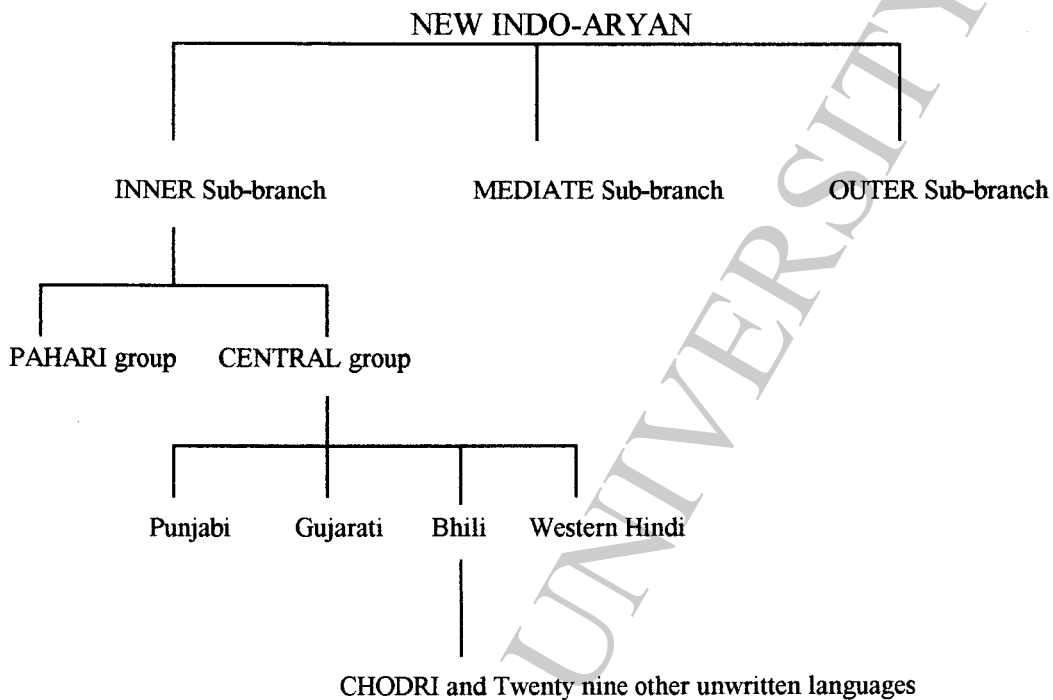

Figure 1 The Chodri language is a part of the New
Indo-Aryan family. (adapted from Grierson, 1903).

Chodri is a SOV (Subject, Object and Verb) language as well as an inflectional one. It has two varieties: one variety is spoken by the *moʈa tʃodri* and the other one is spoken by the *nana tʃodri*. The first variety is used by the *moʈa tʃodri* people living north of the Tapi river, and the other one is used by the *nana tʃodri* people living south of the Tapi river in the *Surat* district. Both varieties are mutually intelligible. The Chodri people speak *"Chodri"* as their primary language. People of adjacent

groups (such as the *Gamit, Kukna, Vasavi* and *Kothvala* who live among them in small numbers) also speak Chodri as a lingua franca.

The native *Chodri* speakers believe their language is only a dialect because it was not written down until very recently (1988). Nevertheless, a clear grammatical distinction between *Gujarati* and *Chodri* proves the two are separate languages. Like other languages, *Chodri* has its own linguistic system.

Emeneau (1964:644-650) discusses the morphological and syntactic similarities between Dravidian and Indo-Aryan languages and claims these languages borrow words from Sanskrit. Regarding their phonological system, he states each has retroflexed, alveolar and dental contrastive consonants. Grammatically, he claims that in both language families, words can be inflected with suffixes but not with prefixes and infixes. Similarly, nouns with singular and plural markers indicate number differences. In general these characteristics comparing the *Dravidian* and Indo-Aryan languages also apply to Chodri. Emeneau's claims regarding their morphological and syntactic similarities are correct. [7]

