Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation

ORTHOGRAPHY GUIDE
FOR FULFULDE-JAAFUN
AS SPOKEN IN THE NORTH WEST REGION
OF CAMEROON

Carolin Huber,
Alhaji Umaru Babuga Deye
and
Alhaji Yakubu Esa

SIL
B.P. 1299, Yaoundé
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Abbreviations

CL	nominal-class-suffix
DECL	declarative
HORT	hortative mood
IMP	imperative mood
IMPF	imperfective aspect
NEG	negative
PERF	perfective aspect
PROG	progressive aspect
VD	verb defocus
VF	default verb phrase form
QM	question marker
n	noun
pl	plural
sg	singular
v	verb
3s	3rd person singular pronoun

Acknowledgments

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ORTHOGRAPHY GUIDE

by Carolin Huber, Alhaji Babuga Deye and Alhaji Yakubu Esa

1   Introduction

This paper proposes an orthography for Fulfulde-Jaafun as spoken in the North West Region of Cameroon. The Fulfulde examples in this document were taken from the Fulfulde dialect spoken by the Fulɓe of the Jaafun clans. Our research also suggests that these same orthographic decisions will work equally well with the various speakers from the Aku clans in the North West Region. This orthography is an attempt to standardize the written form of Fulfulde in this corner of Cameroon and should not hinder the Fulɓe from writing their respective dialects as they speak them.

The orthography conforms to the guidelines adopted in 1979 by the National Committee for the Unification and Harmonization of the Alphabets of Cameroon Languages, found in *General Alphabet for Cameroon Languages.* (Tadajeu, Sadembouo, 1984)

The Ethnologue (Lewis, 2009) lists the following classification for the wide-ranging Fulfulde language: Niger-Congo, West Atlantic, northern branch, Senegambian group. There are two main dialects of Fulfulde[1] in the North West Region. These dialects are spoken by about 80,000 – 100,000 Fulɓe[2] in the North West Region of the Republic of Cameroon, as well as by some of the Fulɓe living in the Foumban area, some in the Adamawa Region and some around Mt. Manenguba in the South West Region.

The Fulɓe living in the North West Region are of two sub-groups, the Jaafun and the Aku. Michaela Pelican comments on the migration patterns of these two groups:

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[1] The Fulɓe themselves call their language Fulfulde and they don't have specific names for dialects.
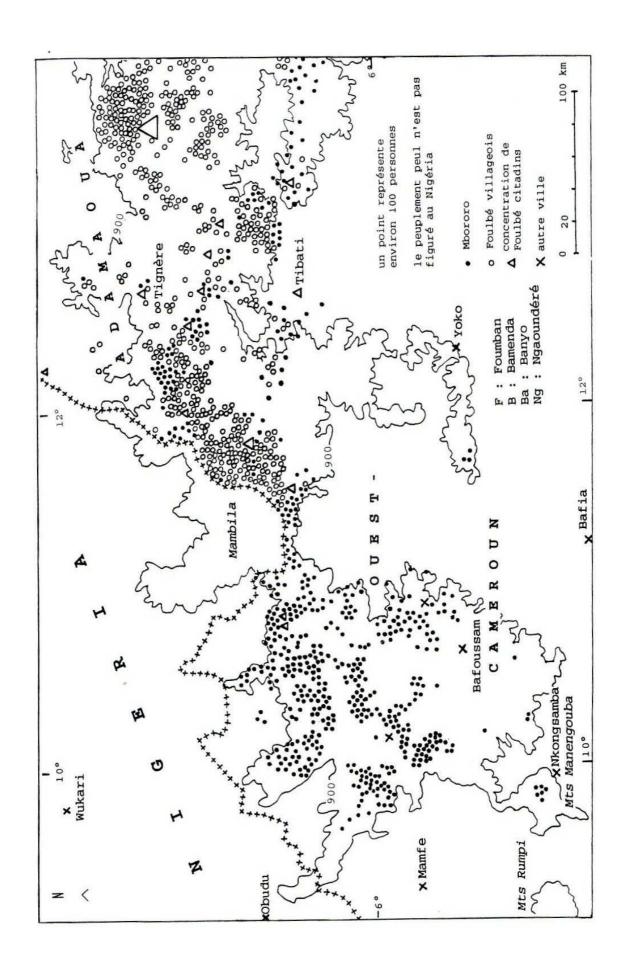
[2] Mboscuda (Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association) in their education census 2004/2005 estimates the number of Fulɓe in the North West Region to be 85,280. This number, though, does not differentiate between speakers of the two dialects and also does not include the speakers of those dialects living in the Adamawa, the West and the South West Regions.

