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LANGUAGE IN CONTACT: THE CASE OF THE FULƁE DIALECT OF KEJOM (BABANKI)

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ABSTRACT This paper describes the variety of Babanki (henceforth called Kejom) spoken by native Fulfulde speakers born and raised in Kejom communities. Kejom is a Center Ring Grassfields Bantu language spoken in two villages (Kejom Ketinguh and Kejom Keku) in northwestern Cameroon. This paper describes the practice in Kejom Ketinguh. The Fulɓe are Fulfulde speakers of Adamawa origin who migrated from northern Cameroon and settled in Kejom more than 50 years ago. Peaceful coexistence between the two groups has encouraged young Fulɓe to learn the Kejom language and to use it when interacting with Kejom people. Comparison of the speech of Fulɓe and native speakers of Kejom revealed that the Kejom spoken by the Fulɓe (the Fulɓe dialect) contains phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical deviations from the standard variety spoken by Kejom people. In addition to Fulfulde (the Fulɓe mother tongue), Cameroon Pidgin English (their second language) has also influenced the Fulɓe dialect of Kejom. We argue in this paper that the Fulɓe prefer to rely on Cameroon Pidgin English to fill most communication gaps with native Kejom speakers, because this widely used language is common to both communities.

Key Words: Language contact; Babanki; Kejom; Fulfulde; Northwestern Cameroon.

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the variety of Babanki (henceforth Kejom, the preferred term used by native speakers for their language and villages) spoken by native speakers of Fulfulde (Fulɓe) who were born and raised in Kejom communities. Kejom is a language belonging to the center branch of the Ring subgroup of the Grassfields Bantu languages. It is spoken in two villages in northwestern Cameroon, Kejom Ketinguh (Babanki Tungo) and Kejom Keku (Big Babanki). The information presented in this paper reflects the practice in Kejom Ketinguh.

In this study, we present a grammar for the Kejom dialect spoken by the Fulɓe (hereafter called the Fulɓe dialect) and examine differences in phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexis between this dialect and that spoken by native Kejom speakers. We also examine the source(s) of interference, finding that both Fulfulde and Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) have influenced the grammar of the Fulɓe dialect.

The Fulɓe have lived in Kejom territory for nearly a century. Most Fulɓe elders (aged 40 or more years) do not speak Kejom, although some can understand it. Children under 10 years of age also do not speak or understand Kejom. Fulɓe speakers of Kejom are thus approximately 10–40 years old, and most use the

language when interacting with native Kejom speakers. Many Fulɓe who do not speak Kejom regret this situation, and express the desire for all of their children to learn the language. They say that the Fulɓe are now part of the community and should be able to interact with everyone, to become integrated, and to be accepted as villagers. Although the Fulɓe have maintained a separate cultural and political identity until recently, their current desire to associate and socialize with the Kejom has led many Fulɓe to learn the Kejom language.

Language contact occurs when the speakers of two languages or dialects interact regularly with each other (Murray, 1998). Interference and/or borrowing can occur to fill the lexical gaps inevitably created by such contact, especially in contact situations with bilingual or multilingual individuals. This process can eventually lead to a new variety of the language in question (Rickford & McWhorter, 1998). The lexicon is usually most affected, and many grammatical components may also be influenced. The phonology may be modified by the introduction of new phonemes or allophones and changes in their distribution. The morphology may be affected through the addition or elimination of affixes. Syntactic changes in word order may also occur. All of these potential modifications were explored in this study, which investigated the manipulation of Kejom grammar by native Fulfulde speakers to convey meaning when speaking Kejom. Before presenting the Fulɓe dialect of Kejom, it is necessary to understand the historical context that brought the two groups together and to review the Kejom and Fulfulde grammars.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

I. Kejom

The Kejom people migrated to their current location from the Tikar group in northeastern Cameroon. Due to hostilities on the part of neighbors, the Tikar group was forced to split into smaller groups that drifted south and east. The Bafut, Kom, Nso, and Kejom were the last to arrive and settle in the Bamenda highlands. The Kejom people later moved from that location and settled around Lake Oku. Following a dispute over the ownership of the lake, the Oku successfully fought the Kejom and forced them to leave the territory. The Kejom subsequently lived alongside the Kom; later, they separated from this group due to disputes related to familial succession.

