

## Comprehensive Analysis of Lexical Case Systems in Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia: A Syntactic Perspective

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### Abstract

This study undertakes a comprehensive comparative analysis of the lexical case systems within the context of Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia, spoken in the northeastern region of India. While these varieties share syntactic structures, they diverge significantly in terms of phonological and morphological features from the standard language. The study focuses on the ten lexical cases that are inherent to these languages: nominative, accusative, dative, ablative, instrumental, locative, allative, comitative, genitive, and vocative. By delving into the forms, functions, and syntactic roles of these cases, the article uncovers the intricate linguistic complexities that distinguish these varieties while offering insights into their shared linguistic features.

By analyzing phonological and morphological variations between the two varieties and Standard Khasi, this article showcases the influence of these differences on case systems. It then proceeds to explore the shared syntactic framework that surpasses these variations, highlighting the underlying syntactic structures that facilitate effective communication across the varieties.

The crux of this study lies in the comparative analysis of the ten lexical cases, shedding light on both similarities and contrasts in their usage, thus contributing to the broader understanding of linguistic typology.

**Keywords:** Khasi language, lexical cases, comparative analysis, syntactic alignment, linguistic variation.

## 1. Introduction

This study aims to unravel the complex intricacies of lexical case systems in three distinctive Khasi varieties: Standard Khasi, War Khasi (Umñiuh-Tmar), and War Jaiñtia (Lamin Variety). By adopting a dedicated syntactic perspective, this study seeks to juxtapose the shared structures and variances that characterize these varieties, shedding light on how grammatical cases encode semantic and syntactic meanings within noun phrases.

### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Study

The Khasi language, with its diverse array of varieties, represents a linguist's treasure trove, offering insights into the intricate relationship between linguistic evolution and cultural influences. The significance of this study lies in its potential to uncover the intricate structures within lexical case systems across Standard Khasi, War Khasi (Umñiuh-Tmar), and War Jaiñtia (Lamin Variety). This exploration not only enriches our understanding of linguistic diversity but also contributes to the broader field of linguistic typology and dialectal studies.

### 1.2 Brief Overview of the Khasi Language and Its Varieties

Standard Khasi belongs to the Austro-Asiatic family of languages and is spoken in the central and eastern parts of the state of Meghalaya in northeastern India by the indigenous Khasi people, exhibiting significant dialectal variations. Grierson (1904) classified four dialects of Khasi: Standard Khasi, which serves as the formal language and is used for all literary purposes; Pnar or Synteng; Lyngngam; and the War dialects. The War dialects of Khasi are assumed to be subdivided into two groups: War-Khasi and War-Jaiñtia. These are spoken in the southeastern corner of the East Khasi Hills District and the Jaiñtia Hills District, respectively.

War-Khasi is represented by the Umñiuh variety, spoken in Umñiuh-Tmar village situated in the Pynursla Tehsil of the East Khasi Hills district in Meghalaya, India. This village is located approximately 31 km away from the sub-district headquarters of Pynursla and 80 km away from the district headquarters of Shillong. On the other hand, War-Jaiñtia is represented by the Lamin variety, spoken in Lamin village situated in the Amlarem Block of the Jaiñtia Hills District. This

village is located 24 km to the south of the District headquarters of Jowai and 44 km from the state capital, Shillong.

### **1.3 Research Objectives and Scope**

The primary objective of this study is to undertake a comprehensive comparative analysis of the lexical case systems within Standard Khasi, War Khasi (Umñiuh-Tmar), and War Jaiñtia (Lamin Variety) through a dedicated syntactic lens. By juxtaposing the syntactic structures, case markers, and semantic roles across these varieties, this research aims to discern the similarities and variations that define their case systems. The scope of this study extends to presenting a cross-linguistic survey of these case systems, offering insights into how grammatical cases serve as vehicles for encoding semantic and syntactic information within noun phrases.

