CHAPTER VI

6.00 THE MORPHOLOGY OF THE KARBI LANGUAGE

6.1 Nominal is a very important phenomenon in Karbi. Such nominals, very often take suffixes, prefixes or such particles. These are divided into Nouns, Pronouns and numerals. These are discussed in the following pages.

6.2 Nouns: Nouns in Karbi are monomorphemic or polymorphemic. It consists of a single root and sometimes it consists of one or more affixes. These are mainly three types of noun roots in Karbi: simple, compound and derived.

6.2.1 Simple: Consist of a single morpheme. e.g.

- ken •leg'
- cu •hair'
- cāl 'bison'
- pe 'cloth'
- phi 'grand-father'
- phu 'head'
- bi 'goat'
- me 'fire'
- mek 'eye'
- methān 'dog'
- wo 'bird'
- hidi 'field'
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>Word 1</th>
<th>Word 2</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>keḵ̩</td>
<td>'leg'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>phu</td>
<td>'head'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>keḵ̩ phu</td>
<td>'knee'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ke̱nti</td>
<td>'heel'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>keḵ̩-pāk</td>
<td>'foot'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ke̱nbat</td>
<td>'footprint'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>cimun</td>
<td>'finger'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>keḵ̩</td>
<td>'leg'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>keḵ̩-cimun</td>
<td>'toes'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'mun-pl</td>
<td>'thumb'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'mun-ārnām</td>
<td>'ring-ginger'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii)</td>
<td>pak</td>
<td>'belly'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pak➢</td>
<td>'pot-bellied'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pak̩awur</td>
<td>'cholera'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pak-kān</td>
<td>'gas in the belly'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pak-kānichir</td>
<td>'diarrhoea'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv)</td>
<td>mir</td>
<td>'flower'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mir-ānrañ</td>
<td>'bud'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mir-kadamphui</td>
<td>'marigold'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mir-c̩obe</td>
<td>'a kind of flower'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mir-z̩owe</td>
<td>'mimosa'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>lān</td>
<td>'water'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lān-cho</td>
<td>'streamlet'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lān-chun</td>
<td>'water-falls'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.3 Derived nouns: Verbal nouns and Agent nouns

6.2.3.1 Verbal Nouns: These are formed by adding the prefix ke-, ka-, ki- to verb roots. e.g.

ke- kekor 'biting'
kekim 'building'
ke-dam 'going'
ke-wan 'coming'
ke-hari 'calling'

kā- kā-parbe 'studing'
kā-chai 'eating'
kā-thin 'dieing'

ki- ki-dun 'going'

6.2.3.2 Agent nouns: The suffix 'āban' must be added to make the singular agent noun. e.g.

kidun  āban 'one who goes'
kindunzi  āban 'one who will go'
kecho ābāñ 'one who is sick, patient'
keduk ābāñ 'one who is poor'
keplāñ ābāñ 'one who is rich'

The plural agent noun is formed by adding the suffix 'ātum' to verbal nouns. e.g.

kethi ātum 'the dead' (pl.)
kewāñ ātum 'those who came'

6.3 Gender: There are four genders in Karbi language - masculine, feminine, neuter and common gender. There are six different ways to indicate the gender of nouns in Karbi; all these are discussed below citing examples from Karbi.