Two Kejom groups were later formed when a prince died shortly before the Kejom annual dance. Contrary to the custom demanding that royal funerals be completed before the annual dance, the Fon ordered that the dance begin and postponed the prince's funeral celebration. Forty disgruntled people decided to separate from the others, and eventually settled in present-day Kejom Ketinguh. The Fon and his supporters remained in present-day Kejom Keku. The Fulɓe came to Kejom territory many decades later.

II. Fulɓe

The Fulɓe began to enter the Grassfields in the 1910s, driven by their continuous search for pastureland. They left northern Nigeria in the early 19th century, slowly migrating to the east and south. Their movements were guided by ecological and political considerations, with the central goal of sustaining their pastoral economy. Because the western Grassfields provided exceptionally favorable conditions that promoted the growth of their herds, many families settled in this area and have remained for several decades, becoming part of the local community.

The Fulɓe included in this study first moved to Kejom between 1935 and 1940, but left in 1958 because of grazing land disputes. They returned in 1970 to settle in their present locations, mostly in the grasslands or hills on the outskirts of Kejom Ketinguh. They perceived themselves as politically marginalized. The hostility that prevailed between the two communities has dwindled in the last 20 years, to the extent that the Fulɓe have interacted with the Kejom more closely and have allowed their children to learn the Kejom language. When Fulɓe who have learned the language interact with Kejom people, they generally prefer to speak Kejom rather than CPE. CPE is a more broadly dispersed language that is spoken by the Kejom and Fulɓe, as well as by most English-speaking and some French-speaking Cameroonians. Unless a Fulɓe has learned Kejom, CPE is the only language in which the two groups can communicate.

OVERVIEW OF PHONOLOGY, MORPHOLOGY, AND SYNTAX

I. Kejom

1. Phonology

The Kejom language uses 26 consonant phonemes /b, t, d, k, g, ʔ, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, f, v, s, ʃ, ʒ, ɣ, h, pf, bv, ts dz, tʃ, dʒ, l, w, j/ and eight vowels /i, e, a, ɨ, ʉ, ə, o, u/. Kejom is a tonal language that uses high (H) and low (L) underlying tone levels and three contour tones (rising, high-falling, low-falling). The mid tone also occurs, but is considered to be the result of a step down from a high tone rather than an underlying tone (Akumbu, 2008).

Four basic canonical syllable types occur in Kejom: N, V, CV, and CVC. The latter two types can be modified by palatalization, labialization, or prenasalization to yield syllables such as CGV, CGVC, NCV, and NCVC (where G represents

Table 1. Syllable structure of Kejom noun roots

	CV	CGV	CVC	CGVC	NCV	NCGV	NCVC	NCGVC
Low	à-bè 'liver'	bjɨ 'pit'	dzəm 'back'	kə-bjìʔ 'dust'	kə-ǹdʉ́ 'whip'	ǹdjə 'thing'	kə-m̀fɨ́f 'blind (n)'	ŋ̀gwàʔ 'seed'
High	ə-fʉ́ 'leaf'	ə-lwí 'nose'	tə-káŋ 'skies'	ə-fwín 'leg'	kə-m̀bó 'madness'	ŋ̀gwé 'name'	ŋ̀kɨ́m 'basket'	m̀bjəʔ 'shoulder'

glide), as illustrated in Table 1.

2. Morphology

Most Kejom nouns are made up of a prefix+root, and class 10 nouns consist of a root+suffix. Overt noun prefixes in Kejom are either CV or V. Noun roots occur with all syllable types except V. The underlying tone melodies on noun roots are L, H, LH, and HL. The Kejom noun class system includes Bantu classes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 6a, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 19 (Table 2). Possible class pairings are 1/2, 3/6, 3/13, 5/6, 5/13, 7/8, 7/6, 7/6a, 7/10, 9/6, 9/10, and 19/6a.