As we delve into the subsequent sections, this study will cover the phonological and morphological variations that distinguish these varieties from the Standard language, explore the shared syntactic framework that predominates these differences, conduct a comprehensive analysis of the different types of lexical cases present, and conclude by underlining the broader implications for linguistic typology. Through this dedicated exploration, we hope to not only uncover the linguistic intricacies within these Khasi varieties but also contribute to the ongoing discourse on language diversity and its implications.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Data Collection**

The methodology employed for this study involved a meticulous process of data collection, ensuring the selection of representative linguistic texts, proficient native speakers, and diverse linguistic resources. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select high-quality texts that capture a range of syntactic structures and case usage across the varieties. Native speakers, proficient in each variety, were engaged in structured linguistic interviews, facilitating the extraction of authentic spoken language data. Additionally, a collection of published linguistic materials, grammars, and linguistic databases provided invaluable resources for detailed analysis.

## 2.2 Comparative Linguistic Analysis Approach

The cornerstone of this study lies in the comparative linguistic analysis approach, which facilitates an in-depth exploration of the lexical case systems within Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia. A syntactic perspective forms the analytical lens through which the study dissects the intricate interplay of linguistic features. This approach involves the following key steps:

### 2.2.1 Syntactic Analysis

The collected data were subjected to meticulous syntactic analysis, focusing on the identification and extraction of instances where lexical cases are employed. Each case's syntactic role, function, and position within sentences were carefully examined, drawing attention to their semantic implications and grammatical relationships. The goal was to uncover patterns of case usage within and across the varieties.

### 2.2.2 Typological Comparison

The extracted data underwent a typological comparison, a method that involves contrasting the case systems of Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia. This involved systematically aligning and juxtaposing instances of case usage in the two varieties, comparing them with Standard Khasi, which was taken as the reference language. This approach facilitated the identification of commonalities and variations in forms and functions. This comparison was crucial for identifying the complexities of syntactic alignment and divergences.

By merging syntactic analysis with typological comparison, this methodology offered a comprehensive perspective on the case systems of the Khasi varieties. It enabled the identification of shared syntactic principles while revealing the underlying syntactic structures that govern case usage. Ultimately, this approach unveiled both the linguistic unity and the dialectal diversity that characterize the lexical case systems in Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia. Through this methodological approach, the study aims to provide valuable insights to the field of linguistic typology and dialectal analysis.

## 3. Phonological and Morphological Variations among Varieties

Phonological and morphological variations play a pivotal role in shaping the identities of varieties within the Khasi language family. These linguistic differences reflect historical, geographical, and socio-cultural factors that have contributed to the emergence of distinct Khasi varieties. While Standard Khasi serves as the benchmark for phonological and morphological features, War Khasi and War Jaiñtia have undergone phonetic shifts and morphological innovations that contribute to their distinctiveness from the standard language. These linguistic variations are fundamental to understanding the unique identities of each variety and their intricate case systems. In this section, we explore the distinct phonological and morphological features present in these varieties and their consequential impact on case systems.

### 3.1 Examination of Phonological and Morphological Differences

The Phonological and morphological differences between the War-Khasi (Umñiuh Variety - UV) and War-Jaiñtia (Lamin Variety - LV) varieties in comparison to Standard Khasi (SK) are evident from the variations observed in the case distinctions provided in Table 1. These differences contribute to the differentiation of the varieties and showcase the unique phonological and morphological features that characterize each variety:

Examining the phonological and morphological differences presented in Table 1 between Standard Khasi (SK), Umñiuh Variety (UV), and Lamin Variety (LV), we can explore the role of how these variations help in shaping dialectal identities, contributing to the unique character and distinctiveness of each dialect.

