The Status of Lyngngam

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Abstract

The Lyngngam speech form (spoken in the northwest of the Khasi Hills of Meghalaya) is considered a dialect of Khasi. However, recently Hamlet Bareh, a Khasi speaker, observed that it may not be appropriate to treat it as a dialect of Khasi. In this light the present study has been undertaken to ascertain the position of Lyngngam in relation to Khasi (standard).

First, around forty percent of Lyngngam’s vocabulary seems to be unrelated to Khasi. There are some sound correspondences, but there are many problem areas as well. The process of contraction is not extensive. There is no concordial agreement such as is found in Khasi; also there is no adjective marker and no general number and gender elements. Case markers except for ha, are different from Khasi. Infixation seems to be more commonly employed. Suffixes are employed to some extent. Except for the first person sg., and 2nd person (personal) pronouns, the pronouns are different from Khasi. Lack of pronominal markers has eliminated interesting aspects of sex symbolism. However, this has resulted in compound constructions. Present and past tense markers are placed after the verb; future tense marker is placed before the verb. Aspect markers precede the verb like in Khasi. Interestingly, verbs (some at least) have full and contracted forms; the full form is employed in present and future tense, while the contracted form is employed elsewhere.

The Lyngngam speech form is spoken in the northwestern parts of the Khasi hills in Meghalaya state of India. Since Grierson’s work (1904), Lyngngam has been considered as one of the dialects of Khasi. Only recently, that is in the late eighties, one scholar named Hamlet Bareh, a Khasi speaker, doubted the appropriateness of this classification. In his work Bareh has provided a few lexical items to make his point. After that, so far no work has discussed this issue. In the direction of filling this gap some data was collected by the present author in 1988 on this speech variety. Though this data is not sufficient for a detailed comparative study, it is still hoped that the various aspects of this speech variety presented below will show many interesting features about Lyngngam and (standard) Khasi.

MON-KHMER STUDIES 26:37-50
1. Phonology

Tentative phonology of Lyngngam:

Vowels: i, (ii), e, ø, i, o, a, (ai), u.

Consonants: p, ph, b, t, th, d, c, ch, j, k, kh, g, ?, m, n, n, n, s, h, r, l, w, and y.

(i). Vowel length is phonemic in Khasi, but it appears that it is not so here. Instead only two vowels i and a seem to have long counterparts. (ii). Barred i [i] is more frequent in this variety, and has wider distribution than in Khasi. (iii). The consonantal system is more symmetrical here than in Khasi, in the presence of voiceless and voiced palatal series. (iv). The aspirated stop series seems to be found only voiceless; a voiced series seems to be absent. (Even in Khasi voiced aspirates have very limited distribution). (v). Among the fricatives Khasi has both s and ç phonemes, whereas this variety has only s. (More detailed study is needed in this area).

2. Vocabulary

Nearly 40 percent of Lyngngam’s vocabulary is unrelated to that of Khasi. Elsewhere, though similarities may be found in some words, sound correspondences are not very regular. Some such forms are listed below:

Nouns:

Related forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lyngngam</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>(Standard) Khasi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>snieʔ</td>
<td>'a bark (of a tree)'</td>
<td>ka snep (-ie- &lt; e, ? &lt; -p)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>òsim</td>
<td>'bird'</td>
<td>ka sim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>snam</td>
<td>'blood'</td>
<td>ka snam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khmat</td>
<td>'eye'</td>
<td>ka khmat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pillŋ</td>
<td>'egg'</td>
<td>ka pillŋ (i &lt; e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çʔenŋ</td>
<td>'bone'</td>
<td>ka çʔenŋ (c &lt; ç)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torsim</td>
<td>'claw'</td>
<td>ka tirsim (o &lt; i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lʔoʔ</td>
<td>'cloud'</td>
<td>u lʔoʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ksu</td>
<td>'dog'</td>
<td>u kseu (u &lt; eu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lʔokur</td>
<td>'ear'</td>
<td>ka çkor (De-clusterization by insertion of vowel a; l &lt; ç, u &lt; o)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some problematic cases:

kmyŋ 'earth' ka khindeu (?)