(i) By using feminine suffix -pl (woman/she) after the word indicating masculine gender. e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>inti 'a clan of Karbi'</td>
<td>intipi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inhi 'a clan of Karbi'</td>
<td>inhipi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āham 'Assamese people'</td>
<td>āhampi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kurzā 'Muslim people'</td>
<td>kurzāpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terāñ 'a clan of Karbi'</td>
<td>terāñpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hindu 'Hindu people'</td>
<td>hindupi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hānce 'a clan of Karbi'</td>
<td>hānchestepi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(ii) By the words denoting male and female as suffix -pa (male), -pi (female) after the word indicating common gender. e.g.,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CM.</th>
<th>MS.</th>
<th>FM.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ḏarlen 'man'</td>
<td>ḏarlenpa</td>
<td>ḏarlenpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏarm 'daughter-in-law's father'</td>
<td>ḏarmpa</td>
<td>ḏarmpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏarnām 'god'</td>
<td>ḏarnāmpa</td>
<td>ḏarnāmpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏar 'brother-in-law'</td>
<td>ḏarp</td>
<td>ḏarpri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏoch 'child'</td>
<td>ḏochp</td>
<td>ḏochpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏchu 'grand-son'</td>
<td>ḏchup</td>
<td>ḏchupi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏ-char-burā 'old man'</td>
<td>ḏ-charp</td>
<td>ḏ-charpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏzir 'friend'</td>
<td>ḏzirp</td>
<td>ḏzirpi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏtep 'father's sister's son (elder)'</td>
<td>ḏtep</td>
<td>ḏtepi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏheme 'one who lost wife'</td>
<td>ḏhemp</td>
<td>ḏhempi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḏhem 'master'</td>
<td>ḏhemp</td>
<td>ḏhempi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) By using different terms i.e., terms of relationship denoting male and female. e.g.,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṣān 'uncle'</td>
<td>ni 'aunt'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṣik 'elder brother'</td>
<td>ṣepi 'sister-in-law'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṣōchō 'boy'</td>
<td>ṣōchāmā 'girl'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṣkarte 'brother'</td>
<td>ṣinžir 'sister'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(iv) By using feminine suffixes -pi and -āpi to animal or animate object other than human-beings after the word indicating common gender... e.g.,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>common</th>
<th>feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kārle 'squirrel'</td>
<td>kārle āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cāinañ 'cow'</td>
<td>cāinañ āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thizak 'deer'</td>
<td>thizak āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phāk 'pig'</td>
<td>phāk āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi 'goat'</td>
<td>bi āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meñ 'cat'</td>
<td>meñ āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methān 'dog'</td>
<td>methān āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wo 'bird'</td>
<td>wo āpi/pl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(v) By using suffixes -ālo (male), -mil/npl (female) to animals or animate objects other than human-being, e.g.,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cāinañ</td>
<td>'bull'</td>
<td>cāinañ ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citun</td>
<td>'tortoise'</td>
<td>citun ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celañ</td>
<td>'buffalo'</td>
<td>celañ ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cherun</td>
<td>'fox'</td>
<td>cherun ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zokhi</td>
<td>'deer'</td>
<td>zokhi ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phelānizule</td>
<td>'mongoose'</td>
<td>phelānizule ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi</td>
<td>'goat'</td>
<td>bi ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>men</td>
<td>'cat'</td>
<td>men ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methān</td>
<td>'dog'</td>
<td>methān ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ño</td>
<td>'bird'</td>
<td>ño ālo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locher</td>
<td>'horse'</td>
<td>locher ālo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simply one ā suffix is removed, when by using suffixes -ālo and -āpi to domestic bird like cock, e.g.,

| ño       | 'cock'     | ño āpi    | 'hen' |

(vi) By using female suffix 'f' (♀) one used after the Karbi word of masculine gender like Assamese female suffix 'f' (♀). e.g.

| chaňburā | 'old man'   | chaňburī/chārpi 'old woman' |
(vii) Words indicating neuter gender in Karbi. e.g.,

ārlan 'stone'
ārni 'sun'
ińlan 'hill'
imprim 'needle'
inčin 'iron'
kalam 'pen'
keñok 'shoes'
chāni 'lime'
tomān 'wind'
theñpi 'tree'
piran 'boy'
pe 'cloth'
me 'fine'
lān 'water'
lānrəi 'river'
lānle 'soil'
hon 'thread'
heñ 'house'
hārln 'cup'

6.4 Number: The Karbi language possesses two numbers - Singular and Plural. The plural is formed by suffixing. Such plural suffixes are -tum, -mār, -hər, -hei hui, -məkhā, -chizam, penānbāk, menañi etc. But there are some restrictions
in the use of these plural suffixes. These are illustrated below:

-tum 'many/more' - the plural suffix is simply added to the personal pronoun only. e.g.,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne 'I'</td>
<td>netum 'we'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neli 'I'(Hon.)</td>
<td>netum 'we' (Hon.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nān 'you'</td>
<td>nānitum 'you'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nānli'you(Hon.)</td>
<td>nānlitum 'you'(Hon.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ālān 'he'</td>
<td>ālān tum 'they'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ālānli 'he'(Hon.)</td>
<td>ālānlitum 'they'(Hon.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When it is added to the nouns the plural suffix -tum takes an ā prefix. e.g.,

**Noun:**
- ik 'elder brother' ik-ā-tum 'elder brothers'
- cho 'child' cho-ā-tum 'children'
- po 'father' po-ā-tum 'fathers'
- pei 'mother' pei-ā-tum 'mothers'
- monit 'man' monit-ā-tum 'men'

