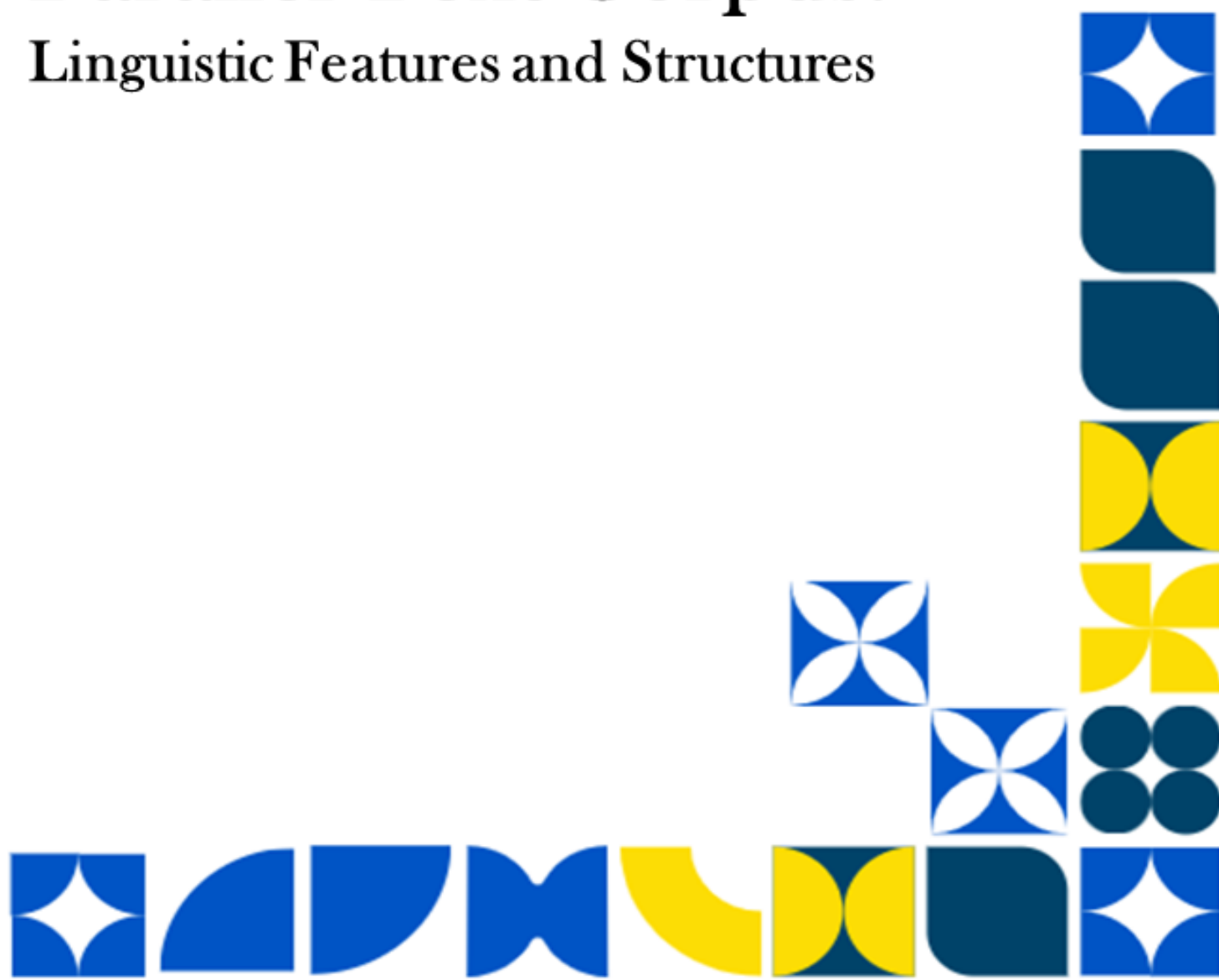




Karbi/Mikir

Parallel Text Corpus:

Linguistic Features and Structures



KARBI/MIKIR PARALLEL TEXT CORPUS: LINGUISTIC FEATURES AND STRUCTURES



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Annotated, quality language data (both-text & speech) and tools in Indian Languages to Individuals, Institutions and Industry for Research & Development - Created in-house, through outsourcing and acquisition.

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KARBI/MIKIR PARALLEL TEXT CORPUS

Umesh Chamling Rai

1.1 LDC-IL PARALLEL TEXT CORPUS

LDC-IL has developed parallel corpus in Indian mother tongues. India has 270 mother tongues as per 2011 census. Most of these mother tongues have no written text readily available and they are mostly oral languages. Most of them do not have any script of their own or use one or more than one dominant script used in that region. Following the requirements of the NEP-2020, LDC-IL initiated to collect sentences from different mother tongues that could give an idea about the basic structure of these 270 mother tongues.

