

KAREKARE VERBAL SYSTEM

The forms that Karekare verbs take comprise the following cross-cutting parameters:¹

- Verb class: A1, A2, B, C, D
- Verb tense, aspect, mood (TAM)
 - Completive and Imperative TAMs only: Number of subject
- Verbal extensions
 - Totality
 - Ventive
 - Additive
- Pronoun affixes or clitics
 - Subject pronouns
 - Direct object pronouns
 - Indirect object pronouns
 - Intransitive copy pronouns (ICP) with verbs bearing the totality extension

VERB CLASS

Karekare verbs fall into one of five classes.² The class determines final vowels in the TAM system and certain other aspects of verb form. The classes are as follows. They are illustrated in the completive with a singular subject and no extensions or objects:

Class		Karekare	
A1	Two root consonants, a short root vowel, and Ø ~ u stem vowel in completive..	àsukò	‘he picked up’
A2	All roots of more than 2 root consonants or 2 root consonants and a long root vowel: stem vowel u in the completive	bìskukò	‘he accepted’
B	Two root consonants, a short root vowel, and -ā stem vowel in completive.	bàsākò	‘he shot’
C	One root consonant and stem vowel -u in the completive.	tukò	‘he ate’
D	One root consonant and stem vowel -a in the completive.	wākò	‘he received’

¹ It proved exceptionally difficult to elicit Karekare verb paradigms in the abstract. I’m not sure why this was the case-forms in Hausa, the elicitation language, do not match well with Karekare verb meanings? poor explaining on my part? inability of the speakers with whom I worked to abstract away from the use of verbs in context? Because it proved very time consuming to collect the desired forms, not to mention being trying for both me and the speakers, and because this was not a major focus of the project, gaps in the data remain. I have left these gaps in the tables here in hopes of filling them in at some future time.

² The classification system is adapted from the system developed for Bole by Johannes Lukas in “Die Personalia und das primäre Verb im Bolanci (Nordnigerien),” *Africa und Übersee*, 54:237-286, 55:114-139, 1970-172. Karekare verbs fall into exactly the same set of classes of those in Bole.

VERB TENSE, ASPECT, AND MOOD (TAM)

Karekare and all other Chadic languages of northern Nigeria have the following basic verbal TAMs: completive, subjunctive, imperative. In addition, all these languages have one or more incompletive TAMs, which include meanings such as *future*, *habitual*, *continuative*, and *potential*. Languages differ in the number and in the meanings of the incompletive TAMs they have as well as how they mark the incompletive TAMs, though incompletive TAMs all tend to use nominal-like verb forms. In addition to the TAM forms, every verb has at least one verbal noun, which is the “name” of the action expressed by the verb. TAM forms are all predictable by verb class, whereas verbal noun form is often not predictable. In the completive and imperative, all the languages of the Bole-Tangale group, of which Karekare is a member, have different forms depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. The TAMs are illustrated below with intransitive verbs having no extensions.

Class A1: àsu- ‘pick up’

	Karekare	
Completive: sing. plural	àsukò àsankò	‘he/she picked up’ ‘they picked up’
Subjunctive	àsē	‘that he pick up’
Future	nā lā àsâ	‘he will pick up’
Habitual	nā àsā	‘he picks up’
Continuative	cf. na zu haɗu-i (DMK-AKG-050)	‘he is eating it’
Imperative: sing. 2 pl. 1 pl.	àsū àsānò	‘pick it up!’ (singular) ‘pick it up!’ (plural) ‘let’s pick it up!’
Verbal noun	àsā	‘picking up’

Class A2: d̄àfu- ‘follow’

	Karekare	
Completive: sing. plural	d̄afukò d̄àfankò	‘he/she followed’ ‘they followed’
Subjunctive	d̄àfi	‘that he follow’
Future		‘he will follow’
Habitual	nā d̄àfâ	‘he follows’
Continuative		‘he is following’
Imperative: sing. 2 pl. 1 pl.		‘follow!’ (singular) ‘follow!’ (plural) ‘let’s follow!’
Verbal noun	d̄àfâ	‘following’

Class B: bàsā- ‘shoot’