- mār 'more/many' - It is used with words indicating human beings. e.g.,

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ɔchɔ 'boy'</td>
<td>ɔchɔmār 'boys'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔchɔpī 'girl'</td>
<td>ɔchɔpımār 'girls'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suffix -li is added after the Pl. suffix -mar. e.g.,

nin 'one of the main clans of Inti' nimārlī (Pl.)
ban 'beloved' banimārlī

-hor 'a herd/flock' - is used with a noun denoting animate object or living being. Suffix -ā is added before the Pl. suffix -hor. e.g.,

innār 'elephant' innār-ā-hor 'a herd of elephant'
kipi 'monkey' kipi-ā-hor 'a flock of monkey'
cāinañ 'cow' cāinañ-ā-hor 'a herd of cows'
cherun 'fox' cherun-ā-hor 'a flock of fox'

This -hor may be compared with Assamese dialectically used pl. suffix -hor etc.

-heihui 'more/many' - is used with both inanimate and animate objects. e.g.,

āreñ 'stone' āreñ heihui 'stones'
iñlañ 'hill' iñlañ heihui 'hills'
meñ 'cat' meñ heihui 'cats'
methān 'dog' methān heihui 'dogs'
hem 'house' hem heihui 'houses'
wō 'bird' wō heihui 'birds'

-mokhā 'a crowd' - is a loan from Assamese. Simply one a suffix is preceded to it before added to the Karbi
words;  mokhā  gives a combinative sense of pl. in case or human-beings. e.g.,
chopā inut  'a boy'  chopā mokhā  'a crowd of boys'
mōnit inut  'a man'  mōnit mokhā  'a crowd of people'

-penāñbāk  'a hoard of men'  - is used with the nouns of human-being to indicate the sense of respect. e.g.,
hādāk mōnit penāñbāk do  'there are a hoard of men'

-chizam  'a shoal'  - is used with a noun in case of fish. Simple -ā suffix is preceded to it before added to the pl. suffix. e.g.,
lāñzi ālāñ ā chizam do  'there are a shoal of fish in the lake'

-menañ  'some/more'  - is used as quantifiers in Karbi. e.g.,
ātañkā menañ  'some money'
kītāp menañ  'some books'
lāñ menañ  'some water'

6.5  Case :  Case in the Karbi language is indicated by post position of the words or by qualifying post position.

6.5.1  The Karbi language possesses seven cases in total. These are - nominative, accusative, instrumental, dative,
ablative, genitive and locative. There are actually in total eight case suffixes in Karbi, such as - -chi, -le, -phān, -āphān, -pen, -penchi, -ā, -ālān which are arranged below in a tabular form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>suffix</th>
<th>Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>(1st) phran</td>
<td>zero element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>(2nd) dun</td>
<td>-phān, -āphan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>(3rd) thom</td>
<td>-penchi, -pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>(4th) phli</td>
<td>-phān, -āphān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ablative</td>
<td>(5th) pho</td>
<td>-pen, -penchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>(6th) thrak</td>
<td>-ā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>(7th) thrak chi</td>
<td>-chi, ālān</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nominative is the case of the surface object of a sentence. e.g.,

ne ān co 'I eat rice'
cāinañ bāp co 'the cow eats grass'
meñ ak co 'the cat eats fish'

Sometimes '-chi' is used to indicate certainty in nominative case. This is not actual case-ending indicative of nominative. e.g.,
The accusative is the case of the direct object of the verb. It is expressed by suffix -phān and -āphān. e.g.,

*nānphān nindok* 'I love you'
*ne phān thārwe epum* 'give me a mango'
*wāpi āphān chān pithā 'give rice to the hen''
*netum āphān àn nān pithā 'give us rice''
*Rām āphān hijap āpāk pithā 'give Rām a fan.'