Table 1: Comparative List of Case Distinctions in Standard Khasi, Umñiuh, and Lamin Varieties

Case Distinction	Standard Khasi (SK)	Umñiuh Variety (UV)	Lamin Variety(LV)
1. Nominative Case	∅	∅	∅
2. Accusative Case	ja	ha	he
3. Dative Case	ja	ha	hu/he/hi
4. Instrumental Case	da	di	de
5. Locative Case	ha	ha	ti
6. Ablative Case	na	na	no?
7. Genitive Case	jəŋ	jəŋ	chʉəŋ

8. Allative Case	ʃa	ʃa	ʃo
9. Comitative Case	bad	en	be
10. Vocative Case	aʔ	aʔ	oʔ

### 3.1.1 Nominative Case

All three varieties share the same phonological realization ( $\emptyset$ ), marked by an absence of any distinct sound, contributing to a shared grammatical feature. All three varieties share the same morphological feature, with no overt marker for the nominative case. This indicates consistency in this aspect across the varieties.

### 3.1.2 Accusative Case

SK employs [ja] for the accusative case, while UV uses [ha] and LV utilizes [he]. These distinct sounds associated with the accusative case contribute to phonological variation and identity differentiation. The distinct accusative markers in UV and LV indicate separate morphological realizations for this case.

### 3.1.3 Dative Case

SK uses [ja] for the dative case, while UV employs [ha], and LV uses [hu/he/hi], showcasing the most significant phonological difference among these varieties. The distinct sounds utilized in LV contribute to a distinct phonological identity. The variety in LV introduces a unique morphological feature with a range of markers based on gender and number.

### 3.1.4 Instrumental Case

All three varieties utilize distinct phonological realizations ([da], [di], [de]) for the instrumental case. The consistent morphological variation in this case highlights diversity in instrumental case marking. The variations in instrumental case markers contribute to the differentiation among these varieties.

### 3.1.5 Locative Case

SK and UV both employ [ha] for the locative case, while LV uses [ti], highlighting phonological divergence. This phonological difference in the locative case contributes to LV's distinct identity. LV's usage of "ti" introduces a distinct morphological feature for the locative case.

### **3.1.6 Ablative Case**

SK and UV both use [na] for the ablative case, whereas LV employs a distinct phonological realization ([noʔ]) for the ablative case. This unique sound used in the ablative case marker contributes to dialectal distinctiveness of LV from SK and UV. The morphological variation in ablative case markers showcases different forms across the varieties.

### **3.1.7 Genitive Case**

SK and UV share the same phonological realization ([jɔŋ]) for the genitive case, while LV uses [c<sup>h</sup>uəŋ] for the genitive case, indicating phonological divergence. The difference in genitive markers contributes to LV's distinct identity. The distinct genitive markers in LV indicate a morphological difference, potentially influenced by phonological and historical factors.

### **3.1.8 Allative Case**

All three varieties share the identical phonological realization ([fa]) for the allative case. The consistent sound employed for the allative case contributes to a shared grammatical identity. The consistent use of "fa" for the allative case indicates similarity in this morphological feature.

### **3.1.9 Comitative Case**

SK uses [bad] for the comitative case, UV employs [en], and LV uses [be] for the comitative case. The phonological differences in comitative markers contribute to the distinctiveness of each variety. The variations in comitative markers introduce distinct morphological forms across the varieties.

### **3.1.10 Vocative Case**

SK and UV share the same phonological realization ([aʔ]), while LV uses a distinct phonological realization ([oʔ]) for the vocative case. The variations in vocative case markers contribute to dialectal differentiation. The morphological variations in vocative markers illustrate diversity in addressing vocatives.

#### **4. Comparative Syntactic Analysis of Lexical Cases in Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia**

The comparative syntactic analysis of the lexical case systems in Standard Khasi (SK), War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex variations and commonalities across these Khasi varieties. Each lexical case serves distinct functions within sentences, offering insights into how syntactic roles are marked and interpreted in different contexts.