Originally, both groups dwelled in the Kano area. In the course of the 19ᵗʰ century they adopted diverging migration trajectories and developed distinct sub-ethnic identities (Boutrais, 1995/96: 15-210, Dognin, 1981). The Jaafun started entering the Western Grassfields in the early 20ᵗʰ century. They came from northern Cameroon, mainly the Adamawa Plateau, and established themselves on the Bamenda Highlands. The Aku followed later, from the 1940s onwards. They entered the Grassfields area coming from Nigeria, mainly the Jos Plateau, and settled on the lowland pastures on the northern fringes of the Bamenda Highlands. (2007:4)

Many researchers have published their findings on the Fulɓe of West Africa. Comprehensive research has been done by Jean Boutrais on the Fulɓe living in the Grassfields of Cameroon. So far, no descriptive linguistic research on the Fulfulde dialects spoken in the North West Region of Cameroon has been done. There is need for an overall understanding of the particular dialects spoken by the Jaafun and the Aku. Though there seem to be a lot of similarities with the Fulfulde spoken in parts of Nigeria, there are also distinct differences due to the unique history of the Fulɓe living in the Cameroon Grassfields.

The proposed orthography will hopefully be useful to all the Fulɓe in the North West Region and will help to promote literacy in the Fulfulde language community as a whole.

The following map is taken from Boutrais' book, *Hautes terres d'élevage au Cameroun* (1995:26). He indicates the locations of the Fulɓe who are speaking the dialects of the North West Region of the map with black dots (Mbororo).

3

N

Wukari ✗

NIGERIA

Obudu ✗

Mts Rumpi

✗ Mamfe

10°

Mambila

ADAMAOUA

900

Tignère ◦

△ Tibati

12°

OUEST-

CAMEROUN

Bafoussam ✗

✗ Nkongsamba

Mts Manengouba

✗ Yoko

Bafia ✗

10°

12°

6°

6°

un point représente
environ 100 personnes

le peuplement peul n'est pas
figuré au Nigéria

• Mbororo

◦ Foulbé villageois

△ concentration de
   Foulbé citadins

✗ autre ville

F : Foumban
B : Bamenda
Ba : Banyo
Ng : Ngaoundéré

0   20   100 km

2   Alphabet

The Fulfulde segmental alphabet is made up of 27 consonants and 5 vowels. They are represented below in upper and lower cases:

A a, B b, Ɓ ɓ, C c, D d, Ɗ ɗ, E e, F f, G g, H h, I i, J j, K k, L l, M m, Mb mb, N n, Nd nd, Ng ng, Nj nj, Ny ny, Ŋ ŋ, O o, P p, R r, S s, T t, U u, W w, Y y, Ƴ ƴ, '.

2.1   Consonants

The consonant phonemes, their allophones and graphemes are presented in the table below. We also show their use in various positions in the word. Long consonants will be discussed in section 2.1.1.

Phoneme	Phonetic realisation	Grapheme	Initial position	Medial position	Final position
/p/	[p]	P p	puccu *horse*	sumpo *visit (n)*	cup *very*
/t/	[t]	T t	tame *dumpling*	ɗatal *path*	__
/k/	[k]	K k	kalaldi *bull*	caka *middle*	__
/ʔ/	[ʔ]	'	[3]	wi'a *say, tell*	__

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[3] The glottal stop is only written when it occurs in the middle of a word. Though every word starting with a vowel is actually pronounced with a glottal stop at the beginning, the glottal stop is not written word-initially. This follows the orthographic convention decided at the Meeting of Experts for the Unification of the Alphabets of the National Languages held at Bamako in 1966 by UNESCO. For an exception to this rule, see 3.2 Word formation rules.