The instrumental is the case of the instrument with the help of which the action mentioned by the verb is performed. It is expressed by the suffix -pen. Suffix -penci is used in instrumental case which in doing the action by human-being. e.g.,

*ne kalan pen chi̱ tōk* 'I write with a pen'
*phunu tari̱-pen rotṉon* 'cut the banana with a knife'
*bīdā -chikha̱ pen āzak mōnit kethā mān un 'the great man will be by study'

*Rām penchi bānīchō ākam pātañlo 'the work has been done by Rām'
Dative is the case of indirect object of the verb.
The suffixes -phan and -aphan are used in dative cases. e.g.,
ne phan nagaon dămzi 'I will go to Nowgaon'
lāphān tōm zir thannon 'tell him a story'
keri āphan rāptha 'help the poor man'

The ablative is the case of separation from the source in performing the action mentioned by the verb.
Suffixes -pen and -penchi are used in ablative case. e.g.,
Ram pen kitāp pāk wān ētlo 'bring a book from Ram'
lā ne ḫempen dām po 'he will go from my house'
ne bazār pen ak nām 'I buy fish from the market'
ārwe ānchań penchi kezan 'the rain falls from the above'

The construction of genitive is a peculiar feature of the language. The genitive precedes the noun where it depends. No case-suffixes are used in genitive case. Sometimes prefix ā- is added to the second noun. e.g.,
ne kitāp 'my book'
ne ḫem 'my house'
nāńli kalam 'my pen'
rām ā ḫem 'Ram's house'
lāń ā ḫem 'his house'
nāńlitum a ināńār 'your elephants'
ālāń ā phāk 'their pigs'
The locative case indicates the location of a person, animal or thing in space or time. There is no separate suffix in Karbi for nominative and locative. It is sometimes marked with -chi and ālāṅ. e.g.

Ian roichiak do 'fish lives in water'
ne dākchi do 'I am here'
hem ālāṅ komāt do ? 'who is present at home'? 
hithi ālāṅ hān-hontā āwe 'there is no vegetables in the market'
diphuchi bāzār do 'there is a market in Diphu'

6.5.2 Inflection of Nominal and Pronominal bases are shown in the following declensions of words:

**mōnit** 'man'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom.</td>
<td>mōnit</td>
<td>mōnitātum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc.</td>
<td>mōnit āphān</td>
<td>mōnit ātum āphān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instr.</td>
<td>mōnit pen chi</td>
<td>mōnit ātum pen chi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>mōnit āphān</td>
<td>mōnit ātum āphān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abl.</td>
<td>mōnit pen chi</td>
<td>mōnit ātum pen chi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>mōnit ā</td>
<td>mōnit ātum ā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loc.</td>
<td>mōnit ālāṅ</td>
<td>mōnit ātum ālāṅ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**chōpo** 'boy'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom.</td>
<td>chōpo</td>
<td>chōpo ātum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc.</td>
<td>chōpo āphān</td>
<td>chōpo ātum āphān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sg.</td>
<td>Pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instr.</td>
<td>chopō pen</td>
<td>chopōātum pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>chopō āphan</td>
<td>chopō ātum āphan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abl.</td>
<td>chopō pen</td>
<td>chopō ātum pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>chopō ā</td>
<td>chopō ātum ā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loc.</td>
<td>chopō</td>
<td>chopō ātum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ne 'I'[

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom.</td>
<td>ne</td>
<td>ne tum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc.</td>
<td>nephān</td>
<td>ne tum phān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instr.</td>
<td>nepen</td>
<td>netum pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>nephān</td>
<td>netum phān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abl.</td>
<td>nepen</td>
<td>netum pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>ne</td>
<td>netum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loc.</td>
<td>ne</td>
<td>netum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

nān 'you'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom.</td>
<td>nān</td>
<td>nāntum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc.</td>
<td>nān phān</td>
<td>nān tum phān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instr.</td>
<td>nān pen</td>
<td>nān tum pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>nān phān</td>
<td>nān tum phān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abl.</td>
<td>nān pen</td>
<td>nān tum pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>nān ā</td>
<td>nān tum ā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loc.</td>
<td>nān</td>
<td>nān</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6.6 Numerative definitives: Karbi possesses few numerative definitives, which are used invariably with the nouns in different species. These are -kron, -cam, -cet, -cáp, -cháñ, -zir, -zen, -zon, -dan, -pák, -pøi, -pun, -pen, -plan, -phlák, -bán, -be, -mì, -røi, -ren, -hán, -wan etc.