Compared to Tamil, a Dravidian language, Chodri is an Indo-Aryan language and is different from Tamil in two ways: 1) phonologically, Tamil has no aspirated sounds whereas Chodri does; and 2) grammatically, Tamil has inanimate nouns which are treated as the neuter gender. Chodri has inanimate nouns which are classified as three genders: masculine, feminine and neuter. In Tamil, the agreement is always between the subject and the predicate whereas in Chodri the agreement is between the subject and the predicate in imperfect tenses, and the object and the predicate in perfect

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[7] [Emeneau argues (p.650) that the *Tamil* language has a classifier after numerals but he offers only one example. The writer of this thesis, a Dravidian whose native language is Tamil, contends that there is no such classifier in Tamil. In the example Emeneau used *nalu per tiruṭarhʌl* 'four thieves'. The meaning of *per* 'person' refers only to human beings and is used only when the speaker wishes to indicate, for example four out of five are thieves. The following example illustrates the usage of *per* 'person' in context . *oru uril ʌ'ndu per irundarhʌl* 'one village five person were.' *ʌvʌrhʌḷil nangu per tiruṭʌrhʌl*. 'out-of-these four person thieves' *oruvʌn nʌllʌvʌn* 'one good.']

tenses. (Imperfect tenses in Chodri: present and past progressive, present habitual and future. Perfect tenses: past, present and past perfect.) Lexically, Tamil and Chodri share no cognates. The Tamil people use the term *ekʌr* 'acre' to measure land area (such as a rice field) while the chodri use the term *vigo*. The Tamil people use the term *pʌvun* 'eight grams' for weighing gold and silver, whereas the Chodri use the term *tolo* 'ten grams'. Gumperz (1964:418) says that speech variation changes according to class and status in Indian society. This is true in the Tamil language which has a low and standard variety of speech. Chodri, however, has no such speech variation with respect to social class and status as exists in Tamil. Social status does not affect Chodri speech variation.

At present, to this author's knowledge, East Indians have published only two books about the Chodri people and their language: 1) *Religious Thought and Worship Among the Chodhras of Gujarat* (Mehta, 1934); and 2) a *Chodri Dictionary* (Acharya 1969) containing 2,755 words. In addition, the author of this thesis has co-authored a monograph *Chodri Phonemic Summary* (Thomas and Thomas 1985) and an article entitled "Story Line Scheme for the Chodri Language" (Thomas and Thomas 1990) in *Occasional Papers in Translation and Text Linguistics* (OPTAT).

1.4 Overview of Chodri Phonology

Chodri phonemes are summarized in the following two tables: Table1 'Chodri consonants'; Table 2 'vowels of Chodri language. Except for the */o/* vowel all other vowels in Chodri have the possibility of being nasalized. The nasalized vowels contrast with their non-nasalized counter parts. Stress is not phonemic in Chodri.

	Labial	Apical	Retro-flexed	Laminal	Dorsal
Stops	p	t	ʈ	tʃ	k
	pʰ	tʰ	ʈʰ	tʃʰ	kʰ
	b	d	ɖ	dʒ	g
Nasals	m	n	ɳ		
Flap		r	ɽ		
Fricatives		s			h
Approximant	ʋ			j	
Lateral		l			

Table 1 Consonants of the Chodri language

Close	i		u
Open	e	ə	o
		a	

Table 2 Vowels of the Chodri language

In general the Chodri orthography follows the script of the state language, which is Gujarati. Chodri does have a modified script, but it is not used in Gujarati. This paper will use the *phonemic* representation. Table 3 displays Chodri phonemes and Chodri script.

Pho.	Or.	Pho.	Or.	Pho.	Or.	Pho.	Or.
p	પ	k	ક	n	ન	ɽ	ડ
pʰ	ફ	kʰ	ખ	ɳ	ણ	i	ઈ
t	ત	b	બ	ʋ	વ	u	ઉ
tʰ	થ	d	દ	s	સ	e	એ
ʈ	ટ	ɖ	ડ	j	ય	o	ઓ
ʈʰ	ઠ	dʒ	જ	h	હ	ə	અ
tʃ	ચ	g	ગા	l	લ	a	આ
tʃʰ	છ	m	મ	r	ર		

Table 3 Orthography for Chodri phonemes

1.5 Grammatical overview

The following paragraphs offer a general grammatical orientation to the Chodri language. Syntactic topics will be expanded upon in other chapters.