	Karekare	
Completive: sing. plural	bàsākò bàsankò	‘he/she shot’ ‘they shot’
Subjunctive	bàsì	‘that he shoot’
Future	nā là bàsê	‘he will shoot’
Habitual	nā bàsê	‘he shoots’
Continuative		‘he is shooting’
Imperative: sing. 2 pl. 1 pl.		‘shoot!’ (singular) ‘shot!’ (plural) ‘let’s shoot!’
Verbal noun	bàsê	‘shooting’

Class C: tu- ‘eat’

	Karekare	
Completive: sing. plural	tukò tankò	‘he/she ate’ ‘they ate’
Subjunctive		‘that he eat’
Future		‘he will eat’
Habitual	nā hínà	‘he eats’
Continuative		‘he is eating’
Imperative: sing. 2 pl. 1 pl.	tô tānò tômà	‘eat!’ (singular) ‘eat!’ (plural) ‘let’s eat!’
Verbal noun	hínà	‘eating’

Class D: wā- ‘get’

	Karekare	
Completive: sing. plural	wākò wankò	‘he/she got’ ‘they got’
Subjunctive	wài	‘that he get
Future		‘he will tet
Habitual	nā wunà	‘he gets
Continuative		‘he is getting
Imperative: sing. 2 pl. 1 pl.	wî wānò	‘get!’ (singular) ‘get!’ (plural) ‘let’s get!’
Verbal noun	wunà	‘getting’

VERBAL EXTENSIONS

All the Bole-Tangale languages spoken in Yobe State have three verbal extensions. Verbal extensions are suffixes that add meaning to verb stems in addition to the meaning contributed by the TAM. The three extensions are the following

- Totality: The name of this extension derives from the fact that in some cases, at least, it contributes a sense of “done to the full extent”, such as affecting all objects, or reaching some logical final end point. However, in the Yobe Bole-Tangale languages, this meaning is not always evident, and in fact use of the totality is, to some extent, tied up with the TAM system. In Karekare, it thus seems more natural in neutral statements of completed actions to use the totality with the completive than to omit it, whereas verbs in other TAMs use the totality extension less frequently.
- Ventive: The ventive (whose name is based on the Latin verb *venire* ‘to come’) indicates that the action was initiated at some other place and has effect on the place of reference. In Hausa, verbs ending in –o, such as **sayo** ‘buy (something) and bring it here’, **baro** ‘leave (something) behind’ are ventives.
- Additive: The additive has several functions. The more or less “neutral” meaning, is ‘do more of’ the action, but with proper context, it can mean ‘do the action in a place referred to’, ‘do the action in a manner referred to’, and other such meanings.

In principle, the extensions can be used with any verb and can be combined on a single verb, for example, a verb could combine both ventive and totality extensions to mean ‘do the action completely with effect here’. In practice, combinations of extensions are not common. As noted above, the totality extension is more naturally used in some TAMs than others. Moreover, the totality is excluded from negative sentences and questions, suggesting that there is some kind of incompatibility between the meaning that the totality adds and negation or interrogation. Finally, the totality and the additive extensions are essentially mutually exclusive, not because of a meaning incompatibility, but because the suffixes marking these extensions occupy the same spot in the verb stem for most verbs and hence cannot both appear at once.

The discussion above implies that there is one suffix marking totality, another marking, ventive, and a third marking additive. This is not the case. The forms that each extension takes vary according to TAM and the type of objects that may or may not be present. The table below illustrates the various forms of each extension in all the possible situations of TAM and object configuration with the class A1 verb ‘pick up’ and, where pronoun objects (direct or indirect) are present, with the pronoun meaning ‘(to) her’.

Completive

SING. SUBJECT				
	Unextended	Totality	Ventive	Additive
No object	àsukò	àsūsikò	àsnèkò	àsūdùgò
Noun object	àsû tànci	àsūkà tànci	àsnè tànci	àsūdùga tànci
Pro DO ‘her’	àsutàkò	àsùntakò	àsnètàkò	àsūdùga tè
Pro IO ‘her’	àsêtò	àsêtàsì	àsnêto	àsêtadì

PLURAL SUBJECT				
No object	àsankò	àsansikò	àsànekò	àsandùgo
Pro DO 'her'	àsantàkò	àsannàtakò	àsànetàkò	
Pro IO 'her'	àsántò	àsantàsì	àsànetò	

Subjunctive

	Unextended	Totality	Ventive	Additive
No object	àsē	àsì	astù	àsdi
Noun object	àsē tàmci	aska tàmci	astù tàmci	
Pro DO 'her'	àsē tè	àsnàto	as tè	àsdi tè
Pro IO 'her'	àsto	àstasì	astò	àsētadì

All the incomplete TAMs (future, habitual, continuative) use the same form of the verb. The table below shows the verbs with a third person auxiliary.