/b/	[b]	B b	baali *sheep*	jaaɓo *answer, reply (v)*	—
/d/	[d]	D d	dare *game*	ada *carry, transport*	—
/g/	[g]	G g	goɓo *hit one's head by accident*	ƴooga *draw water*	—
/ɓ/	[ɓ]	Ɓ ɓ	ɓada *be near, close draw near*	haaɓa *be eager, long for*	—
/ɗ/	[ɗ]	Ɗ ɗ	ɗum *it*	daɗa *win, come in first*	—
/ƴ/	[ʄ]	Ƴ ƴ	ƴama *ask*	liiƴa *stretch out hand*	—
/tʃ/	[tʃ]~[s]~[ʃ]⁴	C c	ceede *money*	—	—
/f/	[f]	F f	fuufa *blow (v)*	afo *first born*	—
/s/	[s]	S s	suudu *house*	loosol *stick (n)*	—
/dʒ/	[dʒ]	J j	jannga *read, learn*	wuja *rub with oil*	—
/h/	[h]	H h	hoola *make loud noise*	woha *bark (v)*	—
/m/	[m]	M m	modda *be thick (liquid)*	nama *grind to powder*	jam *be well*
/mb/	[mb]	Mb mb	mbaala *sheep (sg)*	beembal *storage for corn*	—
/n/	[n]	N n	nebbam *butter (n)*	waana *wrap a cloth around oneself*	an *you (sg)*
/nd/	[nd]	Nd nd	nder *inside*	foonda *measure*	—
/ŋg/	[ŋg]	Ng ng	ngaari *young bull*	naange *sun*	—

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⁴ With some speakers of certain clans, [tʃ] is rather pronounced as [s] or [ʃ]. The difference in pronunciation is mainly a dialect variation. However, depending on the contacts with speakers of other clans, there is also some free variation within dialects.

/ndʒ/	[ndʒ]	Nj nj	njumri *honey*	—	—
/ɲ/	[ɲ]	Ny ny	nyaaki *bees*	minyiraawo *younger sibling*	—
/ŋ/	[ŋ]	Ŋ ŋ	ŋata *bite (v)*	saŋalde *hedgehog*	—
/l/	[l]	L l	luumo *market*	ɓila *hang up (v)*	be'el *kid (n)*
/r/	[r]	R r	raande *rope (n)*	raara *look at*	tar *very*
w/	[w][5]	W w	wooɗi *be good*	waawa *be able to, be capable*	law *quickly*
/j/	[j]	Y y	yoora *become dry*	leydi *soil, earth, country*	ley *down, low*

2.1.1   Double consonants

In consonants as well as vowels, length is phonemic. Long (geminate) consonants can only occur in medial position, as is indicated in the table below. Not all the consonants can be lengthened; so far, we have found no examples for the following double consonants: ff, ss, hh, ŋŋ, ww, yy.

Phoneme	Phonetic realisation	Grapheme	Initial position	Medial position	Final position
/pː/	[pː]	pp	—	sappo *ten*	—
/tː/	[tː]	tt	—	ndottiijo *full-grown man*	—

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[5] The [w] can have many slight variations, depending on the speaker. There is some debate as to whether or not the Fulfulde in the North West Region contains the common Fulfulde [v]. Though literature suggests that the Jaafun and Mbororo nomadic groups in Adamawa are using [v] (Seydou 1998:XXXVI), so far we have not found the Jaafun in the North West Region using it. Some clans seem to use a bilabial fricative [β] for this phoneme. Other speakers don't. At this point of our research, we propose to represent all of these with the grapheme **w**, which is also standard with most Fulfulde orthographies in West Africa.

/kː/	[kː]	kk	—	**hakke** *sin*	—
/ʔː/	[ʔː]	”	—	**so”o** *turn back*	—
/bː/	[bː]	bb	—	**hebbina** *fill up*	—
/dː/	[dː]	dd	—	**haddo** *put on/wear a wrapper*	—
/gː/	[gː]	gg	—	**nagge** *cow*	—
/ɓː/	[ɓː]	ɓɓ	—	**haɓɓa** *tie*	—
/ɗː/	[ɗː]	ɗɗ	—	**fuɗɗa** *start*	—
/ƴː/	[ƴː]	ƴƴ	—	**liyyi** *fish (pl)*	—
/tʃː/	[tʃː]~[sː]~[ʃː][6]	cc	—	**puccu** *horse*	—
/dʒː/	[dʒː]	jj	—	**wujja** *steal*	—
/mː/	[mː]	mm	—	**ramma** *be short*	—
/mbː/	[mbː]	mmb	—	**ommba** *close, put cover*	—
/nː/	[nː]	nn	—	**wanna** *vex, bother*	—
/ndː/	[ndː]	nnd	—	**annda** *know*	—
/ŋgː/	[ŋgː]	nng	—	**nanngee** *catch.IMP (pl)*	—
/ndʒː/	[ndʒː]	nnj	—	**jonnja** *clean out gourd by putting water in and shaking it*	—
/ɲː/	[ɲː]	nny	—	**sannya** *weave*	—
/lː/	[lː]	ll	—	**ɓilla** *press, squeeze*	—