- kron : It indicates in counting roads, e.g.

ekron atowar 'one road'
kron thom atowar 'three roads'
-cam : It indicates counting paddy, plants at the time of planting. Suffix -ā is added before the noun. e.g.

    cam ni ā thanpī 'two trees'
    cam kep ā chak ā klim 'ten plants'

-cet : It indicates a small thing. e.g.

    lothe arwō ecet 'a piece of banana trees'

-cap : It indicates counting sheet of paper. e.g.

    ecāp 'one page'
    cāpni 'two pages'

-chaṇ : It indicates counting of necklace, bracelets etc. e.g.

    echaṇ ālek 'one necklace'
    lek chaṇ thōm 'three necklace'
    roī chaṇ phli 'four bracelets'

-zir : It indicates counting songs, poems etc.

    ezir ālun lunthā 'sing one song'
    lun zir thōm 'three lines of songs'

-zen : It indicates vegetables, ropes, threads, hair etc. e.g.,

    ezeṇ āchu 'one hair'
    hōn zeṇīni 'two threads'
-zon : It indicates animate or living beings and for counting months. e.g.,

- innār ezon 'one elephant'
- ciklo zonthom 'three months'
- zonpho ā-phāk 'five pigs'
- zon krehini aāk 'twelve fishes'

-don : It indicates counting of families in a village. e.g.

- dāk don koān do ? 'how many families are here' ?
- netum aron don inkoā do 'there are twenty families in our village'

-pāk : It indicates flat but delicate object like books, papers, mats, leaves etc. e.g.,

- kākai pāk ni 'two piece of papers'
- bithi pāk chikep 'ten pieces of betel-leaves'
- tar pāk thom 'three mats'

-poū : It indicates counting intervals between bamboo knots. e.g.

- poūni 'two intervals'
- poūnthom 'three intervals'

-pum : It indicates solid and complete fruits, eggs, marbals or similar objects. e.g.,

- kowe epum 'one betel-nut'
- thāwe pum thom 'three mangoes'
- phinu pumpho 'five bananas'
-peñ : It indicates bundles like reed. e.g.

inkirā peñni "two bundles of reed"

-plañi : It indicates counting loaf or bread. e.g.,

hinj plani "two loaves of bread"

-phlāk : It indicates some flat objects like wood, bamboo etc. e.g.

cek epflāk "bamboo one piece"
karl phlākni "two pieces of purlin"
prī phlāk thom "three pieces of rattan"

-bañ : It indicates counting person, student starting from two onwards. e.g.,

ochomār banhini "two boys"
charburā bañ kethom "three old men"
monīt bañphli "five men"

-be : It indicates counting brooms, e.g.,

ārpek bephli "four brooms"

-rō : It indicates counting rivers, tributaries and sheds. e.g.,

dāk lān rōni chetō "here two rivers meet"
bī rōiphli "four goat's pens"
-ren : It indicates the rows of hills. Suffix -ā is added before the noun word. e.g.,

ren thām ānlān (ā+inlan) 'three rows of hills'

-hān : It indicates long but solid object, parts of the body and ornaments. e.g.,

impōrīm hānthrek 'ten needles'
thenī hanni 'two fire woods'
ri-cimun hāmphō 'five fingers'
roy hārkep 'ten bracelets'

-hi : It indicates for parts of body that are found in pairs only. Suffix -ā is added before the noun words. e.g.,

hini ānō 'two ears'
hini āmek 'two eyes'

-wān : It indicates counting plates of food. e.g.,

ān ewān 'one plate of rice'
ān wānni 'two plates of rice'

6.7 Pronouns : Pronouns in Karbi are mainly of two types - Personal pronoun and Demonstrative pronoun. Personal pronouns are sub-divided into three classes - 1st, 2nd and 3rd personal pronoun. Similarly Demonstrative pronoun shows
four classes - Far demonstrative, Near demonstrative, Interrogative and Reflexive. The Karbi language does not possess Relative pronoun. These pronouns are not inflected for gender like nouns in Karbi.

6.7.1 Personal pronoun: Each personal pronoun has only one form, which appears as plural after suffixing the plural marker. The second and third personal pronouns are used in the honorific sense after suffixing the -li affix. The pl. marker in all these personal pronominal form is -tum. These are illustrated below -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal pronoun</th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>ne/ne-li 'I'</td>
<td>ne-tum/-litum 'we'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>nān 'you'(inf.)</td>
<td>nān-tum 'you'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nānli 'you'(hon.)</td>
<td>nān-li-tum 'you'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>ālān 'he'</td>
<td>ālān-tum 'they'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ālānli 'he'(hon.)</td>
<td>ālān-li-tum 'they'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In the 1st personal plural form -li is used with the plural formation without giving any honorific sense.

