



Phasal Polarity expressions in Fulfulde of northern Cameroon Constructional variation and grammaticalization

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Fulfulde is the lingua franca in northern Cameroon and, by now, it is L1 not only of “ethnic” Fulani, but also of speakers outside this group. Based on a corpus of biblical texts and (elicited) data collected among 15 speakers with different linguistic/ethnic backgrounds, I will show means of expressing phasal polarity in this Fulfulde variety. Negative PhP categories NOT YET and NO LONGER are homogenously expressed by constructions involving a negator and the clause final elements *fahin* ‘no longer’ and *tawon* ‘not yet’. However, constructional variation (aside from numerous periphrastic ways of rendering PhP meaning) can be found in the coding strategies of positive PhP categories ALREADY and STILL. ALREADY is left unmarked or denoted by clause-final elements *timmi/jinni* derived from ‘finish’-verbs *tim-*/*jinn-*. STILL is overtly unmarked or coded by either the NOT YET item *tawon* or the NO LONGER item *fahin*. In my presentation, I will demonstrate that the occurring variation in ALREADY/STILL expressions depends on the type of PhP-scenario to be coded (NEUTRAL or COUNTERFACTUAL), and on the linguistic backgrounds of the speakers possibly responsible for rather recent contact induced grammaticalizations of PhP constructions.