Languages without nouns and verbs?

A closer look at reference and predication in Kharia (South Munda, India)

- "free" constituent order, mainly predicate-final
- strict constituent-internal order
- grammatical marking mainly through enclitics
- Singular, Dual, Plural
- Inclusive / Exclusive
- Active – generally transitive
- Middle – generally intransitive

Two syntactically defined clause-level units ("phrases"):  
- TAM/Person-syntagmas
- Case-syntagmas

Closely related – but not identical! – to predication and reference, respectively.

Case-Syntagmas can be used attributively:
1. $u \, go^t\,a \, duniya=te \, lebu=ki=ya? \, kahani$
   
   this entire world=OBL person=PL=GEN story
   
   'the story of the people on this entire world'

TAM/Person-Syntagmas can be used attributively:
2. $yo=yo^j \, lebu \, col=ki.$
   
   see=A.PST.1SG man go=M.PST
   
   'The man that I saw left' (= literally: 'I=saw man left').

Case-Syntagmas can be used predicatively:
3. "…ro $u=ga \, ho \, jinis=a? \, komaj.$"  
   
   and this=FOC that animal=GEN meat
   
   "…and this [is] that animal's meat.'"

TAM/Person-Syntagmas can be used referentially:
4. $kun\,qab \, aw=ki \, tomliy \, khar\,iya \, gam \, dom=na \, la?=ki=may$
   
   behind COP=M.PST milk Kharia say PASS=INF IPFV=PASS=M.PL
   
   because this=PL milk drink=FOC come=M.PST=3PL
   
   '[Those who] were in the rear (= literally: 'they were behind') were called "Milk Kharia" because they came drinking milk.'

The Case-syntagmas

\[(GEN) (DEM)(QUANT (CLASS)) (GEN) (LEXEME*) (=POSS) (=NUM) =CASE\]

or simply...

\[X =\text{CASE}\]

where $X \equiv$ semantic base $\equiv$ (genitive attribute) (demonstrative) (quantifier (classifier)) (genitive attribute) (lexeme*) (=POSS) (=NUM)
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Summer School on Linguistic Typology, August 24, 2010

Direct (Ø) – subjects; indefinite objects  
Relations to the Predicate

Oblique (=te) – definite objects; "indirect objects", locative adjuncts

Postpositions – buŋ 'INST', tay 'ABL'

**Does not mark a relation to the predicate**
Genitive (=YAYA/) – Possessive marker  
Relation between 2 "NPs" – better: between two semantic bases

**Number**: Ø – Singular; =kiyar – Dual; =ki – Plural

**Inalienable Possession**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual / HON</th>
<th>Plural</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(=na)=ŋ, (=na)=iŋ</td>
<td>Incl. (=na)=nŋ</td>
<td>Excl. (=na)=jar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>=no=m</td>
<td>(=no)=bar</td>
<td>(=no)=pe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>=dom</td>
<td>=dom(=kiyar)</td>
<td>=dom(=ki)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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5. ho rusuŋ oʔ(=Ø) 'that red house'
   that red house(=DIR)

6. mon kinir=aʔ jantu 'an animal of the jungle (= a wild animal)'
   jungle=GEN animal

7. konselʔuʔ=dom=ki=te  
   woman=3POSS=PL=OBL 'their wives (e.g., as direct object)'

**The TAM/Person-syntagma**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>STEM* (V2*)</th>
<th>TAM/BASIC VOICE=PERS/NUM/HON</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>col=ki=may</td>
<td>go=M.PST=3PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'they went'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>muʔ=ki=may</td>
<td>emerge=M.PST=3PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'they emerged'</td>
</tr>
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</table>

"V2" – Aktionsart and markers of the passive, etc., appears between the stem and TAM-markers. Most common: V2: go’d’ C:TEL’, dom PASS’, kay BEN’, etc.

10. duŋgo go’d=ki  
    sit.down C:TEL=M.PST  
    '[s/he] sat down'
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### TAM / BASIC VOICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAM / BASIC VOICE</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Middle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past (PST)</td>
<td>=oʔ</td>
<td>=ki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present (PRS)</td>
<td>=te</td>
<td>=ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present progressive (PROG)</td>
<td>=te/jd</td>
<td>=ta/jd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrealis (IRR)</td>
<td>=e</td>
<td>=na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subject marking

<table>
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<th>Dual / HON</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>=i(ɨ)n</td>
<td>=naŋ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>=(e)m</td>
<td>=bar</td>
<td>=pe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>=kiyar</td>
<td>=ki / =may</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Precategoriality"

Two lexical classes:

- **Open** – may appear in referential, predicative or attributive function with no derivational marking, "light verb", copula, etc.

- **Closed** – two subtypes:
  - Proforms / deictic elements – may be used in referential or predicative function with no further marking. In attributive function the genitive is (apparently) obligatory (I, you, here, there, today, tomorrow, ...)
  - Functional morphemes – TAM, case, Aktionsart, etc. May never be used in referential, predicative or attributive function (GEN, OBL, DU, PL, PASS, ...)

