

## On-site Education of Practical Languages for Area Studies

Report in 2008

—Fula, The University of Yaoundé 1, Cameroon (H20.12.4 — H21.3.23) —

Year of Enrollment: 2008

Graduate School of Asian and African Areas Studies

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### Theme of the Study

The Fulbe has its origin in Senegal, West Africa. Through eastward migration, they have expanded their area to Sudan, East Africa. “Mbororo” are the branch of this ethnic group, and are well known as “pastoral Fulbe”. My research is focusing on their dairy product selling.

Traditionally, Mbororo consume milk from their cows and sell the processed goods from the milk in the market. The study aims to clarify their traditional milk processing, dairy product selling, and its distribution. Through the description of these processes, I will clarify the characteristics of their society.

In Cameroon, situation of dairy products in the pastoralists has been changing in some decades. For example, crossbreeding program of cattle has carried out and the milk processing plant has introduced. Such changes have influenced on Mbororo life which relies on the pastoralism. In this study, I also survey the situation among dairying that Mbororo is facing . Through that,, I will show an example of pastoralist’s life in today’s.Africa



< fig.1: Mbororo’s dairying selling >



< fig.2: a pat of butter after stiring >

## Features of the Language

Fula belongs to the Atlantic branch of the Niger-Congo language family. It is the mother tongue of Fulbe that spreads over large area, from Senegal to Sudan. It is difficult to say in which area the “standard” Fula is spoken. Fula is divided into two groups; west dialect and east dialect (Eguchi, 1993) \*. In north Cameroon, Fula is spoken as common language by ethnic groups other than Fulbe.

## Contents of the Course

I and Mr. Yamaguchi (my colleague of ASAFAS) took the lecture in the University of Yaoundé 1.

The lecture was done in English. First, the classification for African language is reviewed, and phonology morphology and syntax of Bantu language are described. The lecture was done in weekdays and one lesson was 90-120 minutes long.

Besides this lecture, I took private lesson on Fula. This lesson was started with learning numeral in Fula. It was almost first time for me to study Fula. After that, I studied basic grammar and oral practices by one to one. I made some sentences using Fula words that lecturer gave me and I translated English sentences to Fula as well. This lesson had also done in English and period had same time as the lecture described above.



<fig.3: the University of Yaoundé 1>



<fig.4: with a student in the university>

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\* Fulbe refer to their language; Pulaar in Senegal, Pular in Guinea, Fulfulde in Mali and elsewhere (Arnott, 1970). Although Eguchi (1993) uses the explanation “Fulfulde-go” in Japanese, I will use “Fula” to include all of them.

### **Overall Impression of the course**

I made a home-stay in a Fula speakers' family. The father of that family frequently tested my Fula in daily conversation. For example, he asked me the meaning of “*kodo*”, “stranger” or “guest” in Fula. I answered, “*bana miin*”, “like me”, in Fula. When I gave him a correct answer, he smiled and said “*too!*”, meaning “exactly” in Fula.

We always communicated in Fula. I should remember terms in Fula. Always I had to explain definition of the terms in Fula.

It was tiring at first, but it really helped me improve my language skill. I felt that Fula was becoming my own language during such conversation with him. It also helped me understand the concept of their language as it is. That was hard but really practical training.

### **Self-assessment of the extent of achievement**

I could improve my conversation skill in Fula during this program. That met the aim of the program, I think. Though this program I improved my listening and speaking ability, and I got enough skill for communication. In this period I made some researches using my conversation skill, which will link to next research. I established some connection with the university, which will help my future research in Cameroon

In general I can say my training was successful. But I could not get enough grammatical and reading skill for literatures yet. To get over it, I would like to continue studying by myself.

### **Reference**

D. W. Arnott, 1970, *The nominal and verbal systems of fula*, Oxford at the clarendon press

Kazuhisa, Eguchi, 1993, Fulfulde-go, Takeshi Shibata eds., *Sekai no Kotoba Syoujiten*, Taisyukansyoten