Verb roots are monosyllabic except when reduplicated and occur with CV, CGV, CVC, and CGVC syllable types and L and H tone levels. A few verbal extensions with CV structure exist in Kejom. According to Akumbu (2009) the language uses eight temporal distinctions, including four past tenses (immediate, recent, distant, remote), a present tense, and three future tenses (immediate, proximate, remote). Tense is grammaticalized in Kejom, with distinct grammatical morphemes marking all past and future tenses. Time adverbials or particles are used to indicate temporal specification in the language, but mixing of tense and adverb meanings is prohibited. Hence, past-referring deictic adverbs occur with past tenses and future-referring deictic adverbs occur with future tenses. The two main aspects in Kejom are perfective and imperfective (e.g., progressive, habitual, repetitive, anterior). Table 3 provides examples of tense and aspect co-occurrences.

3. Syntax

Word order in Kejom is STVO (where T is the *tense or aspect* marker). As a head-first language, the modifier of a noun phrase normally occurs after the noun it modifies. However, this order is inverted in many occurrences. Apart from discontinuous morphemes, tense and aspect markers occur before the verb root:

1)	/fə̀-sés	fə́	ə̀-kó/	[fə sés fə́ kó]	‘expensive pepper’
	c19-pepper	AM	c5-money		

Table 2. Kejom noun classes

Noun Class	Prefix or Suffix	Example	Gloss
1	ə̀-	sàŋ, sùʔ, wùlɨ́m	‘month’, ‘bottle’, ‘man’
2	və̀-, ə̀-	və̀-sàŋ, və̀-sùʔ, lú-mə́	‘months’, ‘bottles’, ‘men’
3	ə̀-	ə̀-fwín, ə̀-wóŋ	‘leg’, ‘market’
5	ə̀-	ə̀-ʃɨ́, ə̀-ɣóŋ	‘eye’, ‘spear’
6	à-	à-fwín, à-ʃɨ́, à-ɣú	‘legs’, ‘eyes’, ‘feet’
6a	mə̀-	mə̀-ɲɲín, mə̀-fú	‘birds’, ‘medicines’
7	kə̀-	kə̀-m̀bò, kə̀-ɣú, kə̀-fó	‘bag’, ‘foot’, ‘thing’
8	ə̀-	ə̀-m̀bò	‘bags’
9	ə̀-	m̀bàʔ, Bú	‘insult (n.)’, ‘dog’
10	-sə́	m̀bàʔ-sə́, Bú-sə́	‘insults (n.)’, ‘dogs’
13	tə̀-	tə̀-wóŋ, tə̀-ɣóŋ	‘markets’, ‘spears’
19	fə̀-	fə̀-ɲɲín	‘bird’

Table 3. Tense and aspect intersection in Kejom

	Perfective	Progressive	Habitual	Repetitive	Anterior
P4	ghə̌ ńzhɨ́m lí 'He sang'	ghə̀ ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He was singing'	ghə̀ ǹ ǹzhɨ́mə́ 'He used to sing'	ghə̌ bê ǹdì'ə́ 'He cried again'	ghə̌ ńvì lí mè 'He came (completely)'
P3	ghə̌ tə̂ zhɨ́m 'He sang'	ghə̀ tə̀ ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He was singing'		ghə̌ tə̂ bè dì 'He cried again'	ghə̌ tə̂ vì mè 'He came (completely)'
P2	ghə̌ yî zhɨ́m 'He sang'	ghə̀ yì ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He was singing'		ghə̌ yî bè dì 'He cried again'	ghə̌ yî vì mè 'He came (completely)'
P1	ghə̌ zhɨ́m lí 'He sang'				ghə̌ vî lí mè 'He came (completely)'
P0	ghə̀ zhɨ́mə́ 'He is singing'	ghə̀ zhɨ́mə́ 'He is singing (now)'		ghə̌ bê dì 'He has cried again'	ghə̌ vî lí mè 'He has come'
F1	ghə̌ zhɨ́m 'He will sing'	ghə̌ ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He will be singing'		ghə̌ bâ dì 'He will again'	
F2	ghə̌ né zhɨ́m 'He will sing'	ghə̌ né ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He will be singing'	ghə̀ né ǹ ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He will be singing'	ghə̌ bê né dì 'He will cry again'	
F3	ghə̌ lú zhɨ́m 'He will sing'	ghə̌ lú ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He will be singing'	ghə̀ lú ǹ ńzhɨ́mə́ 'He will be singing'	ghə̌ bê lú dì 'He will cry again'	