##### **4.1 Shared Syntactic Framework**

Despite the phonological and morphological variations, an exploration of the syntactic structures reveals that Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia share fundamental grammatical foundations. The basic sentence structures, constituent order, and core syntactic relationships exhibit noteworthy commonalities. These shared structures serve as a linguistic bridge, allowing speakers of these varieties to understand each other's speech despite the dialectal differences.

The existence of shared syntactic principles among Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia has significant implications for effective linguistic communication. This shared foundation enables speakers of these varieties to intuitively understand the core structure of sentences, facilitating seamless interactions in various contexts. The syntactic commonalities serve as a medium for interdialectal intelligibility, which is crucial in multilingual communities where speakers regularly encounter different Khasi varieties.

Moreover, this shared syntactic framework lays the groundwork for efficient language acquisition and preservation. Language learners and speakers transitioning between these varieties can leverage their understanding of shared syntax as a basis for mastering the linguistic



complexities specific to each variety. This becomes particularly relevant in contexts where language preservation efforts intersect with linguistic diversity.

In essence, the shared syntactic framework discovered across Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia exemplifies the remarkable resilience of linguistic structures in the face of phonological and morphological divergence. This shared foundation not only ensures mutual intelligibility but also highlights the intrinsic linguistic unity that binds these Khasi varieties together with the Standard language.

## 4.2 Comparative Analysis of the Lexical Case Systems

In this section, we delve into the detailed comparative analysis of the lexical case systems, exploring the specific ways in which these syntactic structures interact with case distinctions across the varieties. Through this exploration, we aim to unveil the intricate interplay between syntax and case systems within the Khasi language landscape.

### 4.2.1 Nominative Case

The nominative case is unmarked ( $\emptyset$ ) in Standard Khasi (SK), Umñiuh Variety (UV), and Lamin Variety (LV), indicating the agent or subject of a sentence. This shared syntactic structure reflects a common nominative case marking feature across the Khasi varieties. The nominative case is structurally employed to show the relationship between the verb 'iam' (cry) in SK and UV, and 'niu' (cry) in LV, and the subject noun phrases 'u lam', as exemplified in sentences 1 (a), (b), and (c) below. When comparing the corresponding sentences, it's interesting to note that unlike Standard Khasi, where the agreement marker 'u' ('Third Singular Masculine') appears before the verb, in the Umñiuh Variety (UV) and Lamin Variety (LV), the agreement marker 'u' is placed after the verb 'cry', as observed in the following sentences.

1. (a) u lam  $\emptyset$  u iam (SK)  
3SM Iba NOM 3SM cry  
'Lam cries'

(b) u lam  $\emptyset$  iam u (UV)

3SM Lam NOM cry 3SM  
 ‘Lam cries’

(c) u lam  $\emptyset$  niu u (LV)  
 3SM Iba NOM cry 3SM  
 ‘Lam cries’

#### 4.2.2 Accusative Case

The marking of the accusative case displays noticeable variation. This case designates the direct object of transitive verbs, indicating the entity that undergoes the action. The distinct markers reveal dialect-specific choices in encoding accusative semantics. In the given examples 2 (a), (b), and (c), we can observe that the object noun phrases (NPs) in the direct object positions are in the objective case. The Accusative Case in Standard Khasi (SK) is expressed as ‘ja’, while in the War-Khasi variety of Umñiuh (UV), it is expressed as ‘ha’. Unlike SK and UV, which do not feature any gender-specific accusative case markers, as exemplified in the corresponding sentences below, the War-Jaiñtia variety of Lamin (LV) employs separate accusative forms based on the gender of the NPs that are in the accusative case. This is achieved by incorporating the vowel of the third person PNG markers into the accusative morpheme /h-/, yielding ‘he’ for feminine objects (derived from the Third Singular Feminine ‘ke’), ‘hu’ for masculine objects (derived from the Third Singular Masculine ‘u’), and ‘hi’ for plural objects (derived from the Third Person Plural ‘i’). However, for first and second person object NPs that are in the accusative case, they are marked by the ‘he’ marker, denoting the Third Singular Feminine Accusative, to indicate the accusative case, as exemplified in 2 (c) below.