### Interrogatives

- *i*  'what?'  'which?'  'of what to happen?' (middle)
- 'do what?' (active)

### Indefinites

- *jahã*  'whatever / whichever'  'do whatever' (active)

### Quantifier

- *moŋ*  'one (ref./attr.)'  'become one, unite (ITR) (middle)'
- 'make one, unite (TR)' (active)

### Properties

- *raŋga*  'cold'  'coldness'
- 'become cold' (middle)
- 'make cold' (active)

### Proper names

- *aʔghrom*  'Aghrom'  'be called Aghrom' (middle)
- 'call [a place] Aghrom' (active)

### Status / Role

- *ayɔ*  'mother'  'become a mother' (middle)
- 'motherly'  'accept someone as a mother' (active)
Activities
siloʔ 'plough (v./n.)' 'ploughed; plowing'
Kayom 'story; matter' 'tell' 'told; narrative'

Physical objects and animate entities
cakhnaʔ 'curry; become a curry (middle); make s.th. into a curry (active)'
kaɖɔŋ 'fish (n.); become a fish (middle); make s.th. a fish (active)'
lebu 'man; person; become man (middle)'
lutur 'ear; become an ear (middle); make s.th. an ear (active)'

Locatives
tobluŋ 'top; on; go up, rise (middle); take up, raise (active)'
tuta 'down; bottom; below; go down (middle); put down, lower (active)'

Deictics
(in a play about me and you, in which both of us will be taking part):
11. "naʈak=te ɲ=na=ga ʈ=na=ɲ ro am=ga ɲ=na=m."
   play=OBL 1SG=FOC that=SG.HUM=MID.IRR=1SG and 2SG=FOC 1SG=MID.IRR=2SG
   "umboʔ. am=na ʈ=na=ɲ pal=te. dɨɾɛk=tar ʂey=ga? ɲ=te
   no 2SG=INF NEG=1SG be.able=ACT.PRS director early=FOC 1SG=OBL
   ho=kar=oaʔ. am=ga am=na=m.
   that=SG.HUM=ACT.PST 2SG=FOC 2SG=MID.IRR=2SG
   "In the play I will be him and you will be me." "No. I can’t be you. The director already
   made me him. You will be you."

Exceptions?
- maha 'big'; 'growing (ref./attr.); largeness'; 'grow / enlarge'
- borol 'alive'; 'life'; 'live'
  etc...
- ʈebul 'table'
  'table-
  'become a table' (middle); 'turn into a table' (active)

Unlikely... but possible!

Semantic predictability – virtually 100%
- Quantifier, physical objects, properties:
  - middle: 'become X'
  - active: 'turn into / make X'
- Proper names:
  - middle: 'be called X'
  - active: 'call someone / a place X'
- Status / Role
  - middle: 'become X'
  - active: 'accept someone as X'
- Locative
  - middle: 'move (ITR) towards X'
  - active: 'move (TR) towards X'
Genitive-marked "Nominals" can also serve as predicates

12. \( in=a? \) \( in \) ho=\( ka\=te \) \( in=a?\=yo\=j. \)
    1SG=GEN 1SG 3=SG.HUM=OBL 1SG=GEN=A,PST.1SG
    'my' I adopted him/her (= "mine-d" him/her).

13. \( am=a? \) \( am \) ho=\( ka\=te \) \( am=a?\=yo\=b. \)
    2SG=GEN 2SG 3=SG.HUM=OBL 2SG=GEN=A,PST.2SG
    'your' you adopted him/her (= "your-ed" him/her).

14. \( ayo=ya? \) keciya '(a/the) mother's money'
    mother=GEN money

15. keciya ayo=ya?=ki.
    money mother=GEN=M,PST
    'The money became the mother's [property].'

16. keciya=te ayo=ya?=yo\=j.
    money=OBL mother=GEN=A,PST.1SG
    'I made the money the mother's (= gave the money to the mother).'

POSS and NUM – like the genitive – can also appear in predicates

17. \( ho=je? \) \( u=je?=ki \) \( go\=d=ki \)
    that=SG,NHUM this=SG,NHUM=PL C:TEL=M,PST
    'That became these.'

18. boksel=nom \( go\=d=ki \)
    sister.in.law=2POSS C:TEL=M,PST
    'She became your sister-in-law (e.g., through marriage.).'

entire "NPs" can serve as predicates

19. \( ho \) rocho\=b=ki=\( n. \)
    that side=M,PST=1SG
    'I went to that side (= I "that-side-d").'

20. \( ho=ki \) \( o?=ya? \) \( telo\=n=\( o?=ki. \)
    3=PL house=GEN roof=A,PST=PL
    'They roofed the house (= they "the house's roof-ed").'