Incomplete

	Unextended	Totality	Ventive	Additive
No object	nā àsà	nā àsàsì	nā astù	
Noun object	nā àsà tàmci	nā àsàkà tàmci	nā astù tàmci	
Pro DO 'her'	nā àsà tè	nā asàntò	nā as tè	
Pro IO 'her'	nā àsàtò	nā asàtasì	nā astò	

For Class A1 verbs, some Subjunctive and Incomplete verbs forms are identical, being differentiated only by auxiliary. In other classes, they differ, as in the following Class A2 and Class B forms.

Class A2 **bìsku-** 'accept'

	Unextended	Totality	Ventive	Additive
Subjunctive	bìskì	bìskî	bìskètù	
Future	nā bìskâ	nā bìskàsì	nā bìkètù	

Class B **bàsà** 'shoot'

	Unextended	Totality	Ventive	Additive
Subjunctive	bàsì			
Future	nā bàsê	nā bàsèsì	nā basètù	

PRONOUN AFFIXES AND CLITICS

Subjects

All TAMs in Karekare use the same set of subject affixes. There are special subject affixes only for first and second person subjects. Overt pronominal subjects are not required for third person subjects, and when third person subject pronouns are overt, they are expressed by independent pronouns, not by special subject clitics, as in first and second person. The first person singular subject clitic of Karekare bears Low tone whereas other person subject clitics bear High tone. This is an inherited feature from proto-Bole-Tangale as can be seen from the fact that Bole, which is not closely related to Karekare within Bole-Tangale, has the same tonal properties.

	Karekare	
1s	nà àsukò	‘I picked up’
2ms	ka àsukò	‘you (ms) picked up’
2fs	ci àsukò	‘you (fs) picked up’
3s (m or f)	àsukò	‘he/she picked up’
1p	mu àsankò	‘we picked up’
2p	ku àsankò	‘you picked up’
3p	àsankò	‘they picked up’

Direct Objects

Direct object pronouns take different forms depending on the extensions that the verb has. If the verb bears the totality extension the direct object pronoun is a bound suffix (identical in form to the direct possessive pronouns used with nouns). In the completive, the completive marker **-kV** (V matching the vowel of the pronoun) follows the pronoun. If the verb does not bear the totality extension, the direct object pronouns have forms that were at one time based on the independent pronouns (**nV**, **kV**, **cV**, **sV**, **tV**, **munV**, **kunV**, **sunV**), though Karekare has replaced this older independent set of pronouns with a set consisting of the prefix **di-** plus the possessive pronouns.

Completive

	Non-totality	Totality	
1s	ǎsnàkàu	àsúnnakàu	‘he took me’
2ms	ǎskàkàu	àsúnkakàu	‘...you (ms)’
2fs	ǎscàkàu	àsúncikì	‘...you (fs.)’
3ms	ǎssàkàu	àsúnninkì	‘...him’
3fs	ǎstàkàu	àsúntakàu	‘...her’
1p	ǎsmunàkàu	àsúmmunkù	‘...us’
2p	ǎskunàkàu	ǎšnkukù	‘...you (pl)’
3p	ǎssinàkàu	àsúnsukù	‘...them’
	Additive		
3fs	àsūdùga tè		‘...her’
3p	àsūdùga sinè		

Subjunctive

	Non-totality	Totality	
1s	àsēnè	àsànàno	‘that he take me’
2ms	àsēkè	àsànàko	‘...you (ms)’
2fs	àsēcè	àsànàko	‘...you (fs)’
3ms	àsēsè	àsànànì	‘...him’
3fs	àsètè	àsànàto	‘...her’
1p	àsēminè	àsànàmu	‘...us’
2p	àsēkunè	àsànà-ku	‘...you (pl)’
3p	àsēsinè	àsànàsu	‘...them’
	Additive		
3fs	àsdi tè		‘...her’
3p			