2.

(a) (i) u ban u ieit **ja** ka lin (SK)  
 3SM Ban 3SM love ACC 3SF Lin  
 ‘Ban loves Lin’

(ii) ka lin ka ieit **ja** u ban (SK)  
 3SF Lin 3SF love ACC 3SM Ban

‘Lin loves Ban’

(iii) u lam u ieit **ja** ki miaw (SK)  
3SM Lam 3SM love ACC 3PL cat

‘Lam loves cats’

(b) (i) u ban eid u **ha** ka lin (UV)  
3SM Ban love 3SM ACC 3SF Lin

‘Ban loves Lin’

(ii) ka lin eid ka **ha** u ban (UV)  
3SF Lin love 3SF ACC 3SM Lam

‘Ban loves Lin’

(iii) u lam eid u **ha** ki miaw (UV)  
3SM Lam 3SM love ACC 3PL cat

‘Lam loves cats’

(c) (i) u ban meyue u **he** ke lin (LV)  
3SM Ban love 3SM ACC(F) 3SF Lin

‘Ban loves Lin’

(ii) ke lin meyue ke **hu** ban (LV)  
3SF Lin love 3SF ACC(M) Ban

‘Ban loves Mary’

(iii) u lam meyue u **hi** miew (LV)  
3SM Lam love 3SM ACC(3PL) cat

‘Lam loves cats’

#### 4.2.3 Dative Case

This case is used to mark recipients or beneficiaries of actions, and the shared markers indicate a common syntactic principle across the varieties. The Dative Case in Standard Khasi (SK) is expressed as ‘ja’, in Umñiuh Variety (UV) it is ‘ha’, and in Lamin Variety (LV) it is ‘hu/he/hi’, as shown in the following sentences 3 (a), (b), and (c) below. The dative case markers ‘ja’ in SK, ‘ha’ in UV, and ‘hu’ in LV indicate the relationship between the ditransitive verb ‘ai’ (give) and its indirect object noun phrase ‘u ban’ in both SK and UV, as demonstrated in sentences 3 (a), (b), and (c). It’s worth discussing that Standard Khasi (SK), Umñiuh Variety (UV), and Lamin Variety (LV) exhibit case syncretism, where there is homophony between two case forms—specifically, the accusative case and the dative case forms are homophonous.

3.

(a) u kit u ai ka kali *ja* u ban (SK)  
 3SM Kit 3SM give 3SF car DAT 3SM Ban  
 ‘Kit gives the car to Ban’

(b) u kit ai u ka kali *ha* u ban (UV)  
 3SM Kit give 3SM 3SF car DAT 3SM Ban  
 ‘Kit gives the car to Ban’

(c) u kit ai e ke metor *hu* ban (LV)  
 3SM Kit give SAM 3SF car DAT Ban  
 ‘Kit gives the car to Ban’

#### 4.2.4 Instrumental Case

The instrumental case in Standard Khasi (SK) is marked as ‘da’, while Umñiuh Variety (UV) employs ‘di’ and Lamin Variety (LV) uses ‘de’. This case indicates the means or instrument by which an action is performed. The variation in markers illustrates how these varieties diverge in the syntactic expression of instrumental relations. In SK, UV, and LV, the instrumental case indicates that the noun phrase ‘ka tari’ in SK and UV, and ‘ke tari’ in LV, serves as the instrument for carrying out the action indicated by the verb ‘pyn-yap’ (CAUS-kill) in SK and UV, and ‘pyn-yep’ (CAUS-kill) in LV. This is demonstrated in the following sentences 4 (a), (b), and (c) below.

When comparing the corresponding sentences, it's interesting to note that in the examples that follow, the order changes in UV, where INST precedes ACC, unlike SK, whereas in LV, the ACC is absent.

4.