2) /mà ə́ bè tə̀ nú/ [mă bê tə̀ nú] ‘I defecated again’.
1s SM REP P3 defecate

II. Fulfulde

1. Phonology

Fulfulde uses 28 consonant phonemes /p, b, t, d, c, ɟ, k, g, ʔ, ɓ, ɗ, y̰, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, f, v, s, h, mb, nd, nɟ, ŋg, l, r, w, j/ and five vowel phonemes /i, e, a, o, u/. Consonant doubling is a widespread feature, involving all consonants except the glottal and prenasalized stops:

3) fotuki ‘fitting’
fottuki ‘passing’
taguki ‘creating’
tagguki ‘folding up’

Vowel length is also contrastive or phonemic:

4) hor ‘spy’
hoor ‘take away’

Each of the five vowel phonemes may be lengthened:

5) horuki ‘remaining’
hooruki ‘taking back’

All Fulfulde syllables begin with a consonant; words that are spelled with an initial vowel are spoken with an initial glottal stop (e.g., *ʔo-wári* ‘he came’). Every syllable has a short or long vowel and may or may not end with a consonant. If the vowel is long, the syllable cannot end with a consonant (e.g., *báaba* ‘father’, *bóne* ‘woe’). For this reason, the vowel in a root is shortened in some morphological constructions. For example, the verb root *ɲaam-* + perfective *-i* = *ɲaami* ‘ate’, but the verb root *ɲaam-* + causative *-n-* + perfective *-i* = *ɲami* ‘caused to eat’. Although the verb root has a long vowel, it is only realized as such if the morphology allows the “m” to begin a new syllable, thus leaving the first syllable open. However, the “m” cannot join a subsequent syllable that starts with a consonant because tautosyllabic consonant clusters are not allowed. For this reason, the vowel is shortened.

Fulfulde is a stress-timed language, and almost all words of more than one syllable carry penultimate stress. Most exceptions to this rule are borrowed words, such as *habaru* ‘story’ from Arabic.

2. Morphology

Most Fulfulde nouns are composed of a stem + class suffix. Consisting of 19 singular classes and five plural classes (Stennes, 1967), the nominal class system is based largely on a semantic taxonomy. The classes are divided into four semantic

Table 4. Fulfulde noun class markers

	Singular	Plural
Person	ʔo	ɓe
Non-person	nde, ŋgo, ŋgal, ka, ki, ko, dam, dum	ɗe
	ndi, ndu, ŋge, ŋgu, ŋgol, kol	ɗi
Diminutive	kal, ŋgum, ŋgel	koy
Augmentative	ŋga	ko

groups: person, non-person, diminutive, and augmentative classes. Each of these groups uses singular and plural class markers (Table 4).

The verb phrase core in Fulfulde is composed of a verb stem+tense-aspect-voice suffix:

6) wár- ‘come’
wár-t- ‘come back’
wár-t-ir- ‘come back in a certain way’

The stem may be a verb root, verbalized noun, or adjective root with or without a stem extension. The tense may be past, future, or continuative. The future and continuative tenses are differentiated from the past by the morphemes *ɗo* and *-at*, whereas the past tense has a zero morpheme. Past and future meanings are distinguished by context, which is not necessarily the actual present. Fulfulde has two main aspects (perfective, imperfective) and three voices (active, middle, passive). A significant feature of the verbal system is the ability to refocus; whenever the focus of a clause is on a fronted constituent rather than on the verbal event, the set of voice-aspect verbal suffixes differs from that used in a normal sentence (where the verbal event is the focus). Negatives occur only in the past and future tenses (e.g., *mi-yáháayi* ‘I did not go’, *mi-yáhataa* ‘I will not go’). Tense is differentiated from aspect in that a pre-time suffix may be added to tense forms, but not to aspect forms (Stennes, 1967).

