

# TAROK EXCLAMATIONS AND INTERJECTIONS

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Single Utterance exclamations.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>3</b>

## TABLES

Table 1. Tarok exclamations .....	1
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## 1. Introduction

The Tarok people live primarily in the region around Langtang in south-east Plateau State, Nigeria. Tarok was first described by Fitzpatrick (1911). The principle scholarly publications on the Tarok language are by Leo Sibomana (1980, 1981a,b) who provides a useful summary of the phonology, noun-classes and verbal system. Longtau (1991, 1993, 2008) has analysed the implications of the classification of Tarok for the interpretation of oral tradition and elaborated a formal phonology.

The paper uses the phonological analysis proposed in Longtau (1993) but not the standard Tarok orthography, which has a misleading use of IPA symbols. The examples in this paper are written in a phonemically giving IPA symbols their conventional (1993) values.

IPA	Tarok orthography
i	ə
ə	ɔ
ŋ	ñ

Three level tones are noted with mid-tone unmarked.

## 2. Single Utterance exclamations

**Table 1. Tarok exclamations**

Tarok	Gloss and example
à	yes of agreement <b>mmaɓu na u ɓa ki ivañ do? à.</b> are you the one who brought the yams? Yes.
â	affirmative implying agreement with element of surprise Always placed at end of a sentence. e.g. 'isn't it?' <b>unəm va ta ki i la nnənap, â?</b> This is the man whom we talked about, isn't it?
ǎ	yes as a reply to a call <b>áNanyàk? ǎ!</b> Nanyak? Yes!
áiyéye	What a pity! <b>áiyéye! upo wó va kuku na bet a?</b> I am sorry! So your father did die?
ámo té	Oh dear! <b>ámo té! O ya nkun mi kaɗ do?</b> Oh dear! You don't see poverty my not? i.e. Won't you take pity on me?
ámo ðàk té	Oh no! Women say <b>ámo ràk té!</b> ex!
âr	What! How dare you! Stand-alone exclamation used by the <b>uDudu</b> and <b>aMampele</b> grass masquerades but has now entered common speech. ex!
áyám	Hey you! <b>áyám ɓá</b> you (somebody) come! Et. thing plus vocative marker. It connotes a lack of familiarity or shows that the person's name has been forgotten. derived from the word for 'thing' plus the vocative marker
bangbusəre	expression in children's singing game <H. <i>babu sele</i> 'no jumping' ex!
buróobà	Wonderful! Remarkable! [not insulting or scabrous in Tarok] < H. <i>bura ubanka</i> an insulting expression meaning 'your father's penis'. cf. <b>durúwanəŋ</b> . <b>buróobà! u ya amoto AFela va cit ê?</b> Remarkable! Have you seen Fela's car?
ɓày	expresses contempt for the listener or frustration on the part of the speaker <b>le a mi ka co, ɓày.</b> Go away from me!
durúwanəŋ	Wonderful! Remarkable! [not insulting or scabrous in Tarok] < H. <i>duri uwa ka</i> an insulting expression meaning 'your mother's vagina'. cf. <b>buróobà</b> . <b>durúwanəŋ! U fe iku anəm ga ayi va cit â?</b> Amazing! Did you hear about the death of the thief?
Duwálà!	used to express dislike and a pejorative implication for the person to whom you use it <b>Duwálà! ɓu təm ka ncal na ka'kul iza ya?</b> Pathetic! Why are you wasting time pleading with him? <H. don Allah (pleading but not insulting).