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/rː/	[rː]	rr	—	torra *torment*	—

The following examples show contrast between short and long consonants.

fota	*be equal to, be as much as*	fotta	*meet, fit, suit, agree with*
do'a	*prayer*	do"a	*fall down*
huba	*throw*	hubba	*plait hair in rough, temporary style*
taga	*(God) create*	tagga	*roll up, coil*
haɓa	*fight, struggle*	haɓɓa	*tie*
fuɗa	*sprout, grow, (sun) rise*	fuɗɗa	*begin*
wuja	*rub oil*	wujja	*steal*
tama	*roll dough into a ball*	tamma	*expect, suppose*
wona	*be*	wonna	*spoil*
walaa	*is not*	walla	*help (v)*
toro	*begging*	torra	*torment*

2.1.2   Consonant orthography rules

The [ŋ] sound is written **ŋ** before vowels and **n** before **k**, **g** or **ng.**
   E.g. **ŋoŋa** *(doze off, feel drowsy)*, **ɓaŋa** *(of man: marry)*, **yonki** *(soul)*,
   hanko *(3s emphatic pronoun)*, **nguufo** *(foam)*, **wanngi** *(appear)*

2.2   Vowels

The Fulfulde language has 5 vowel phonemes, presented with their proposed graphemes in the table below. The sounds are shown as they occur in different positions of the word.

Phoneme	Phonetic realisation	Grapheme	Initial position	Medial position	Final position
/i/	[i]	I i	inna *mother*	winnda *write*	ngaari *young bull*
/ε/	[ε]	E e	enɗi *breasts*	leɗɗe *wood*	ɓe *they*
/a/	[a]	A a	anndii *know.PERF*	ladde *bush*	defa *cook (v)*

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/u/	[u]	U u	unirgal *pestle*	kulol *fear (n)*	wawru *well (n)*
/ɔ/	[ɔ]	O o	ommba *close, put a cover on*	fombina *south*	jaango *tomorrow*

2.2.1   Vowel length

Fulfulde has both short and long vowels, with the long vowels written as a sequence of two identical vowels. A change in vowel length in medial position can change the meaning of some words, so there is definitely lexical contrast. In addition, a change in vowel length on a suffix attached to an active or middle voice verb changes the focus from the verb to another constituent of the sentence, so affixes also display contrastive vowel length.

2.2.1.1   Lexical contrastive vowel length between verb roots

Examples of long vowels and the contrasting short vowels with verb roots:

ɓiira	*scrape bottom of a dish*	**ɓira**	*milk (v)*
seeɗa	*spending the dry season*	**seɗa**	*sift*
baali	*sheep (pl)*	**bali**	*fibre for weaving*
huula	*step across, cross*	**hula**	*be afraid*
hoonda	*(animal) begin to suck*	**hona**	*wage war against*

2.2.1.2   Vowel length changes in the verb-root

Vowel length in the verb-root is written the way it is realized in speech. This means that vowel length can change, depending on the kind of syllable pattern a verb-root has. The following syllable types are found in Fulfulde: CV, CVC, CVV. A syllable with a long vowel can therefore not end with a consonant. Which means, in some morphological constructions, the underlying long vowel in a root gets shortened in both the pronunciation and in the orthography. (Note also that syllable breaks are not always identical to morphological breaks.) For example:

Verb root **nyaam**– + perfective –**ii** = **nyaa.mii** *ate*

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Verb root **nyaam**- + causative -**n**- + perfective -**ii** = **nyam.nii** *caused to eat*

Although the verb root has an underlying lexical 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 (as in the first example above: **nyaa.mii**)*.* However, in the second example the lexical orthographic long vowel must be shortened because the second syllable already starts with a consonant, so the **m** instead ends the first syllable (**nyam.nii**)*.* (see also McIntosh, 1984: 13-17 and Wenger, 2010:6-7)

2.2.1.3   Vowel length and verb suffixes

The vowel length of certain verb suffixes changes the meaning of a sentence. The first example shows the default verb phrase form (VF) with an audible long vowel verb suffix.