bimŋ 'name' ka kirteŋ (?)

domba 'mountain' u lum
Unrelated forms:

.aspect 'ashes' u dpei
.lawba 'belly' ka kpo?
.enkrin 'breast' ka çadem
.nbot 'heart' u kloñsnam
.yenmorovn 'knee' ka kho?siëu
.khillai 'liver' u do?nuñd
.zmim 'meat' ka do?
.ægarp 'mouth' ka ktiën
.enbi 'neck' u rindañ
.senhu 'night' ka miet
.sotot 'root' ka tinrai
.khoitlyon 'seed' u simbai
.inthak 'smoke' ka tdem
.yauuem 'sun' ka sni
.zmoin 'tooth' u bniat
.ratokmau 'woman' ka khinthei
.bmya 'cheek' ka ñab
.da-pam 'axe' u sdie
.kawa 'crow' u tiañb

In a list of 58 nouns in the data (not all are listed above), 38 seem to be related; 18 unrelated, and two doubtful cases. The various types of changes involved will be discussed later.

Verbs:

Related forms:

deit 'drink' di?
.thinën 'burn' thën
.pinnap/nap 'die' yap
.pyon 'stand' ien
.binnën/ban 'eat' bëm
.innati 'give' ai
.innoñ/on 'say' on
.sngi/sëngu 'hear' sënap
.p/phinep 'kill' pinuap
.thilloit 'lie' thok
.tonk? 'limp' dko?

Unrelated forms:

.kindei 'fly' her
.he?ñon 'know' tip
.di/dinni 'walk' yaid
.kindur 'want' kua?
.khom/khënnom 'bind' te?
sirpai 'rub' ta?
hat ?incox 'clean' khuid
imphak 'blossom' phu?
imbōi 'blow' put, etc.

Problematic cases:

ŋinnai 'swim' ŋogi
thom/thinnom 'take' čim

Out of 58 verbs, 21 are unrelated, 35 related, and two problematic.

Adjectives:

Related forms:

inŋon 'black' ba-yon
ryɔŋkhoŋ 'dry' ba-rkhyarŋ
in-daŋp 'full' ba-dep
əŋju 'sour' ba-jeu
əlliŋ 'white' ba-lieŋ?
sintim 'yellow' ba-stem
obon 'many' či-bun
korəŋ 'male' činranŋ, etc.

Unrelated forms:

prɔksop 'all' ba-roŋ
mərhyaŋ 'good' ba-bha
əmmir 'fat' ba-sŋaid
binsir 'cold' ba-khryat
əllup 'hot' ba-khliut
kaŋ 'bad' ba-sniŋu
kisan 'hard' ba-eŋ
kirirŋ 'breadth' ba-yaŋ

Problematic cases:

jimbaŋit 'wet' ba-jhieŋ?
cɔŋne 'permanent' ba-neŋ?
khinŋa? 'heavy' ba-khyaŋ?

Out of 27 adjectives, 11 are unrelated, three are problematic and the rest are related.

Interrogatives: both are different.

ormat 'what' -ei
bəyət 'who' -no
Numerals:

On the whole, lower numerals agree. The following is a problematic case:

илои 'first'  нёнкои

Some of the regular changes between these are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Khasi</th>
<th>Lyngngam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ç- &gt; c- :</td>
<td>çien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çon</td>
<td>'sit'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çad</td>
<td>'dance'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çipheu</td>
<td>'10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çispa?</td>
<td>'100'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ç?yap</td>
<td>'sand'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çkor</td>
<td>'ear'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ç- &gt; s- :</td>
<td>çniu?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çnya?</td>
<td>'chisel'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y- &gt; n :</td>
<td>yon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yap</td>
<td>'die'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-u- &gt; -o- :</td>
<td>khun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lum</td>
<td>'hill'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>su?ot</td>
<td>'dysentery'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A diphthong becomes a simple vowel:

-ai > -i : | bnaï | 'month' | bni |
| kwari | 'betelnut' | kwi |
| -eu/eu > -u : | ksou | 'dog' | ksu |
| jeu | 'sour' | ju |
| -ie- > -o- : | miet | 'night' | mot |
| -ie- > -i- : | sdie? | 'fry' | sindi? |
| -ie-> -u- : | hinpieu | 'seven' | hinpuræ |
| -ei > -æ : | hinrei | 'six' | hriæ |

( -æo is sort of a suffix, used with other lower numerals when used in isolation).