6.7.2 Demonstrative pronouns: The near demonstrative pronouns are -lā, -lā-bānchɔ (=it (this) in singular and lāhei, -lā-bānchɔtum (=these) in plural. e.g.,

lā-bānchɔ ānlañ inntui 'this hill is high'
lā monit 'this man'
The far demonstrative pronouns are hālā, hālābāńcho (=that) in singular and hālāhei, hālābāńcho tum (=those) in plural.

hālā mõnit
hālā theñpi
hālā bāńcho neli kalam
hālā hei mõnit
hālā hei kitāp
hālā bāńcho neli kitāp

There are a few other demonstrative pronouns in Karbi to indicate pronoun of place. The demonstrative pronouns are illustrated below:

dāk
lādāk
hādāk
hālādāk
lāpu
hāpu

'here'
'here'
'there'
'there'
'this side'
'that side'
lāchan  'thus'
dākhet  'very near'
lādāk het  'very near'
hādāk het  'far off'
lāhādāk het  'far off'

Note: The particle lā stands for 'near', while particle hā means distance/far. e.g.

nānli lādāk wānthā  'you will come here'
nānli hālādāk dāmthā  'you will go there'
nānli lāpū wānthā  'you come here'
nānli hādāk dōthā  'you stay there'
nānhem lādāk pen ko ān helo lāni  'how far your house from here?'

Similarly, the following pronominal forms in Karbi are used to mean 'pronoun of time'. e.g.,

pini  'to day'
pināp  'tomorrow'
pināp-dik  'day after tomorrow'
pināp-dik-ici  'day, day after tomorrow'
ātumī/pātumī  'yesterday'
pātumidik  'day before yesterday'
pātumidik ici  'day, day before yesterday'
ādāp  'morning'
pedāp  'this morning'
pāninwe  'to night'
Note: These prefix pe-, me- are used to mean time, while the suffix -dik, -dikici, -het, -malam indicate difference of time. e.g.

\[\begin{align*}
\text{pini urmi ārni} & \quad \text{'today is Monday'} \\
\text{nān ālān wānik po} & \quad \text{'he will come just now'} \\
\text{ātumi mantri lādāk wān} & \quad \text{'the Minister came here yesterday'} \\
\text{mōniṅ netum wānzi} & \quad \text{'we shall come next year'}
\end{align*}\]

The Interrogative pronouns in the Karbi language are formed by the prefix 'ko'. e.g.,

\[\begin{align*}
\text{māt/kōmāt} & \quad \text{'who'} \\
\text{kōpi/pi} & \quad \text{'what'} \\
\text{kōpu/kōpuchun} & \quad \text{'how'} \\
\text{kōān/kōānchi} & \quad \text{'how many'} \\
\text{kōdāt/kōmāt} & \quad \text{'where'} \\
\text{kōpupen} & \quad \text{'where from'} \\
\text{kōman/māntu} & \quad \text{'when'} \\
\text{māt/ā phān} & \quad \text{'whom'}
\end{align*}\]
Its
nanli men kop̃i lo ? 'what is your name'?  
nanli kitap konat lo ? 'where is your book'?  
nanli mantuch techi wānzi ? 'when will you come'?  
nan konat loke dāmzi ? 'where will you go'?  
lā komatchi klem lo ? 'who has it done'?  
hādāk ickul domā ? 'is there any school'?  
rañ ānbañ mont ko ēn do ? 'how many people are there in the village'?  
nan ruñ kolo ? 'which is your village'?  

The Reflexive pronominal forms in Karbi are only two: binon 'own', methān 'self'. The particle 'che' prefixed to any verb is used to strengthen the meaning of the verbal root. e.g.,

lā hēm che wāilo 'he returned home'  
ālānli methān āhēm chedām lo 'he went to his house'  
lāke ne kitāp binon lo 'this is my own book'  

6.8 Adjectives: Adjectives are generally formed in the Karbi language by prefixing ke-, ki-, kē- to the root. Adjective does not show the gender, number or case difference in Karbi. These stand always for grammatical purpose.

ke-

ik 'to be black' ke ik 'black'  
ēr 'to be red' ke ēr 'red'
'to be yellow' ke 'yellow'
'to be good' ke 'good'
'to be sweet' ke 'sweet'
'to be poor' ke 'poor'
'to be white' ke 'white'

'new' kimi 'new'
'to be die' kithi 'dead'
'taste like raw banana' kiphik 'tasty'

by prefixing kā- the nouns are converted into adjectives. e.g.,
āram - kāram 'warm'
ārnuk - kārnuk 'deep'
ārthat - kārthat 'thick'
lāń kārnuk 'warm water'
inām kārthat 'thickly jungle'
lāń kārnuk 'deeply water'

The adjectival words are used after the nouns in the sentence. e.g.,
'good boy'
'new book'
'white cloth'
'red flower'
'short man'
'big house'
6.8.1 To denote adjectival adjectives the affixes -pik, -klin, -cat, -phlap, -chip, -hek are added after an adjective form when any of the above affixes is added to the adjective then the initial ke-/ki-/ka- is immediately disappeared. 