Buuba yariiɗam.
Buuba drink.PERF.VF.it ("it" in this case refers to a liquid, e.g. milk)
Buuba drank it.

The next example has an audible short vowel suffix, which shows that the verb is defocused (VD) and the focus is shifted to another constituent in the sentence*.*

Buuba yariɗam.
Buuba drink.PERF. VD.it ("it" in this case refers to a liquid, e.g. milk)
It is Buuba who drank it.

For more examples and a complete table of verb suffixes check appendix A. (see also McIntosh, 1984: 26-27)

2.2.2   Vowel orthography rules

In Fulfulde, in contrast to English and French, two vowels can only occur together if written as a sequence of two identical vowels in order to lengthen the vowel. Therefore:

- Never write **ou**. If you hear [u], write **u**.
    E.g. **unirgal** *(pestle)*, not **ounirgal**.

A vowel can be followed by a syllable-final semivowel consonant. Below are some rules and examples.

- Never write **iu**. If you hear [iu], write **iw**.
    E.g. **diwna** *(shake, tremble)*

- Never write **eu**. If you hear [ɛw], write **ew**.
    E.g. **ewna** *(call),* **lewru** *(moon)*

- Never write **ei**. If you hear [ɛj], write **ey**.
    E.g. **leydi** *(soil, earth),* **ley** *(down, low)*

- Never write **au**. If you hear [aw], write **aw**.
    E.g. **awdi** *(seeds),* **mawndu** *(lion),* **law** *(quickly)*

- Never write **ai**. If you hear [aj] write **ay**.
    E.g. **ayna** *(look after, watch),* **waywayko** *(eyelash),* **waray** *(will come)*

- Never write **ui**. If you hear [uj], write **uy**.
    E.g. **uyre** *(pride),* **wuyɓe** *(thieves)*

- Never write **ou**. If you hear [ow], write **ow**.
    E.g. **fowru** *(hyena),* **dow** *(up)*

- Never write **oi**. If you hear [oj] write **oy**.
    E.g. **koyɗi** *(dreams),* **ɓikkoy** *(children)*

Below are three orthography changes concerning verb endings, compared with Fulfulde orthographies previously used. For a complete table of verb endings, check appendix B.

The perfective negative ending for an active verb is **–aayi**.

Mo waraayi.
3s come.PERF.NEG

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She has not come.

The imperfective progressive verb ending for middle voice is –**oo**.

> **E mo siwtoo.**
> PROG 3s rest.IMPF.PROG
> *He is resting.*

The imperative ending for an active verb is: -**u** for one person, -**ee** for multiple people.

> **Nyaamu!**
> Eat.IMP.sg
> *Eat!*
> **Nyaamee!**
> Eat.IMP.pl
> Eat!

3 Word formation

Fulfulde word formation will hopefully be examined further at some later point in time. Find below what has been decided so far.

3.1 Word division rules

The particle **e** which is used to signal progressive aspect is not attached to the subject pronoun, but written as a separate word, as in the following examples.

> **E mi nyaama.**
> PROG I eat.PROG
> *I am eating.*

3.2 Word formation rules

Object pronoun suffixes are attached to the end of verbs.

> **Mi hokkiimo kosam.**

I give.PERF.him milk
I gave him milk.

Moye wi'ika?
who say.PERF.it ("it" in this case refers to **haala**, which is in the **ka** noun class.)
Who said that?

Moye wi'imoka?
who tell.PERF.3s.it ("it" in this case refers to **haala**, which is in the **ka** noun class.)
Who told him that news?

If the verb ends with a vowel and the object pronoun starts with a vowel, the usually unwritten glottal stop before the beginning vowel of the object pronoun is in this case written (see footnote[3]).

Mi wi'i'on.
I tell.PERF.you.pl
I told you.

No hyphens are used. Postverbal subject pronouns are attached directly to the verb.

Ko ekkitiiɗen.
what learn.PERF.we
What we have learned.

Keenya ngarɗaa.
yesterday come.PERF.you.sg
You came yesterday.

Sey tokkon juungo nano kuulon.
HORT follow.path.IMPF.you.pl. hand left cross.IMPF.you.pl
You should follow the path to the left and then cross.