3. Syntax

Fulfulde is a STVO language. Noun phrases with a single head nominal generally show a head-modifier relationship, with limitations on the elements that can occur together (e.g., *bìŋgel górgel* ‘boy’, *bìŋgel déyel* ‘girl’). A very few plural-centered or compound noun phrases with more than one head nominal exist. The verb phrase is composed of a verb core and a modifier that may or may not be present (e.g., *ɓe-kúli* ‘they feared’, *mi-ɗoréena kadi* ‘I am waiting then’). Verb phrase modifier types include adverbs, infinitives, and negative particles. For more information on Fulfulde grammar, the interested reader is referred to Stennes (1967) and Taylor (1953).

THE FULƁE DIALECT OF KEJOM

The speech of the Fulɓe and that of the Kejom vary considerably.(1) Given the regularity of these variations, the Fulɓe can be said to speak a dialect of Kejom. Differences are present at nearly all grammatical levels, most notably in the phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon. The following discussion considers these differences.

I. Phonology

The phonological elements of Kejom are modified in various ways in the Fulɓe dialect. Some sounds have been replaced or are treated as interchangeable.

1. Consonants

The two dialects differ in the interaction between fricatives and affricates. Affricates and some fricatives are widely used in place of other fricatives and affricates in the Fulɓe dialect (Table 5). However, this use is not regular. For the majority of speakers, [dʒ] is used in place of [dz], [s] replaces [ʃ] and [ts], and [z] is replaced by [ʃ] or [ʒ]. This mixing of fricatives and affricates can be explained by the presence of these sounds in the Kejom language and their absence (except [s]) in Fulfulde. The Fulɓe are therefore unable to distinguish between the sounds and use them indiscriminately.

2. Vowels

The central high vowels [ɨ, ʉ] in Kejom are consistently replaced by the front or back high vowels [i, u] in the Fulɓe dialect. Whereas [ʉ] is always replaced by [u], [ɨ] can be replaced by [i] (as expected) or by [u] (Table 6). This process represents the reduction of the four Kejom high vowels [i, ɨ, ʉ, u] to the two Fulfulde high vowels [i, u].

Table 5. Consonant variations

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	mà dʒáŋ ʒíʔ ɣɔ́m I call name my 'I called my name'	mà dzàŋ ə-ʒíʔ ɣɔ́mə́ I call c5-name my 'I called my name'
b)	súsə́ 'fish'	ʃúsə́ 'fish'
c)	ʧɛ̀n mà dʒú if I go 'if I go'	sə́tsɛ̀n mà dʒʉ́ if I go 'if I go'
d)	ʃén ŋwàʔlə buy book 'buy a book'	zén ŋwàʔlə buy book 'buy a book'
e)	mà dʒú sɔ̀ŋ kó I go steal money 'I went and stole money'	mà dʒʉ̀ tsɔ̀ŋ ə́-kó I go steal c5-money 'I went and stole money'

Table 6. Vowel changes

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	ʤìm ‘pray’	ʤɨ̀m ‘pray’
b)	ʒú kə̀-bájn eat c7-fufu ‘eat fufu corn’	ʒɨ́ kə̀-bájn eat c7-fufu ‘eat fufu corn’
c)	mà ʤú á kə́-kwə́n búnə̀ I go to c7-bed sleep ‘I should go and sleep’	mà ʤʉ́ ɲə̀ŋmə̀ bʉ̀nə́ I go lie down sleep ‘I should go and sleep’
d)	ɲú mùluʔ drink wine ‘drank palm wine’	ɲʉ́ mə̀nljùʔ drink wine ‘drank palm wine’

