

Khasi Parallel Text Corpus: Linguistic Features and Structures



KHASI 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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Table of Contents

Khasi Parallel Text Corpus	1
1.1 LDC-IL Parallel Text Corpus.....	1
1.2 Challenges in Creating A Parallel Corpus.....	1
1.3 Khasi: A Brief Introduction.....	2
1.4 Khasi parallel Corpus	2
1.5 Summary of Khasi parallel Corpus	3
1.6 Reference.....	4

KHASI PARALLEL TEXT CORPUS

Yumnam Premila Chanu

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 newly created writing systems, 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 KHASI: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Khasi (ka Ktien Khasi) is an indigenous Austroasiatic language spoken primarily by the Khasi people in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills of Meghalaya, India. As a member of the Khasic group, it holds a unique linguistic position in the region, sharing ancestral roots with Southeast Asian languages such as Vietnamese and Khmer. This ancient connection distinguishes it from the surrounding Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman languages. According to the 2011 census, the language boasts 1037964 speakers and has enjoyed the status of an associate official language in Meghalaya since 2005. Today, Khasi is a cornerstone of the state's administrative, educational, and media landscapes. While it was historically recorded using the Bengali script, it has since transitioned to a predominantly Latin-based writing system. This shift has facilitated a burgeoning literary scene that spans from traditional religious texts to contemporary novels and poetry. Furthermore, the language is characterized by a diverse range of dialects, each serving as a testament to the vibrant cultural heritage and regional identity of the Khasi people.

Khasi literature refers to the rich body of oral and written works created by the Khasi people. Traditionally, Khasi literature was passed down orally through folktales, myths, legends, songs,

and proverbs, reflecting the community's deep connection with nature, spirituality, and social values. With the arrival of Christian missionaries in the 19th century, the Khasi language began to be written using the Roman script, which led to the growth of modern literary forms such as poetry, short stories, novels, and essays. Early contributors played a key role in preserving folklore while also introducing new themes like education, identity, and cultural change. Today, Khasi literature continues to evolve, blending traditional narratives with contemporary issues, and serves as an important means of preserving the heritage, language, and worldview of the Khasi people.

1.4 KHASI PARALLEL CORPUS

Khasi is an Austroasiatic language of the Mon-Khmer branch, distinguished by its Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) word order- a rarity among the predominantly SOV languages of India. It features a sophisticated system of gender-based noun classifiers and a morphological structure that balances analytic and agglutinative properties. While the language is predominantly prefixing and infixing, it also employs suffixes, primarily within derivational morphology and to denote negation or tense. Written in a modified 23-letter Latin script, Khasi includes unique characters such as *ĩ*, *ñ*, and *ng* to precisely map its rich vowel system and phonemic distinctions. Notably, unlike many of its Tibeto-Burman neighbors, Khasi is non-tonal, relying instead on a complex phonetic structure to convey meaning.

Khasi represents a critical resource for developing parallel text corpora alongside other Indian regional languages and mother tongues. This corpus serves as a vital research asset for investigating syntactic divergence, morphological richness, and code-mixing phenomena. Furthermore, studying its script variation and its adaptation to the multilingual Indian context offers profound insights into the evolution of Austroasiatic languages in South Asia. Such resources are indispensable research resource.

1.5 SUMMARY OF KHASI PARALLEL CORPUS

The Khasi parallel text corpus connected with English and 146 mother tongues of India. Those mother tongues are Anal, Angami, Apatani, 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, Chirri, Chungli, Churahi, Coorgi/Kodagu, Deori, Dhundhari, Dimasa, Dogri, Gangte, Garhwali, Garo, Gojri/Gujjari/Gujar, Gujarati, Gujar, Halabi, Handuri, Hara/Harauti, Haryanvi, Hindi Multani, Hindi, Irula/Irular Mozhi, Kabui, Kachchhi, Kangri, Kannada, Karbi/Mikir, Kashmiri, Khandeshi, Khari Boli, Khezha, Khiemnungan, Khortha/Khotta, Kisan, Kodava, Kokbarak, Kolami, Koli, Kom, Konda, Konkani, Konyak, Koya, Kudubi/Kudumbi, Kuki, Kurmal 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, Nepali, Nimadi, Nissi, 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 Khasi which are systematically structured based on 159 grammatical categories. Khasi has 41762 word count and 184587 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

[1] Rejitha K. S. and Narayan Kumar Choudhary. (ed.). (2025). LDC-IL Corpus Insights. CIIL, Mysore. 978-93- 48633-33-0.