A parallel corpus is a collection of texts in two or more languages that are carefully aligned sentence wise in pairs and placed either side by side or matched with a common sentence/phrase identification number. It is widely used in linguistics, translation studies, and Natural Language Processing. Researchers use it to compare vocabulary, grammar, and meaning across languages, while computational systems rely on it to train statistical and neural machine translation models. Parallel corpora also support language learning by providing real translation examples and enable cross-language information retrieval, allowing users to access information in multiple languages efficiently.

LDC-IL developed a framework to accommodate all the linguistic features of mother tongues. The sentences were collected from Indian scheduled languages especially from descriptive grammar books. The sentences cover the general grammatical and structural types like adjectival phrases, adverbial phrases, compounding, Interrogative sentences, Imperative sentences, different speech types, statements, structural question, coordination, subordination and so on. Moreover, it includes linguistic features such as use of adposition, anaphora, derivational morphology, inflectional morphology and language specific features like emphasis, equative, possession, reciprocation, reflexive expression and so on. For more details on the source collection for this parallel corpus, please refer to the [LDC-IL Corpus Insights \(2025\)](#).

This parallel corpus can be used in AI development by enabling the creation of Indic multilingual foundation models, develop cross-lingual knowledge graphs and create low-resource language adapters. By providing high-quality linguistic data, it strengthens natural language understanding and generation. As India rapidly advances in the digital age, it is essential to preserve and promote undocumented mother tongues by bringing them onto digital platforms, ensuring they are sustained and able to thrive for future generations.

Low-resource languages have a significant impact on both AI development and digital world. When AI systems are trained mostly on high-resource languages, they become biased toward those linguistic and cultural contexts. Including low-resource languages helps build stronger multilingual foundational models. Exposure to diverse grammar structures, vocabulary, and linguistic patterns improves cross-lingual learning and generalization. Language carries cultural knowledge. Incorporating low-resource languages enriches AI systems with diverse worldviews, idioms, and traditional knowledge systems. If a language is not supported digitally, its speakers

may be excluded from online education, e-governance, healthcare services, and digital commerce. When digital tools support local languages, more people can participate in the economy. Local languages often contain indigenous knowledge about agriculture, medicine, environment, and culture and therefore bringing them into digital ecosystem safeguards the linguistic treasures that language might contain.

Supporting low-resource languages makes AI more inclusive, intelligent, and representative of linguistic diversity. In India, where hundreds of mother tongues co-exist, investing in low-resource language technologies is essential for equitable digital growth.

1.2 CHALLENGES IN CREATING A PARALLEL CORPUS

Creating a Parallel Corpus for mother tongues in India involves several linguistic, technical, and socio-cultural challenges. The major difficulty is the lack of standardized orthography in many regional and tribal mother tongues. Most of the mother tongues use the prominent script used in their region. Some mother tongues may use multiple scripts or even a newly created writing system, which complicates the corpus development. Another challenge is the scarcity of written and digitized resources. Many mother tongues are used for daily communication only.

Dialectal variation is another serious issue, as a single mother tongue may have numerous regional varieties with differences in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. This makes it difficult to ensure consistency and representativeness in the corpus. Accurate translation is a concerned matter. Proficient bilingual speakers may be limited for low-resource languages. Maintaining semantic equivalence across mother tongues with different cultural contexts can be challenging. Sometimes equivalent words are not available due to the socio-cultural differences. These factors affect large-scale parallel corpus development in Indian mother tongues. The creation of reliable and balanced parallel corpora for Indian mother tongues is a complex and resource-intensive task.

1.3 KARBI/MIKIR: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The Karbi/Mikir is the mother tongue of the Karbi people. It is one of the major ethnic groups of North-East India. Previously it was also known by the name of the ‘Mikir’. Karbi/Mikir speakers predominantly inhabited in the districts of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong of Assam. According to the UNESCO’s Atlas of World’s Languages in endanger, Karbi is one of the languages listed in the vulnerable category. Currently, Karbi is under the process of standardization.

Karbi/Mikir has no script of its own. In 1978, the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) by a resolution adopted Roman Script for writing Karbi language. The Karbi Lammet Amei (KLA), the apex literary body of the Karbi, too adopted Roman Script in its Annual General Conference held in 1985 for writing Karbi. The Government of Assam by a Notification No.PLB/560215/110, dated 19th April, 2025 notified the use of Karbi language in official correspondences in addition to English in the districts of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong. Earlier, the Board of Secondary Education, Assam (SEBA) introduced Karbi as MIL from 2021.