Table 7. Variation in tones

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	ʃə́ʔtə̀ ‘told’	ʃə̀ʔtə̀ ‘told’
b)	mà ʤú sɔ̀ŋ kó I go steal money ‘I went and stole money’	mà ʤʉ̀ tsɔ̀ŋ ə́-kó I go steal c5-money ‘I went and stole money’
c)	lá kə́ mà ɣɔ́m that NEG I beat ‘…that I should not beat’	lá kə́ mà ɣɔ̀m that NEG I beat ‘…that I should not beat’
d)	kámə́ máljìk squeeze milk ‘collected milk’	kàm máljìk squeeze milk ‘collected milk’
e)	jès ʤú á mû we go to water ‘we then go and fetch water’	jɛ́ ʤʉ́ á mù we go to water ‘we then go and fetch water’

3. Tones

Variations in the use of tone are closely related to the morphology of the languages. The Fulɓe dialect does not incorporate the tonal differences that occur among Kejom verb tenses. The presence or absence of some surface tones results in differences in meaning between the dialects (Table 7).

These data as reveal that tone does not surface in the Fulɓe dialect in exactly the same manner as it does in Kejom. This can be explained by the failure of Fulfulde speakers to fully recognize and produce the salient tonal distinctions in Kejom, because Fulfulde is not a tonal language.

Table 8. Irregular tense markers

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	mà ná gàʔ lá… I F2 speak that 'I will say that…'	mà né gàʔ lá… I F2 speak that 'I will say that…'
b)	mà ná sɔ́ŋ kó I F2 steal money 'I will steal money'	mà né tsɔ́ŋ ə́-kó I F1 steal c7-money 'I will steal money'
c)	…kám-ə́ máljík squeeze-PROG milk 'collecting milk'	…kàm máljík squeeze.PST milk 'collected milk'
d)	jès fúkə̀ we leave 'We left'	jɛ̀ fʉ̀kə̀ we leave.PST 'We left'
e)	…lá kə́ mà ɣɔ́m that not I beat '…that I should not beat'	…lá kə́ mà ɣɔ̀m that not I beat.PST '…that I should not beat'
f)	à dìʔ ndə́ á mà né it is who that I do 'What did I do?'	à dìʔ ɣɔ́ á mà yì nè? It is what that I P2 do 'What did I do?'
g)	à dìʔ màmí ɣɔ́m ténsə́ lí it is mother my refuse P1 'It was mother who refused'	à yì tə̀nsə́ màmí ɣɔ́m it P2 refuse mother my 'It was mother who refused'

II. Morphology

The manner in which different morphemes combine to form words, as well as the shape of some modifiers, is affected in the Fulɓe dialect.

1. Tense

The tense-aspect system of the Fulɓe dialect has segmental and tonal differences, as compared to that of Kejom. Examples (a) and (b) in Table 8 show that the near-future tense (F2) marker surfaces in the Fulɓe dialect as [ná] instead of [né]. In example (c), the progressive aspect is used instead of the general past-tense marker used in narratives. In examples (d) and (e), the verb root tones are high instead of low (note that the action is in the general past). In example (f), the recent past (P2) marker is omitted in the Fulɓe dialect; in (g), the immediate past (P1) is used instead of P2. These variations can be attributed to differences in the tense and aspect systems of Kejom and Fulfulde. For example, while Fulfulde has single past, present, and future tense markers, Kejom has five past, one present, and three future tense markers. Fulɓe speakers therefore find it difficult to master and distinguish all of the subdivisions of Kejom tenses.