(a) u ki u pyn-yap ia u ksew **da** ka tari (SK)  
 3SM kit 3SM CAUS-kill ACC 3SM dog INST 3SF knife  
 ‘Kit kills the dog with a knife’

(b) u kit pyn-yap u **di** ka tari ha u kshu (UV)  
 3SM kit CAUS-kill 3SM INST 3SF knife ACC 3SM dog  
 ‘Kit kills the dog with a knife’

(c) u kit pyn-yep u ksia **de** ke tari (LV)  
 3SM kit CAUS-kill 3SM dog INST 3SF knife  
 ‘Kit kills the dog with a knife’

#### 4.2.5 Locative Case

The locative case marker is consistent in Standard Khasi (SK) and Umñiuh Variety (UV), expressed as 'ha', while Lamin Variety (LV) uses 'ti'. This case indicates spatial relationships and destinations. The shared marker in SK and UV underscores syntactic similarity, while LV introduces a distinct marker. The locative case markers 'ha' in SK and UV and 'ti' in LV are placed before *poh* ‘under’, indicating the location of action referred to by the copula 'don' (in SK), 'em' (in UV), and 'ah' (in LV), as observed in sentences 5 (a), (b), and (c) below. The agreement marker 'ka', denoting 'Third Singular Feminine' in SK, precedes the copula in 5 (a), whereas in UV and LV, 'ka' (Third Singular Feminine) and 'ke' (Third Singular Feminine), respectively, come after the copula in 5 (b) and 5 (c), as shown below. Additionally, Umñiuh Variety (UV) employs the same marker for LOC, which sounds the same as the ACC and DAT cases.

5.

(a) ka miaw ka don **ha** poh ka miej (SK)

3SF cat 3SF COP LOC under 3SF table

‘The cat is under the table’

(b) ka miaw em ka *ha* poh miej (UV)

3SF cat COP 3SF LOC under table

‘The cat is under the table’

(c) ke miew ah ke *ti* poh ke miej (LV)

3SF cat COP 3SF LOC under 3SF table

‘The cat is under the table’

#### 4.2.6 Ablative Case

This case signifies the source or origin of an action, indicating separation or movement away from a point of origin. The Ablative Case in Standard Khasi (SK) and Umñiuh Variety (UV) is expressed by 'na', while in Lamin Variety (LV), it is expressed by 'no?'. These markers are positioned immediately after the verb in SK and LV, and after the agreement marker 'u' (indicating third singular masculine) in UV. This usage is exemplified in the following sentences 6 (a), (b), and (c) provided below.

6. (a) u kit u daN wan *na* yieN (SK)

3SM Kit 3SM PROG come ABL home

‘Kit is coming from home’

(b) u kit doN yia u *na* yiN (UV)

3SM Kit PROG come 3SM ABL home

‘Kit is coming from home’

(c) u kit daN wan *no?* sni u (LV)

3SM Kit PROG come ABL home 3SM

‘Kit is coming from home’

#### 4.2.7 Genitive Case

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Comprehensive Analysis of Lexical Case Systems in Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia:  
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The Genitive case signifies possession or relationships, indicating the entity that possesses another entity. In Standard Khasi (SK), is expressed by *ʃɔŋ*, Umñiuh Variety (UV) by *ʃɔŋ* and in Lamin Variety (LV) by *cʰuɔŋ*, indicating that the item referred to by the noun *u lit* in SK, UV and LV is the possessor of *u ksew* ‘dog’ in SK, *u kshu* ‘dog’ in UV, and *u ksua* ‘dog’ in LV, as exemplified in the following sentences 7 (a), (b) and (c) below.