Some of the irregular changes:

-m > -ŋ : | baam | 'eat' | ban |
| l- > d- : | lum | 'hill' | dom |
| k- > g- : | kulai | 'horse' | gulai, etc. |
Some of the important morphological features in which Lyngngam differs from Khasi are the following:

3. General word order

The word order is similar to that of Khasi at the sentential level: S-V-O.

(L1) kinsai ju ṭəŋ-la? oyəŋ
Kynsai ‘3msg’ build-pt obj house ‘Kynsai built a house’

(L2) bra ju phnyap-la? sa- bəseŋ
man ‘3msg’ kill-pt obj snake ‘(the) man killed a snake’

(L3) nə dənni di?
I go fut ‘I will go’

(L4) gju binnəŋ nən
she eat con.asp ‘she is eating’

Though the above order is the same as that of Khasi at the S-V-O level, there is some difference in the verbal complex. In Lyngngam the tense marker occurs after the verb (laʔ/diʔ, nən), instead of preceding it as in Khasi.

(K1) u kinsai u la çna ya ka yeŋ
prn. kynsai prn pt build obj house ‘Kynsai built a house’

(K2) u brieu u la pinyap ya u bsep
prn man prn pt kill obj snake ‘(the) man killed a snake’

(K3) nən əlit
I-fut go ‘I will go’

(K4) ka danə əlit
she con-asp go ‘she is going’

By comparing the above pairs, we can see some of the other differences between them.

4. Pronoun marking

The pronominal and agreement markers (u/ka/ki) which are found in Khasi (K1, 2) are not found in Lyngngam.

When a noun is used as subject in both Khasi and Lyngngam, then an appropriate third person pronoun is used immediately after the noun. If the noun is plural, then the third person plural pronoun is used. Examples K1, 2 and L1, 2 and L5, 6 illustrate this.
(L5) rœukmau du di la? lei? lei? lala
woman 3rdfem go pt quickly
‘the woman went quickly’

(L6) bra kyu di la? lingba la?tap
man 3rdpl go pt through forest
‘the people went through the forest’

Example L5 contains a feminine noun, as the pronoun is feminine. However, instead of full form gdu, the contracted form -du, (dropping the initial consonant) is used here. L6 contains a plural noun, as the pronoun is plural. (Here the initial consonant of the pronoun is not dropped; this may be due to the fact that the preceding noun ends in a vowel (this needs checking).

In Khasi this feature occurs with all nouns, even when a noun occurs as an object (see K1, K2) except when they occur as part of a compound. However, in Lyngngam it is restricted to human nouns only (note L7), and that only when they occur as subject of a sentence. So this feature is highly restricted in Lyngngam.

(L7) ksu wo?na: la? sœ-myœu
dog chase pt obj-cat ‘the dog chased the cat’

5. Verb constructions

Both Khasi and Lyngngam have the same three tense distinctions, present, past and future. However, their placement in the verbal complex differs.

‘present tense’ ø in both
‘past tense’ la in Khasi, placed before the verb
la? in Lyngngam, placed after the verb
‘future tense’ in in Khasi, placed before the verb
dî in Lyngngam, placed after the verb
‘present cont.’ dan in Khasi, placed before the verb
nœn in Lyngngam, placed after the verb

Since in Lyngngam the future marker occurs after the verb, the phonetic merging of the pronominal marker (u/ka/ki) and the future marker (see K3) that is found in Khasi is not found here. The same holds good in the case of the negative marker as well.

In Khasi verbs are invariable, while in Lyngngam some verbs have two forms, a full form and a short form. The full form has an infix (or prefix) Vn(n) in it. The short form is used in the past tense only, while the full form is used elsewhere.