E.g.

- kelok - pik = lokpik 'perfectly white'
- kelok - klin = lokklin 'bright white'
- kelok - cat = lokcat 'the mark of white'
- kelok - phlap = lokphap 'pale colour'
- kečr - chip = orchip 'bright red'
- kečr - hek = orhek 'slight red'
- kečt - pi = otpi 'slight yellow'

The noun form with initial 'in' - is disappeared when it is converted into an adjective by prefixing kān-. 

E.g.,

- inchām 'cool' kānchām 'cold'
- inlāt 'slippery-ness' kānlāt 'slippery'
- inlāt 'height' kānlāt 'high'
- inlāt 'cleanliness' kānlāt 'clean'

The primary adjectives are mostly loan words. E.g.,

- duchtā āmōnit 'wicked person'
- dhuni āmōnit 'rich person'
- zyāni āmōnit 'wise person'
- lubi āmōnit 'greedily person'
6.8.2 Degree of comparison: Karbi shows separate prefixes to indicate comparative and superlative degrees. These are mu-(comp.) and nei-(sup.). e.g.,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adj.</th>
<th>Comp.</th>
<th>Sup.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ke-me 'good'</td>
<td>memu 'better'</td>
<td>me nei 'best'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kedín 'tall'</td>
<td>dińmu 'taller'</td>
<td>dinnei 'tallest'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kántui 'high'</td>
<td>intuimu 'higher'</td>
<td>intuinei 'highest'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kāchān keme 'Kachang is good'
Kāchān mute Aran memu 'Arang is better than Kachang'
Kādok āwe apar Kāchān menei 'Kachang is the best of all'

Note: In the formation of Comp. and Sup. degrees the original word undergoes some changes.

Similarly āphān and āpār are also used to mean Comp. and Sup. respectively in Karbi. e.g.,

Hari āphān Ram char muchōt 'Ram is older than Hari'
kādōkāwe āpar Ram theknei 'Ram is the best of all'

The superlative degree is also formed by adding affix -pik, -par, -nei. After such addition of suffixes the original affix kā is disappeared.

kecho 'painful' | chopik 'very painful'
kāntui 'high' | intuípik 'very highest'
kethe 'great' | the par 'very great'
Numerals: Numeral is another interesting phenomenon of the Karbi language. Numerals are formed in Karbi in a peculiar way like other Tibeto-Burmese languages. The cardinal numeral forms from one to nine are as below -

ich "one"

hini "two"

kethom "three"

phli "four"

pho "five"

thrak "six"

thrakchi "seven"

nerkep "eight"

chirkep "nine"

kep ten"

6.9.1 The counting system from one to six is very simple, while seven to nine shows some peculiarities as below -

'seven': six plus one i.e., thrak + ichi thrakchi

'eight': ten minus two i.e., kep-hini (=ner) nerkep.

'nine': ten minus one i.e., kep-ichi (=chir) chirkep.
6.9.2 The numerals from eleven to nineteen takes the prefix 'kre'.

kre ichi 'eleven'
kre hint 'twelve'
kre kethom 'thirteen'
kre phli 'fourteen'
kre pho 'fifteen'
kre thrak 'sixteen'
kre thrakchi 'seventeen'
kre nerkep 'eighteen'
kre chirkep 'nineteen'

6.9.3 The numeral twenty is 'INKO' and from twenty one up to twentynine the cardinal form appears as twenty plus one, twenty plus two, twenty plus three and so on. In counting INKO 'twenty' takes 'RA' suffix in these forms as below :

INKO RA ichi 'twenty plus one i.e. twenty one'
INKO RA hint 'twenty two'
INKO RA kethom 'twenty three'
INKO RA phli 'twenty four'
INKO RA pho 'twenty five'
INKO RA thrak 'twenty six'
INKO RA thrakchi 'twenty seven'
INKO RA nerkep 'twenty eight'
INKO RA chirkep 'twenty nine'
6.9.4 This -ra suffix is used in counting the various cardinals from one to nine after twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy eighty, ninety.