Table 9. Atypical modifiers

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	ndʒí sɔ́m-sə́ sə̀n dress my-c10 this 'this my dress'	ndʒí ʃɔ́m sə̀n dress.c10 my this 'this my dress'
b)	ndʒí sɔ́m-sə́ ɣɔ́m dress my-c10 my 'my dress'	ndʒí ʃɔ́m dress.c10 my 'my dress'
c)	ndʒí sɔ́m-sə́ wén dress my-c10 his 'his dress'	ndʒí-sə́ wén dress-c10 his 'his dress'
d)	ndɔ́ŋ-sə́ vwɔ́m friend-c10 my 'my friends'	ndɔ́ ʃɔ́m friend my 'my friends'
e)	lójn à wù-ndóŋ mò beg from c1-friend my 'beg from my friend'	lójn fà wù-ndɔ́ ɣɔ́m beg from c1-friend my 'beg from my friend'
f)	mà dʒáŋ ʒí? ɣɔ́m I call name my 'I called my name'	mà dʒáŋ ə̀-ʒí? ə̀ ɣɔ́mə́ I call c5-name AM my 'I called my name'

2. Modifiers

Like other languages with a noun class system, Kejom requires agreement between the noun and nominal modifiers. With certain nouns, Fulɓe speakers may find it difficult to choose an appropriate modifier or to use its correct form. Examples (a) through (c) in Table 9 show differences in the form of the possessive. Native Kejom speakers usually drop the class suffix when modifying a class 10 noun (Hyman, 1979; Akumbu, 2010). In the Fulɓe dialect, this suffix is retained. In examples (d) and (e), the Fulɓe speaker uses the wrong possessive marker. In example (f), the Fulɓe speaker uses the possessive for a class 1 noun instead of that for a class 5 noun. These data show that differences in the noun class systems of Fulfulde and Kejom make it difficult for Fulɓe speakers to master the agreement patterns of Kejom.

III. Syntax

Word order within phrases and sentence structure are the most affected Kejom syntactic units in the Fulɓe dialect. In examples (a) through (d) of Table 10, the order of the highlighted units is reversed in the Fulɓe dialect. In example (b), retention of the head-first position of nouns in nominal phrases renders the construction ungrammatical, because native Kejom speakers place the modifier before the noun in adverbial phrases. These syntactic variations suggest that Fulɓe speakers do not master the movement constraints of Kejom, and tend to overgeneralize grammatical rules.

Table 10. Divergent word order

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	ɣə́ kú **mo kó** he give me money 'He gives me money'	ɣə́ kú **kó à mò** he give money to me 'He gives me money'
b)	bwìnə́ vì á **gə́ jés** turn come to home our 'return to our home'	bwìnə́ vì á **jɛ́ gə́** turn come to our home 'return to our home'
c)	…lá **mà kó** ví nə̀ wìʔ that I NEG come with person '…that I shouldn't bring anyone'	…lá **kə́ mà** vì nə̀ wìʔ that NEG I come with person '…that I shouldn't bring anyone'
d)	à dìʔ **màmí ɣɔ́m ténsə́** lí it is mother my refuse P1 'It was mother who refused'	à yì **tə̀nsə́ màmí ɣɔ́m** it P2 refuse mother my 'It was mother who refused'
e)	mà fwán lí, mà ɲín lí I fear P1, I run P1 'I was scared and ran'	mà fwán, ə̀ ɲín I fear, CONJ run 'I was scared and ran'
f)	mà ɲín mà ɲín mà ɲín I run I run I run 'I ran'	mà ɲín ə́ ɲín ə́ ɲín I run RED run RED run 'I ran'

IV. Lexis

As mentioned above, the lexicon is usually the most affected grammatical component in language contact situations. In the following subsections, we explore lexical modifications internal to Kejom and those that have resulted from borrowed CPE words.

1. Kejom words

Fulɓe speakers commonly use certain Kejom lexical items to convey other semantically related meanings. Table 11 provides examples of the use of semantically related words to represent Kejom words that are not easily accessed by Fulɓe speakers. In example (d), the Fulɓe speaker uses the name of a very rich individual known to them, in this case Cameroon's president Paul Biya, to refer to a rich person.