(L8) no donni ‘I go’,
I go
(L9) นə  di-la?  'I went',
      I    go-past

(L10) tu  đənni-di?  'he will go',
      he   go-fut

(L11) tu  di-la?  'he went',
      he   go-past

(L12) mi  bönnəŋ-di?  'you (sg.-masc.) will eat'
      you  eat-fut

(L13) mi  bəŋ-la?  'you (sg.) ate'
      you  eat-past

Consonant-initial verbs are infixed: kap/kinnap ‘bite’, thang/thinnap ‘burn’,
pap/pinnap ‘die’, bang/binnap ‘eat’. Vowel-initial verbs are prefixed: ai/innai
‘give’, ong/innəŋ ‘say’, etc. Though this type of variation is found mostly in verbs,
some similar forms are found in other form classes as well, but their function is not
clear (this needs further investigation).

Similarly, the change of order within a verbal complex is very interesting.
However, in some data, the change is not maintained. (Is it due to the influence of
Khasi, which most of the educated Lyngngams know?).

(L14) ju  sə?  đənni  'he shall go', but:
      he  mood  go

(L15) ju  wən-ŋəŋ  'he usually goes'
      he  go  hab.

In L14, the mood marker sə? occurs preceding the verb, as in Khasi; but in
L15 ŋəŋ ‘habitual’ marker occurs after the verb, the usual Lyngngam construction.
Similarly in L16.

(L16) ju  bəŋ  kinnoit  'he can eat' (if he wishes to)
      he  eat   may

6. Word-formation

Here only one feature will be mentioned. Lyngngam uses infixation more
commonly than the Khasi. Verbs are derived from nouns by infixing -Vn(n)- to the
nouns in this variety, whereas it is the reverse in Khasi. However, this affixation
type is not currently productive.

(L17) L.:  snət  'a comb' :  sinnət  'to comb'
K.:  səd  'to comb' :  snəd  'a comb'
L.:  cənt  'a dance' :  cinnət  'to dance'
K.:  çəd  'to dance' :  çnəd  'a dance';
L.:  čnon  ‘a village’  :  cinnon  ‘to dwell’
K.:  čon  ‘to dwell, live’  :  čnon  ‘village, dwelling’

In the last Lyngngam example, though the unaffixed noun form čnon looks like the affixed Khasi form čon, it seems not to function like an affixed form.

Some other very limited nominalizations:

(L18)  L.:  pøt/pinnøt  ‘to sweep, clean’  :  cipnøt  ‘a broom’
K.:  saarr  ‘to sweep, clean’  :  sinsaarr  ‘a broom’;
L.:  ønjøŋ  ‘to urinate’  :  punjøŋ  ‘a urinary bladder’
K.:  jøŋ  ‘to urinate’  :  panjøŋ  ‘a urinary bladder’

The productive Lyngngam verbalizing system prefixes an infinitive marker hat-

(L19)  khîlyøp  ‘a fold’  :  hat-khîlyøp  ‘to fold’,
        incor  ‘clean’  :  hat-incor  ‘to clean’, etc.

Whether all verbs have this kind of prefixation needs to be ascertained.

Compounding and contraction seem to be similar in both Khasi and Lyngngam, though contraction seems to be restricted in Lyngngam.

7. Negation

In all the tenses only the short form of the verb is used in negative constructions.

(L20)  jutu ra di? ønji
he pt. go neg.  ‘he is not going’
gju di? ønji
she go neg.  ‘she did not go’
khondøin tu bønji
boy 3ms eat-neg.  ‘the boy does not eat’

Compare that with the negative formation in Khasi.

(K20)  um danø leit
he-neg. cont.asp go  ‘he is not going’
ka khlem leit
she neg go  ‘she did not go’ (khlem is a neg. particle used only in past tense)

u khinnaʔ um barm
prn. boy he-neg. eat  ‘the boy does not eat’
Though Khasi has *im, khlem, wat* as negative markers, the first one is used more commonly, except in past tense where the second form also can be used. Usually the first one occurs immediately after the subject, and becomes part of it formally. In contrast to this situation, in Lyngngam the negative marker is *anjì*, and occurs finally.

