CHAPTER FIVE

THE CASE-SYNTAGMA (“NPs”)

5.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Although it was shown in Chapter 4 that any syntactically well-formed semantic base—whether simple or complex—may function as the semantic base of both a TAM/PERSON-syntagma or a Case-syntagma, for ease of presentation and reference those categories which are generally found in the semantic base of a Case-syntagma, such as number marking, demonstratives, etc., will be discussed in this chapter, although it should be stressed here once again that it is only case marking which defines a Case-syntagma as such. That is, the general structure of a Case-syntagma is as in Table 5.1, where “X” is the possibly complex semantic base of the Case-syntagma:

Table 5.1: The structure of a Case-syntagma in Kharia

X=CASE

“Case” in this sense refers to the direct case (unmarked), the oblique case (=te), and adpositions but not to the genitive, since as we saw in Section 4.4, the genitive can appear in the semantic base of both TAM/PERSON- and Case-syntagmas.¹

The maximal structure of a Case-syntagma can be summarized schematically as in Table 5.2, where the maximal possible structure of the semantic base (“X” in Table 5.1) has been expanded.

Table 5.2: A schematic overview of a Case-syntagma

GENITIVE DETERMINER DEM QUANT CLASS GENITIVE DETERMINER LEXEME(S)=POSS=NUM/HON=CASE

¹ Note that this is slightly different from the use of the term “case” in Section 5.2, where “case” is distinguished from “adposition” and includes the genitive. As unfortunate as this double usage of the term “case” is, it seemed preferable to coining a new term for either use.
1. \( \text{nāw} \text{jān} \ \text{be}^{t} \text{qom} \text{=kiyar} \) ‘their nine sons (HON)’
   nine CLASS son=3 POSS=HON

2. \( \text{ho=kiyar}=\text{ya} \) carpaṭ ‘their cleverness’
   that=DU=GEN cleverness

3. \( \text{ho} \ \text{pāc} \ \text{lebu}=\text{ki} \) ‘those five persons’ [Biligiri, 1965: 77]
   that five person=PL

In addition, there may be a relative-clause-like modifier which generally precedes the entire structure shown in Table 5.2 but which may also follow the demonstrative. These structures will be dealt with in more detail in Sections 5.8 and 7.6.

There is no compelling evidence for the presence of “nouns” and “adjectives” in (Simdega) Kharia. Instead, contentive morphemes can simply be regarded as juxtaposed units, each comprising a phonological word, with the semantically “most central” unit appearing to the far-right. This is denoted in Table 5.2 by the term “Lexeme(s)”, denoting one or more contentive morphemes in juxtaposition.

4. \( \text{ho} \ \text{rusuŋ} \ \text{o} \) ‘that red house’
   that red house

5. \( \text{moŋ} \ \text{maha} \ \text{daru}=\text{ya} \) tuta=te ‘at the bottom of a big tree’
   one big tree=GEN bottom=OBL

The same is also true for what would appear to be compounds, at least from an English-speaking perspective. As there is no evidence that these two or more units should be considered compounds (cf. §4.6), they are simply considered juxtaposed contentive morphemes.

6. \( \text{be}^{t} \text{ki} \text{ndu}^{i} \) \( \text{ho} \ \text{laro} \) daru ‘girl’ ‘that date-palm tree’ [Biligiri, 1965: 77]
   girl child that date.palm tree

7. \( \text{kinir} \ \text{konthe}^{q} \) \( \text{raksin} \ \text{kāṭaybo} \) ‘birds of the forest’ ‘the old witch’
   forest bird witch old.woman