Tarok	Gloss and example
ě	Congratulations! <H. ex.
Gbágólíí	expresses surprise (used by women) <b>Gbágólíí! U pak iza ūpo yi cit bet ya?</b> Impressive! How have you managed to cook something so quickly for our father?
gbát!	don't try it! (used only by men) <b>gbát! Kañ wa ga atak abol kat.</b> Don't do it! Don't go to the football game.
ghər!	Disappear! Command by Dudu masquerade for people to get away from his sight
hálilúyà	Hallelujah! Used by Tarok Christians <b>uYesu woñ cit, hálilúyà! Nna a təm.</b> Jesus has risen, Hallelujah! Amen.
hê	Ho! expression by Hare in folktales when Hare says this the listener knows that he is about to pull off a trick. <b>hê! uPatashiñgi cê?</b> Ho! Where is Patashingi?
hñ	Ho-hum! expression of surprise or regret <b>hñ, mmani nan nən amwañ</b> Ho-hum! It is me who has been stupid
ikáŋkáŋ	fine [greeting], peace <b>O fa okaŋkaŋ â? Ikáŋkáŋ!</b> Did you wake up well? Fine!
ìgàshì	word of sympathy or apology Et. <b>ga shi</b> 'go burn'. This form is not considered as correct Tarok, but it is the more common one in use by children. cf. the correct expression: <b>ìkàshì</b> .
ìkàshì	Sorry! (West African usage) word of sympathy or apology A compression of the expression <b>n don pa kañ a shi kat, kañ a shi</b> lit. I don't want it to hurt but it does. <b>ìkàshì, ibəl va lar mbet na bet.</b> Sorry, the goat is lost forever, isn't it? Et. <b>kang shi</b> 'not burn'. cf. the wrong but popular expression: <b>ìgàshì</b> .
káká	Not at all! Never! <b>káká, mmani na n kpal izhe ata kat.</b> No, I am not the one who fetched the meat.
ká	please! invariant and always clause-final polite way of saying please, always sentence final <b>nak mmi a na, ká.</b> Please, put oil for him
kà	If you wouldn't mind, please do polite way of saying please, always clause final in this form. Less authoritative than <b>ká</b> e.g. <b>re na ká.</b> Please, leave him alone. However, if immediately following the head-verb the vowel shows concord and tonal agreement with the following noun-prefix. <b>ba ka akwap a mi</b> bring me shoes
kòlikò	Not in dictionary! children's formula for telling another child to stop doing s.t. or they will be reported to an adult <b>kòlikò, uDul uwa i pətər akashu ta.</b> You stop that! Dul is plucking the cashew fruits!
kùsùkkúsúk	please! in clause-final position <b>na ndəñ a mi kà n wa, kùsùkkúsúk</b> please give me water to drink
lákďórí	Huh! Only found in the children's expression <b>hehê lákďórí</b> meaning 'very surprising' <b>hehê lákďórí, nda mi i ya ivanbən</b> Huh! Today people will see that you are only young! [Boy speaking to a girl]
m̃	Yes! (affirmative) <b>uDul ma ku đo? m̃.</b> Did Dul die? Yes.
ǎ	Yes? (querying) <b>n la nap a bu tu u fe kat đo? ǎ.</b> Did you not hear me when I spoke to you? Ye-e-e-s.
m'm̃	No! <b>m'm̃. ka wa ba kat.</b> No, you should not come.
ñwíí	I see! So that is how it is! expresses agreement after having some doubt <b>ñwíí, nnap nnəmmo kañ u mor la kat a?</b> I see, that is how things stand and you didn't tell me promptly
ó'ò	No <b>ó'ò, uza ba kat.</b> No, he didn't come.
Shìrìshìrì	greeting used at the sorghum harvest

<b>Tarok</b>	<b>Gloss and example</b>
	<b>Shirishiri, aBan.</b> Ban, well done
<b>soksok<sup>+</sup> gulyát!</b>	It serves you right! This is a reference to the saying <b>iyam ishi mal ku ugulyat</b> lit. the head fits the crane. <b>soksok</b> is the cry of the crane. <b>Soksok<sup>+</sup> gulyát! Njibu ya bu cit.</b> Serves you right, now you can experience it as well.
<b>solisoo</b>	Tch! Used by younger boys to comment on the behaviour of their elders. The word is usually whistled instead of spoken aloud. <b>Solisoo, aci irugu co do.</b> Tch! are those the eggs of a chicken? [Commenting on an elder who is walking around with his testicles exposed]
<b>sss...</b>	hissing sound to draw attention. Considered inappropriate by elders
<b>ta<sup>+</sup></b>	pause marker, equivalent to the English ..mm..
<b>ùnàṅ bu</b>	Your mother! An insulting epithet accompanied by the gesture of stretching out the hand with extended fingers. A calque of the Hausa <i>uwaka!</i> with this meaning
<b>ùpò bu</b>	Your father! An insulting epithet accompanied by the gesture of stretching out the hand with extended fingers. A calque of the Hausa <i>ubanka!</i> with this meaning
<b>wácígey</b>	exclamation by children when one of them has done something bordering on rudeness. Lit. 'to drink the egg of the red bishop-bird', meaning 'what are you up to?' ex!
<b>wale<sup>+</sup></b>	please! <b>adír va u kam te, a kur nle ka cit dak, wale</b> it is enough for you to return the hoe you have borrowed, please
<b>wíwí</b>	Hm! jeering sound <b>wíwí, bu nàm sañ pa lap da?</b> Hm! Why are you behaving like that?
<b>wóiwói...</b>	sound of a coward crying <b>uKai yāñ wóiwói ka ayər na pa dot</b> Kai was crying entirely from fear
<b>wóuwéé...</b>	Wonderful! <b>Wóuwéé...! uza tar ikur va pa catcat</b> Amazing! He has poured out all the sorghum
<b>wúlúlú</b>	expresses surprise <b>Wúlúlú! ize i ba cu ê</b> I am seeing something amazing here!
<b>wúsh</b>	expresses pleasant surprise when s.t. apparently problematic turns out to be simple <b>Wush, mbwai va igbal na kang bu gham do?</b> Hm! the fee is only a hundred Naira and you have been complaining bitterly
<b>wúsha</b>	expresses surprise when a good deed is misunderstood <b>wúsha, ba ki iyam mi a mi</b> Well then, return my possession (implying you feel the other person is not using it)
<b>wyáak</b>	Ha-ha! Jeering expression <b>Wyaak! I ri wo cit ka ayak!</b> Ha-ha! We beat you in the elections!
<b>málkánmàlkàn</b>	The standard reply to greetings while harvesting sorghum

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