There are three tenses in Chodri: present, past and future. The present and past tenses demonstrate the progressive, habitual and perfect aspects. The present tense and the present progressive aspect are the same in Chodri. The past progressive aspect and past habitual aspect are also the same.

According to Longacre's (in Thomas 1990:60) analytic scheme, Chodri, like other Indo-Aryan languages in general, is a split ergative system morphologically. It has a nominative accusative structure in some tenses and an ergative-absolutive structure in other tenses.

All intransitive and transitive verbs in Chodri can be causativized at least once by attaching causative suffixes to the verb roots. Most of the causativized verbs can be further causativized. Intransitive verbs are transitivized when they are causativized.

Chodri has simple, compound and conjunct verbs. A simple verb consists of only one main verb in finite form, which has number, gender and tense markers. A compound verb is a combination of a main verb with an -i suffix as well as a vector verb. A limited set of verbs are combined with other verbs, which are then treated as compound verbs. A conjunct verb contains a noun or adjective plus a verb.

Each noun inherently belongs to one of three genders: masculine, feminine and neuter. There are few compound and derived nouns in Chodri. Like other Indo-Aryan languages, Chodri uses 'post-position' and not 'preposition'.

1.6 Overview of the story line scheme in Chodri narratives

The narrative discourse in Chodri consists of seven bands. The story line scheme is summarized in this section (Thomas 1990:69) and the seven bands are explained in the following chart:

Event Band	Pivotal event: punctiliar aspect = compound verb + past tense Primary event: punctiliar aspect (ordinary & routine event) Simple verb + past tense Secondary event: simple verb or compound verb with suffixes -i/ -in
Background activities	Past or present durative aspect, present habitual, past or present progressive
Flashback	past perfect (events out of sequence)
Setting	verb 'to be' in past tense
Irrealis	negatives
Evaluations	performative statement and descriptive clause
Cohesion	back reference, particiles *eʈle, te, ne*

Table 4 Story line scheme in the Chodri language

1.7 Objectives of this research

This paper will discuss a portion of Chodri syntax by describing and analyzing the distribution and function of Chodri clauses and sentences.

The scope of this study is restricted to the following considerations:

- The Chodri language spoken by the *nana tʃodri* 'small Chodri' from two different Chodri villages and the texts collected from eight native speakers of these two Indian villages.

- The writer's personal knowledge gained through living with native *nana tʃodri* 'Chodri' speakers.

- The clause and sentence structures of Chodri.

- Cases in Chodri, including the ergative case, are described in the Chodri clause structures.

1.8 Syntactic theory

Scholars describe syntax differently. Noam Chomsky (1976:1) describes syntax as follows:

> Syntax is the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages. Syntactic investigation of a given language has as its goal the construction of a grammar that can be viewed as a device of some sort for producing the sentences of the language under analysis.

Benjamin Elson and Velma Pickett (1962:16) state, "Syntax is the study of the composition of constructions larger than words—phrases, clauses, sentences." Joan Healey (1988:33) describes syntax as, "the study of how words combine into phrases, phrases into clauses and clauses into sentences."

Tagmemic theory was formulated by Kenneth L. Pike (1982) in *Grammatical Analysis* (among other titles) and was modified by Robert E. Longacre (1964) in *Grammar Discovery Procedures*. This theory has been applied for practical work by Joan Healey (1988) in *Doing Grammar*.

The central concept of tagmemic theory is the tagmeme. In this study a tagmeme consists of two parts: 1) the specific function, and 2) the set of items which fulfill the function. In tagmemic theory, a specific function and a set correlation is known as a 'tagmeme'. Thus, a tagmeme is an element described as both a function and a class. This paper refers to the tagmeme as an 'element'. For example, a specific noun phrase is a class that functions as the subject at the clause level. Together the class and the function make up the 'tagmemic element'.

For this research the writer applies a modified tagmemic theory using materials from Robert E. Longacre and Joan Healey, and integrates valuable ideas from Dixon (1994) on *Ergativity*. This thesis is about the clause and sentence structure of Chodri as adapted from Healey's model.