8. Interrogatives

The Lyngngam interrogative markers are quite different from those of Khasi. The Lyngngam prefix *a*- is used with nouns (in the illustrations here only pronouns). And a particle *mət/yət* or *minat* is placed at the end of the sentence as well: *yət* asks who, *mət* asks what or why, *minat* asks when (these need further study). So interrogation is marked in two places simultaneously in Lyngngam, but only in one place in Khasi.

(L21)  askudu  rəumət  di?
int-they  do-int.  pt  ‘what did they do?’

ajjutu  lərsəmət
int-he  come-int.

‘why did he come?’

attu  lər  sa?  minat
int-he  come  fut  int.

‘when will he come?’

amju  lər  minat
int-she  come  int.

‘when did she come?’

ami/aphe  oŋ  syət
int-you (m/f)  call  obj-int.

‘whom did you call?’ (s- obj. marker)

agnu  əkot  əmbi  yət
int-it  book  pos.  int.

‘whose book is it?’

ana  gu  bəŋ  smət
int-I  eat  int.

‘why should I eat?’

Compare these with the Khasi forms:

(K21)  lano  un  wan
when?-fut  he-fut  come  ‘when will he come?’

minno  ka (la)  wan
when?-pt  she (pt)  come  ‘when did she come?’

yano  phi  la  khot
obj-int.  you  pt  call  ‘whom did you call?’

ka  dei  ka  kot  jonbo
prn  be  prn  book  pos-int.  ‘whose book is it?’
balei ṇan bam
why? I-fut eat 'why should I eat?'

In Khasi the interrogative formation is quite complex because of the presence of two bound forms -no and -ei. They take various forms for their occurrence. It has other interrogative forms as well. They occur mainly at the beginning of a sentence; but can occur elsewhere as well in some cases.

Another interesting difference between them is in the yes/no question constructions. Lyngngam uses the prefix a-, plus a particle e? finally, but in Khasi interrogation is expressed only by intonation.

Khasi: ṇa la bam I pt eat 'did I eat?'

9. Pronouns and possessives

The Lyngngam personal pronominal system is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person:</td>
<td>ṇo</td>
<td>yau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2nd person: | mi (masc.) | maːmi (masc. pl.) [phyau prok 'pl']
|          | phe (fem.) | maphe (fem. pl.) |
| 3rd person:
  | masculine: | tu, ju, jutu | kyu, kudu |
  | feminine:  | gdu, gju    |

The Khasi personal pronouns are the following: ṇa, ṇi: pha/me, phi: u, ka, ki.

The Lyngngam and Khasi demonstrative pronouns are not very different. L. (g)ni and (g)ta vs. K. (u/ka/ki)-ne and (u/ka/ki)-ta, etc.

The Lyngngam possessive marker is əm-; while in Khasi it is jōŋ:

(23) L. khon əm-na? 'my son' vs. K. u khun jōŋ-na
L. rə?trei əmju 'his servant' vs. K. Sakri jōŋ-u

However, when two nouns are used, no possessive marker is used:

(24) L. donŋksu 'dog's tail' vs. K. u tdonŋksəu
L. sladynə 'tree leaf' vs. K. ka sladiŋə, etc.
10. Number

Surprisingly the Lyngngam data does not show clear number distinctions; it
appears that there are no formal markers of plurality. But in Khasi *u*/*ka* and *ki* are
singular and plural markers, respectively. It appears that quantifiers are used in
Lyngngam with the nouns to make number distinctions. Lyngngam uses classifiers
like the ones found in Khasi. In Khasi the number markers precede the nouns;
while in Lyngngam the quantifiers also occur after the nouns. (In Khasi the
adjectives also occur after the nouns).

(25) L. khon son ‘sons/many sons’ vs. K. ki pl. kon son ‘a son’
     jimma many

(26) L. khon son ‘two son(s)’ vs. K. aŋgut two pl. kulay horse
     aŋgut son two

(27) L. gulai horse ‘a horse’ vs. K. u kulay horse
     tə?wau one sg.