Indirect Objects

A feature of many Chadic languages, and of all the Bole-Tangale languages, is the fact that indirect object pronouns are, in some sense, more tightly bound to the verb than are direct object pronouns. In Karekare, the indirect object pronouns for all verbs use the same set of pronouns as are used as possessive pronoun suffixes with nouns. When a verb bears the totality extension, the pronoun PRECEDES the suffix marking totality, in contrast to direct object pronouns, which always follow extension suffixes.

Completive

	Non-totality	Totality	
1s	àsêhño	àsêhñnasì	‘he took for me’
2ms	àsêtiko	àsêtikasì	‘... for you (ms)’
2fs	àsêci	àsêcisì	‘... for you (fs.)’
3ms	àsêhñnì	àsêhñnìsì	‘... for him’
3fs	àsêto	àsêtasì	‘... for her’
1p	àsêtìmu	àsêtìmusì	‘... for us’
2p	àsêtìku	àsêtìkusì	‘... for you (pl)’
3p	àsêsu	àsêsusì	‘... for them’
	Additive		
3fs	àsêtadì		
3p	àsâsidì		

Subjunctive

	Non-totality	Totality	
1s	àsno	àsnasì	‘that he take for me’
2ms	àsko	àskasì	‘... for you (ms)’
2fs	àsci	àscisì	‘... for you (fs)’
3ms	àsni	àsnìsì	‘... for him’
3fs	àsto	àstasì	‘... for her’
1p	àsmu	àsmusì	‘... for us’
2p	àsku	àkusì	‘... for you (pl)’
3p	àssu	àssusì	‘... for them’
	Additive		
3fs	àsêtadì		
3p	àssidì		

Intransitive Copy Pronouns (ICP)

Intransitive Copy Pronouns (ICP) are pronoun suffixes that copy the person, number, and gender of the subject. In Ngamo and Karekare, ICPs are used only together with the totality extension, which, in this case, must originally have had the form **it*, but which has been changed by various assimilatory and deletion processes in virtually every form so that the original form is no longer recognizable. In effect, then, the ICP is the form the totality extension takes with intransitive verbs, since totality and ICP can never occur one without the other on intransitive verbs. The meaning of an intransitive verb with the totality extension likewise often gives a sense of finality to the action, typical of the meaning of the totality extension with transitives.

Completive

1s	nà pàtāhnnakàu	‘I went out’
2ms	ka pàtātikakàu	‘you (ms) went out’
2fs	shi pàtācìkì	‘you (fs) went out’
3ms	pàtātinkì	‘he s went out’
3fs	pàtātakàu	‘she went out’
1p	mu pàtantunkù	‘we went out’
2p	ku pàtātukukù	‘you (pl) went out’
3p	pàtānsukù	‘they went out’

Subjunctive

1s	nà pàtāhnnàu	‘that I go out’
2ms	ka pàtātikàu	‘that you (ms) go out’
2fs	ci pàtācì	‘that you (fs) go out’
3ms	pàtāhnnì	‘that he go out’
3fs	pàtātàu	‘that she go out’
1p	mu pàtātìm(ù)	‘that we go out’
2p	ku pàtātikù	‘that you (pl) go out’
3p	pàtāsù	‘that they go out’

THE VERBS ‘go’ AND ‘come’

As in many West Chadic languages (and languages around the world), the verbs ‘go’ and ‘come’ in Karekare comprise a number of irregular and suppletive forms. In particular, ‘come’, is not always simply a ventive form of the same root as ‘go’. The forms in the paradigm would have third person subjects

	‘go’	‘come’
Completive: sing. plural	ndukò ndankò	ndènèkò ndànèkò
Subjunctive	wàlî	ndètù
Future	nā la nā wàlà	na nnà nā wàlè
Habitual	wàlèkò	ndèko
Imperative: sing. 2 pl. 1 pl.	ndô ndānò ndōmà	’yètî ndètî ’yàtî ndātî
Verbal noun	ńnà (from / ndinà /)	ńnà