7. (a) *u ksew ʃɔŋ u lit* (SK)  
 3SM dog GEN 3SM LIT  
 ‘Lit’s dog’

(b) *u kshu ʃɔŋ u lit* (UV)  
 3SM dog GEN 3SM LIT  
 ‘Lit’s dog’

(c) *u ksua cʰuɔŋ u lit* (LV)  
 3SM dog GEN 3SM LIT  
 ‘Lit’s dog’

#### 4.2.8 Allative Case

The allative case in Standard Khasi (SK) is expressed by *ʃa*, Umñiuh Variety (UV) by *ʃa* and Lamin Variety (LV) by *ʃo* placed before *delhi* marking destination as expressed by the action of the verb *leit* ‘go’ in SK, *le* ‘go’ in UV and *lia* ‘go’ in LV as exemplified in the following sentences 8 (a), (b) and (c) below.

8. (a) *ka iba ka-n leit ʃa delhi* (SK)  
 3SF Iba 3SF-FUT go ALL Delhi  
 ‘Iba will go to Delhi’

(b) *ka iba ong ka en le ʃa delhi* (UV)  
 3SF Iba say 3SF FUT go ALL Delhi  
 ‘Iba will go to Delhi’

(c) ke iba jiu lia ke  $\Sigma\theta$  delhi (LV)  
 3SF Iba FUT go 3SF ALL Delhi  
 ‘Iba will go to Delhi’

#### 4.2.9 Comitative Case

The comitative case marker varies across the varieties. Standard Khasi uses ‘*bad*’, Umñiuh Variety (UV) by ‘*en*’ and Lamin Variety (LV) by ‘*be*’. This case denotes an associative context, often indicating companionship or social relationships, as exemplified in the following sentences 9 (a), (b) and (c) below.

9.

(a) u ban u leit iew *bad* ka kmie joN u (SK)  
 3SM Ban 3SM go market COM 3SM mother GEN 3SM  
 ‘Ban will go to the market with his mother’

(b) u ban le iew u *en* la kmie (UV)  
 3SM Ban go market 3SM COM PREP mother  
 ‘Ban will go to the market with his mother’

(c) U ban lia jiu *be* ke maw u (LV)  
 3SM Ban go market COM 3SF mother 3SM  
 ‘Ban will go to the market with his mother’

#### 4.2.10 Vocative Case

In both SK and UV, the vocative case is indicated by ‘*a?*’, whereas in LV it is indicated by ‘*o?*’, which serves the purpose of direct address. This case reflects the emotional tone and emphasis placed on addressing a specific entity, as exemplified in the following sentences 10 (a), (b), and (c) below.

(a) a? blei (SK)  
 VOC God  
 ‘Oh God’



(b) aʔ ble (UV)  
VOC God  
'Oh God'

(c) oʔ pra (LV)  
VOC God  
'Oh God'

## 5. Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of the intricate linguistic landscape of Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia has illuminated profound insights embedded in their lexical case systems from a syntactic perspective. The conclusion of this study emphasizes the main findings and their significance for linguistic typology and dialectal studies.

The comparative analysis has unveiled shared syntactic structures and intricate case distinctions between the standard language and its varieties. Despite phonological and morphological differences that set these varieties apart, their communicative patterns are emphasized by a common syntactic framework. The presence of unmarked nominative cases serves as evidence of shared syntactic rules across these varieties. However, variations in case markers for the accusative, dative, instrumental, and other cases reflect the individual character of each variety. This study also reveals case syncretism between the accusative and dative cases in Standard Khasi and Umñiuh Variety, while Lamin Variety employs distinct gender-specific markers for accusative and dative cases. This diversity is further defined through the intricate interplay of semantic roles and syntactic functions.

The study showcases the complex interactions between phonological, morphological, and syntactic elements that influence the lexical case systems in Standard Khasi, War Khasi, and War Jaiñtia. Beyond highlighting the strength of language, the shared syntactic framework that persists despite dialectal differences prompts us to delve into the delicate balance between linguistic heritage and adaptability. This work provides insights into the Khasi varieties in relation to

Standard Khasi, contributing to a broader understanding of linguistic diversity and the factors that shape it.

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