According to tagmemic theory, in any language there is a grammatical hierarchy which starts with the lowest level of morphology and builds gradually into higher levels. Each level is considered as a unit of the next higher level. For example a morpheme is a unit within a word, a word is a unit within a phrase, a phrase is a unit within a clause, a clause is a unit within a sentence, a sentence is a unit within a paragraph and a paragraph is a unit within a discourse.

1.9 Grammatical hierarchy of Chodri

The theory of grammatical hierarchy can be applied to Chodri. However, both the clause and phrase elements of Chodri may be filled by clauses. The phrase element may also be filled by phrases. The following diagram summarizes the grammatical hierarchy found in Chodri. In Figure 2, three diagrams are shown between clauses and phrases. The line that starts without an arrow is a unit in the level where the line ends with an arrow. For example, the right side diagram shows a clause (dependent or relative) is a unit in the phrase level. The left side diagram shows a clause is a unit in the clause or a phrase is a unit in the phrase level.
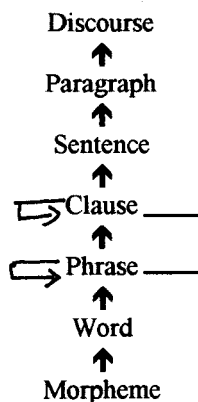
Discourse

↑

Paragraph

↑

Sentence

↑

Clause

↑

Phrase

↑

Word

↑

Morpheme

Figure 2 The grammatical hierarchy of Chodri.

1.10 Methodology of this research

While living in three Chodri villages with the Chodri people for approximately fifteen years, the writer of this thesis gained considerable knowledge of the language and speaks it fluently. During the latter part of these years, she collected twenty-three texts from eight native speakers in two different villages. The data included in this research are from the writer's personal knowledge and were checked with two Chodri people in the *Padamdungri* village, Surat district, Gujarat State.

The writer selected and transcribed fifteen recorded texts for this analysis. (Only one of the fifteen texts is included as a sample in the Appendix.) She then has identified different sentences, classified different sentence structures, and identified dependent and independent clauses within sentences. The syntactic analysis of this paper includes the following steps:

- identification of independent and dependent clauses,

- identification of clause typology,

- description of clause modification,

- examination of phrases as classes and functions at the clause level,

- discussion of clauses which function as elements at the clause level,

- identification of clausal and non-clausal sentences,

- identification of simple and complex sentences,

- identification of coordinate and subordinate sentences, and

- description of sentences and the function of clauses: deciding base elements and clauses.

In this analysis, the writer of this thesis consulted publications describing languages similar to Chodri. From Williams' (1973) description of clause patterns in Maithili, the writer infers the following similarities between Chodri and Maithili: 1) both Chodri and Maithili belong to the Indo-Aryan language family; 2) both are SOV languages; and 3) in Chodri and Maithili an additive follows the noun head in the noun phrases. Williams refers to this additive as an 'emphasizer'. It is interesting to note that there is no ergative case in Maithili.

In the *Grammar of Lamani*, Trail (1968) reveals similarities in Chodri and Lamani, both of which belong to the same Indo-Aryan language family. His writings and charts offer helpful ideas for describing dependent clauses in Chodri.

In the following chapters, first, independent and dependent clauses will be described. Then, a display chart is offered to summarize the types of clauses. Next, the clause typology will be discussed with examples. Then, phrases functioning as elements at clause level will be described in the same chapter. Next, the modification of clauses in Chodri are explained with modification charts in the third chapter. Then, the cases

including the ergative case, are described in the fourth chapter. Next, non-clausal and clausal sentences are explained, and a clear distinction between sentences and clauses is described in the fifth chapter. Then, clauses functioning as base elements in sentences are described in the same chapter. The structure of each element is explained in terms of function and class. Appendix 1 contains some examples with tree diagrams displaying a portion of the grammatical analysis of Chodri. Appendix 2 contains a table summarizing all cases in Chodri. Appendix 3 contains a text which allows the reader to view an extended example of Chodri speech.

The function of sentences in the paragraph and the structure of phrases and words are not covered in this thesis.