In other words, in Kharia we are not dealing with lexical classes like noun and verb but rather with syntactic units.

21. \( pe\=cakhna? \) \( i\=\tilde{\text{t}}han \) \( kinbhar=na=pe! \)
    rice curry cow.dung courtyard=M,IRR=2PL
    'Cook rice and curry and clean the courtyard with cow dung!' [Kerket'ța, 1990:7]

22. timsoŋ sonol goniaŋ=na
    fire firewood cook.rice=INF
    '[in order] to [gather] firewood [for the] fire, [so that we can] cook rice' [RD, 2:55]
Quotations can also be used predicatively

23. *idib tubo? "kersoŋ=e la! kersoŋe la!"* loʔ=na=kivar.
    day night marry=A.IRR VOC CNT.M.IRR=DU
    'Day and night they will keep on [saying] "Hey! Get married! Hey! Get married!"'
    [Kerkettä, 1990:24]

Enclitics as "phrasal affixes"

24. munuʔsiŋ rochob=aʔ  lebu=ki
    east side=GEN person=PL
    'the people of the east'

25. munuʔsiŋ rochob=aʔ=ki
    east side=GEN=PL
    'the easterners'

26. *u sembho ro dakay rani=kiyər=aʔ beta*
    this Sembho and Dakay queen=DU=GEN son
    'the son of this Sembho and Queen Dakay'

27. kayom=ta=m um=em kayom=ta / um kayom=ta=m
    speak=M.PRS=2SG NEG=2SG speak=A.PRS NEG speak=M.PRS=2SG
    'you speak' 'you do not speak'

28. *ɲog=e=ki ro uɖ=e=ki*
    eat=A.IRR=PL and drink=A.IRR=PL
    'they will eat and they will drink'

29. *ɲog=e (ro) uɖ=e=ki / noʔ (ro) uɖ=e=ki*
    eat=A.IRR=PL and drink=A.IRR=PL eat and drink=A.IRR=PL
    'they will eat and drink'

My Proposal:
We have two structural categories, TAM/Person-syntagmas and Case-syntagmas, which differ only with respect to their grammatical head:

TAM/Person-/Case-SYNTAGMA

| CONTENT HEAD (CONTHEAD) | FUNCTIONAL HEAD (FUNCHEAD) |

The content head is neither N nor V
If X ≡ CONTHEAD, we can then isolate the FUNCTIONAL HEADs of both TAM/Person- and Case-syntagmas as follows:
Case-Syntagma: X = CASE
TAM/Person-Syntagma: X = TAM/BASIC.VOICE = PERS/NUM/HON

Case-SYNTAGMA

CONTHEAD

FUNCHEAD_{Case-SYNTAGMA}

konselduʔ={dom=ki
woman=3POSS=PL

=te

'OBL

'their wives (e.g., as the object of the sentence)'

TAM/Person-SYNTAGMA

CONTHEAD

FUNCHEAD_{TAM/Person-SYNTAGMA}

muʔ
emerge

=ki=may

=MPST=3PL

'they emerged / came out'

TAM/Person-SYNTAGMA

CONTHEAD

FUNCHEAD_{TAM/Person-SYNTAGMA}

GENP

LEX

{oʔ=yaʔ

house=GEN

=teloŋ

roof

=oʔ=ki.

=APST=PL

'they roofed the house.'

TAM/Person-SYNTAGMA

CONTHEAD

GENP

LEX

=bides=aʔ

abroad=GEN

=tebu=ki=aʔ

person=PL=GEN

=rupraŋ

form

=ki=may.

=M.PST=3PL

'they took on the appearance of foreigners.'
### Summary:
- The only lexical classes in Kharia are "open" and "closed". The closed class subdivides into "Proforms / Deictics" and "Functional morphemes".
- Every constituent in Kharia consists of two parts – a (non-endocentric) "phrasal" content head and a functional head.
- The content head has the EXACT SAME POTENTIAL STRUCTURE for both TAM/Person- and the Case-Syntagmas.
- The functional head signals whether the constituent is a TAM/Person- or Case-Syntagma.

### Literature

### Abbreviations
- A – active
- ABL – ablative
- ADD - additive focus
- AFF – affix
- ANAPH – anaphoric proform
- A:TEL – anticipatory telic
- CAUS – causative
- CMPL – complementizer
- CNTR – contrastive focus
- CNT – continuative
- COP - "copula"
- C:TEL – culminatory telic
- DU – dual
- DIR – direct (case)
- EXCL – exclusive (1/2, non-singular)
- FOC - restrictive focus
- GEN – genitive
- HUM – human
- INF – infinitive
- INST – instrumental
- IPFV – imperfective
- IRR – irrealis
- M – middle
- NEG – negation
- OBL – oblique (case)
- PL – plural
- POSS – inalienable possession
- PRS – present
- PST – past
- SG – singular
- SEQ – sequential converb
- VOC – vocative