1.4 KARBI/MIKIR PARALLEL CORPUS

Karbi/Mikir belongs to the Tibeto-Burman group of languages of the Sino-Tibetan family. The language is spoken in Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong, Dima Hasao, Hojai, Nagaon, Biswanath, Lakhimpur, Golaghat, Cachar, Kamrup (Metro and Urban), Marigaon districts of Assam; Papumpare district of Arunachal Pradesh; Ri-Bhoi and Jaintia districts of Meghalaya; some pockets in Nagaland. Inclusive of all dialectal variants, Karbi/Mikir has approximately 8,00,000 (eight lakh) speakers.

According to Dr. Phukan Chandra Phangcho (Lamde, 1995, pp.) Karbi/Mikir language has five dialectal variants: Kamrupi or Dumrali, Bhoi, Chinthong, Rongkhang and Kamrup-Rongkhang. But the marked variations are Kamrupi and Rongkhang. For example, ‘ingkoi’ (twenty) in Rongkhang and ‘ingkol’ in Kamrupi. Rongkhang is widely spoken and understood, hence it has been taken as standard for standardization of Karbi language.

Grammatically, Karbi/Mikir follows a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order. It is an agglutinative language, meaning that grammatical functions are expressed through suffixes attached to root words. Nouns do not typically show gender distinctions, but case markers are used to indicate grammatical roles. Verbs are marked for tense, aspect, and mood through suffixation rather than auxiliary verbs. The language also uses particles to indicate emphasis and relational meanings. Tone and phonemic contrasts play an important role in distinguishing meaning, with many words spelt similarly but with different pronunciation according to the context.

Karbi is a tonal language; meaning changes if tone changes. For example, thí (to snatch), thī (to be short) and thi (to die). Word order of Karbi is SOV. Karbi verb has no past tense form; adverb of time determines its tense. The above mentioned features contribute to Karbi/Mikir’s uniqueness among the languages of India and highlight its importance in the study of linguistics.

Karbi/Mikir is a valuable resource for developing parallel text corpora with other Indian mother tongues. This parallel text corpus can serve as a valuable research resource for studying syntactic divergence, morphological richness, code-mixing phenomena, and script variation, which are particularly relevant in multilingual contexts such as India.

1.5 SUMMARY OF KARBI/MIKIR PARALLEL CORPUS

The Karbi/Mikir parallel text corpus connected with English and 146 mother tongues of India. Those mother tongues are Anal, Angami, Are, Assamese, Awadhi, Bagheli/Baghel Khandi, Bagri Rajasthani, Bagri, Balti, Bengali, Bhadrawahi, Bharmauri/Gaddi, Bhojpuri, Bilaspuri Kahluri, Bodo, Brajbhasha, Bundeli/Bundel khandi, Chakru/Chokri, Chambeali/Chamrali, Chang, Chhattisgarhi, Chirr, Chungli, Churahi, Coorgi/Kodagu, Deori, Dhundhari, Dimasa, Dogri, Gangte, Garhwali, Garo, Gojri/Gujjari/Gujar, Gujarati, Gujari, Halabi, Handuri, Hara/Harauti, Haryanvi, Hindi Multani, Hindi, Irula/Irular Mozhi, Kabui, Kachchhi, Kangri, Kannada, Kashmiri, Khandeshi, Khari Boli, Khasi, Khezha, Khiemnungan, Khortha/Khotta, Kisan, Kodava, Kokbarak, Kolami, Koli, Kom, Konda, Konkani, Konyak, Koya, Kudubi/Kudumbi, Kuki, Kurmali Thar, Ladakhi, Lepcha, Liangmei, Limbu, Lotha, Lyngngam,

Magadhi/Magahi, Maithili, Malayalam, Malvi, Manipuri, Mao, Mara, Maram, Marathi, Maring, Mech/Mechhia, Mewari, Mewati, Miri/Mising, Mishmi, Mizo, Mongsen, Monpa, Mundari, Muwasi, Nawait, Nimadi, Nyishi, Nocte, Odia, Pahari, Paite, Palmuha, Pania, Pawari/Powari, Phom, Pnar/Synteng, Pochury, Poula, Punjabi, Purkhi, Rai, Rajasthani, Reang, Rengma, Rongmei, Sadan/Sadri, Sambalpuri, Sangtam, Sanskrit, Santali, Saurashtra/Saurashtri, Sema, Shina, Sindhi, Sirmauri, Sugali, Surjapuri, Talgalo, Tamil, Tangkhul, Telugu, Thado, Tibetan, Tikhir, Tripuri, Tulu, Urdu, Vaiphei, Wagdi, Wancho, Yerava, Yerukala/Yerukula, Yimchungre, Zeliang, Zemi, Zou.

There are 5,332 sentences/phrases in Karbi/Mikir which are systematically structured based on 159 grammatical categories. Karbi/Mikir has 30400 word count and 183861 character count. The corpus is aligned with 146 mother tongues and English, comprising 4,404,845 words (over 4.4 million tokens) and 23,374,289 characters (approximately 23.3 million).

1.6 REFERENCE

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