2. Cameroon Pidgin English words

When Fulɓe speakers cannot access a Kejom word, they frequently turn to CPE. The Fulɓe prefer to incorporate a word from this common language to avoid interrupting the conversation. Many words in the Fulɓe dialect have been borrowed from CPE, and native Kejom speakers also commonly use CPE. CPE has influenced the way many Cameroonians speak their mother tongues. Example (f) in Table 12 shows that some CPE words have been adapted to the structure of Kejom words. The Kejom verbal extension (*sə́*) is added to the CPE root (*vex*)

Table 11. Kejom words with different meanings

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	mà díʔ á dʒùŋ I am in good 'I am happy'	mà sáŋlə̀ I happy.PROG 'I am happy'
b)	pfɛ̀ ká-bán cook c7-fufu corn 'prepare fufu corn'	lám ká-bán mix c7-fufu corn 'prepare fufu corn'
c)	ǹè kə̀-fó tradition do c7-thing tradition 'perform traditional rites'	nè á-ɲú lɔ́ʔ do c8-thing village 'perform traditional rites'
d)	mà jén paul bija I see Paul Biya 'I saw a rich man'	mà jén wú ɣɔ́ʔɔ́ I see person rich 'I saw a very rich man'
e)	ndʒí sɔ́m-sə́ ɣɔ́m dress my-c10 my 'my dress'	ndʒí ʃɔ́m dress.c10 my 'my dress'
f)	à dìʔ ndɔ́ á wàjn lə̀ it is who with child this 'What is this with the child?'	à dìʔ ɣɔ́ à wàn lə̀ it is what with child this 'What is this with the child?'

Table 12. Cameroon pidgin english words

	Fulɓe speakers	Kejom speakers
a)	ə̀-ʒú fasting c5-time fasting 'during a fasting period'	ə̀-ʒú bámə̀ tʃù c5-time abandon mouth 'during a fasting period'
b)	mà dʒú eigein I go again 'I went back'	mà bɛ́ dʒ~~ù~~ I again go 'I went back'
c)	five o'clock kwíʔ five o'clock reach 'at five o'clock'	tə́-ʒú tə̀ tàjn k~~ú~~ʔ c13-time AM five reach 'at five o'clock'
d)	all víʔí á tsúŋgə̀ŋ all c2.person in compound 'everyone in the compound'	nɔ́ víʔ və̀-tsɛ́m á tsúŋgə̀ŋ all person c2-all in compound 'everyone in the compound'
e)	nè kə̀-fó tradition do c7-thing tradition 'perform traditional rites'	nè ə́ɲú lɔ́ʔ do c8-thing village 'perform traditional rites'
f)	mà véksə́ tà və́ksə́ I angry only angry 'I continued to be angry'	mà fwísə́ tsín tà fwísə́ I burning heart only burning 'I continued to be angry'

and the Kejom phonological process changes /*x*/ to [*k*].

SOURCES OF INTERFERENCE

Interference typically occurs when two languages come into contact. In this case, Fulfulde is expected to influence the way in which the Fulɓe speak Kejom. Indeed, we found that Fulfulde grammar has influenced the grammar of the Fulɓe dialect, as shown above. In addition, a third language (CPE) influences the Fulɓe dialect. As discussed in section IV.2, CPE words and expressions occur throughout the Fulɓe dialect. CPE is a common language that the speakers of both communities use in their daily lives, and thus serves to fill communication gaps experienced by Fulɓe speakers interacting with native Kejom speakers.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that the Kejom spoken by native Fulfulde speakers differs significantly from that spoken by native Kejom speakers. We have demonstrated that the phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexis have been affected in various ways. We found that Fulfulde and Cameroon Pidgin English have influenced the variety of Kejom spoken by the Fulɓe. Whatever the degree of variation between dialects, the Fulɓe prefer to speak Kejom and the Kejom people appreciate this effort during verbal interactions. In this context, the use of Kejom has provided a sense of belonging to, and unity with, the larger Kejom community. The language has thus served as a tool for village integration.

NOTES

(1) The data used in this paper were obtained from interviews and tape-recorded personal narratives elicited from four females (aged 15, 20, 28, and 50 years) and 3 males (aged 13, 21, and 48 years). All were born in Kejom and continue to live there. The deviations reported here occurred in the language of at least 57% of informants.

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