(28) L. gulai horse ‘two horse(s)’ vs. K. aŋgut two pl. kulay horse
     taʔwar two

(29) L. gulai horse ‘horse(s)/many horse(s)’ vs. K. kulay / pl. kulay horse
     əbon many

(30) L. san five ‘five thing(s)’ K. san five
     tilli clas.

11. Gender

No general gender marker is employed in Lyngngam, unlike in Khasi,
where *u* is masculine, and *ka* is feminine. Only adjectives like *konthau/raukmau*
‘female/woman’, *koraj* ‘male’ are employed for this purpose. The first one seems
to be restricted to non-human nouns.

Observe the following forms:

(L31) **Feminine**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lyngngam</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>erenba (&lt; er-raŋba)</td>
<td>‘fowl’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baibu raŋkmau</td>
<td>‘teacher’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khillot</td>
<td>‘young person’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baŋ raŋkmau</td>
<td>‘person’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>konthau (ba)</td>
<td>‘spouse’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa-konthau</td>
<td>‘cow’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Masculine**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lyngngam</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>erkonthau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baibu khonkoraj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koraj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>braŋ khonkoraj</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koraj (ba)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa-koranj</td>
<td>‘bullock’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(L32) \[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{Generic} & \text{Masculine} & \text{Feminine} \\
\hline
\text{‘cow’} & \text{masc} & \text{səkəran} & \text{səkonthau} \\
\text{‘dog’} & \text{ksu} & \text{sukgorən} & \text{sukonthau} \\
\text{‘tiger’} & \text{khla} & \text{lakorən} & \text{lakonthau} \\
\text{‘donkey’} & \text{kada} & \text{kədakorən} & \text{kədakonthau}, \text{etc.} \\
\end{array}
\]

The interesting sex-symbolism found in Khasi is not found in Lyngngam. For instance:

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{masculine} & \text{feminine} \\
\hline
\text{Khasi:} & \text{u bilor ‘bottle’ (glass)} : & \text{ka yit ‘glass’ (sheet)} \\
& \text{u prek ‘iron nail’} : & \text{ka raçi ‘sickle’} \\
& \text{u liŋka ‘crowbar’} : & \text{ka kurat ‘saw’} \\
& \text{u nar rot ‘iron rod’} : & \text{ka nar ‘iron sheet’, etc.} \\
\end{array}
\]

12. Case distinctions

Nominative case is unmarked in both Khasi and Lyngngam. In accusative case while the Lyngngam has two forms, sa and o, Khasi has ya only. sa is used with animate nouns while o is restricted to inanimate nouns.

(33) (a) L. \[\text{brə phnyap-la? sa bəsen ‘(the) man killed a snake’} \]
\[\text{(K. u briew u la pinyap yə u bəyen)}\]

(b) L. \[\text{kinsai əŋ-la? o yen ‘Kynsai built a house’, etc.} \]
\[\text{(K. u kinsai u la dep yə ka iyen)}\]

The instrumental case marker in Lyngngam is ba?, while in Khasi it is ba d.

(L34) \[\text{ba? bau ‘with a stick’} \]

The dative and locative case markers are the same in Lyngngam and Khasi.

The ablative case marker in Lyngngam is - əm, while in Khasi it is na.

(35) L. \[\text{əm cinoŋ ‘from the village’ (K. na ka çnoŋ)}\]

The associative case marker is nəm in Lyngngam, while ba d in Khasi.

(36) L. \[\text{siŋ judi-la? nəm g(o)ju ‘Singh went with her’} \]
\[\text{(K. u çiŋ u la leit ba d ka)}\]

Even some adverbial prepositions show some differences.

(37) ‘near’ \[\text{L. jëŋam/jəŋam (K. hajan),} \]
‘above’ \[\text{L. tnom (K. halor),} \]
‘outside’ \[\text{L. təbarr (K. habarr), etc.} \]
Conclusion:

The foregoing statements show clearly that the Lyngngam speech form is quite distinct from that of (Standard) Khasi. However, the question of whether this form should be considered as a dialect of Khasi or as a related language is a complicated one. Here, instead of arguing in either way, an attempt has been made to compare them and to highlight the similarities and differences between them. Further interpretation will be for the future.

REFERENCES


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