inkoi ra ichi 'twenty plus one > twenty one'
inkoi ra chirkep 'twenty plus/and ten minus one> twenty nine'

thom kep ra ichi 'three ten i.e. ten multiplied by three plus and one> thirty one'
thom kep ra nerkep 'three ten i.e. ten multiplied by three plus and ten minus two> thirty eight'

6.9.5 While counting thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty and ninety the cardinals are formed by prefixing 'kep' (=ten) the multiplier unit to it. e.g.,

kethom 'three' thom kep 'three multiply to ten > thirty'
phil kep 'four " " " > forty'
pho kep 'five " " " > fifty'
thrak kep 'six " " " > sixty'
thrakchi kep 'seven " " " > seventy'
thrakner kep 'eight " " " > eighty'
thrak chirkep 'nine " " " > ninety'

6.9.6 The numerals 30 to 100 are given below:

thomkep 'thirty'

thomkep ra ichi 'thirty one'
thomkep ra hini
thomkep ra kethom
thomkep ra phli
thomkep ra pho
thomkep ra thrak
thomkep ra thrakchi
thomkep ra nerkep
thomkep ra chirkep
phlikep
phlikep ra ichi
phlikep ra hini
phli kep ra kethom
phli kep ra phli
phli kep ra pho
phli kep ra thrak
phli kep ra thrakchi
phli kep ra nerkep
phli kep ra chirkep
pho kep
pho kep ra ichi
pho kep ra hini
pho kep ra kethom
pho kep ra phli
pho kep ra pho
pho kep ra thrak
pho kep ra thrakchi
'thirty two'
'thirty three'
'thirty four'
'thirty five'
'thirty six'
'thirty seven'
'thirty eight'
'thirty nine'
'forty'
'forty one'
'forty two'
'forty three'
'forty four'
'forty five'
'forty six'
'forty seven'
'forty eight'
'forty nine'
'fifty'
'fifty one'
'fifty two'
'fifty three'
'fifty four'
'fifty five'
'fifty six'
'fifty seven'
pho kep rā nerkep
pho kep rā chirkep
thrak kep
thrak kep rā ichi
thrak kep rā hini
thrak kep rā kethom
thrak kep rā phli
thrak kep rā phō
thr k kep rā thrak
thrak kep rā thrakchi
thrak kep rā nerkep
thrak kep rā chirkep
thrak chi kep
thrak chi kep rā ichi
thrak chi kep rā hini
thrak chi kep rā kethom
thrak chi kep rā phli
thrak chi kep rā phō
thrak chi kep rā thrak
thrak chi kep rā thrakchi
thrak chi kep rā nerkep
thrak chi kep rā chirkep
thrak nerkep
thrak nerkep rā ichi
thrak nerkep rā hini
thrak nerkep rā kethom

'fifty eight'
'fifty nine'
'sixty'
'sixty one'
'sixty two'
'sixty three'
'sixty four'
'sixty five'
'sixty six'
'sixty seven'
'sixty eight'
'sixty nine'
'seventy'
'seventy one'
'seventy two'
'seventy three'
'seventy four'
'seventy five'
'seventy six'
'seventy seven'
'seventy eight'
'seventy nine'
'eighty'
'eighty one'
'eighty two'
'eighty three'
6.9.7 In Karbi the cardinal forms for 'one hundred' and 'one thousand' are phār and churi respectively. In Karbi society the counting is generally done in thousand.

The counting system from hundred up to thousands appears as below:

phār ichi 'one hundred'
phār hini 'two hundred'
phāro kethom • three hundred
phāro phli • four hundred
phāro pho • five hundred
phāro thrak • six hundred
phāro thrakchi • seven hundred
phāro nerkep • eight hundred
phāro chirkep • nine hundred
churi • thousand
churi ichi • one thousand
churi hini • two thousand
churi chirkep • nine thousand

Similarly the counting is also done beyond thousand as below:

churi kep : thousand multiply to ten > ten thousand, ajut
churi pharo : thousand multiply to hundred > one hundred thousand / a lakh

6.9.8 The ordinals like 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc. in Karbi are as below:

ichi āphrān • first
hini āphrān • second
kethom āphrān • third
phli āphrān • fourth
pho āphrān • fifth
It is interesting that the ordinal number always precedes the noun and the prefix ā- is added before the noun word. e.g.,

āphrān āndeň 'first/front room'
ādun āndeň 'second room'
kethom āndeň 'third room'
kethom āhém 'third house'