In Fulfulde, words can be formed by adding a suffix to a stem. E.g. with the stem **maw-**, meaning *big, important,* the following words, beside many others, can be formed:

mawɗo	tummude mawnde	na'i mawɗi[7]
big-CL	calabash big	cows big
important person	*big calabash*	*big cows*

However, there are cases where the end of the stem and the beginning of the suffix undergo some changes in articulation. In her book *Fulfulde Syntax and Verbal Morphology*, Mary McIntosh says, "Note, again, that assimilation often occurs between the final consonant of the stem and the initial consonant of the suffix" (1984:49). The orthography rules for those cases need more research and will be presented at a later point in an additional appendix.

4 Elision

Here is a partial list on what has been proposed so far:

Some few active verbs drop the 2nd sg suffix **–u** for the imperative. The example below is one of them.

War!
come.IMP.sg
Come!
(Not: "Waru!")

The **-u** is always dropped when a 1st person object pronoun is suffixed to the verb. In that case the object pronoun also changes from **-yam** to **–am**. See below.

Wall*am*.
help.IMP.sg.me
Help me.
(Not: "Walluyam.")

Hokk*am* ndiyam.
give.IMP.sg.me water
give-me water.
(Not: "Hokkuyam ndiyam.")

Maɓɓitan*am* dammugal.
open.IMP.sg.for.me door

Open the door for me.
(Not: "Maɓɓitanuyam dammugal.")

5 Punctuation and capitalisation

The punctuation marks and the rules that govern the Fulfulde language in the North West Region of Cameroon are the same as those for English (though Fulfulde does not need the semicolon). The punctuation marks used for Fulfulde are therefore as follows:

Full stop	.
Question mark	?
Exclamation mark	!
Comma	,
Colon	:
Quotation marks	"..."
Parentheses	(...)

5.1 Full stop

The full stop in Fulfulde marks the end of a declarative sentence.

Hajara e ɓira nagge ngen.
Hajara PROG milk.PROG cow this
Hajara is milking this cow.

5.2 Question mark

The question mark marks the end of an interrogative sentence.

Ko fuɗɗi yiite ngen?
what start.PERF fire this
What caused this fire?

5.3 Exclamation mark

The exclamation mark is written at the end of a command, or it is placed following exclamatory words or phrases. It functions to express interjections,

surprise, excitement, and forceful comments as well as simple commands, as below.

Umma!
get-up.IMP.sg
Get up!

Ŋatannde ɓoosaaru no nawnde!
bite dog is painful
Getting bitten by a dog is painful!

5.4   Comma

Commas are used to separate clauses or parallel words within a clause, as below:

Ɓe kokkimo lekki, ammaa neeɓi nden ɗum feewi.
they gave.PERF.3s medicine but take.PERF.some.time then it cool.down.PERF
They gave him/her medicine, but it took some time before the pain subsided.

Wammi yahi luumo soodi gawri, fitte, nebbam bee njumri.
Wammi go.PERF market buy.PERF corn, salt, oil and honey
Wammi went to the market and bought corn, salt, oil and honey.

5.5   Colon

A colon is used after an independent clause that precedes a list. It is also used to separate an explanation, rule or example from a preceding independent clause. A colon can be used as part of a title. See examples below (and also under 5.8. Capitalisation).

Before a list:

Raa inɗe fukaraaɓe: Wammi, Suleymaanu, Faaɗimatu bee Juleykatu.
here.is names students: Wammi Suleymaanu Faaɗimatu and Juleykatu
Here are the names of the students: Wammi, Suleymaanu, Faaɗimatu and Juleykatu.

After the introduction to an explanation:

Gaynaako raarii nagge nge'e nyawnge: ndikka mo soorange.
Herdsman look.PERF cow this sick: better he sell.it
The herdsman looked at the sick cow: it would be better to sell it.

In a title:

Taalol leydi Bamenda: Baaba Kuro
Folktale land Bamenda: Father Kuro
A folktale from the Bamenda Region: Father Kuro

5.6 Quotation marks

Quotation marks occur at the beginning and end of direct speech and should be written slightly different than the double glottal stop, as below:

Ɓe mbi'i, "Min wuyɓe! Waddu ceede ma! "
they say.PERF we thieves bring.out.IMP.sg money yours
They said, "We are thieves! Give us your money! "

Note: In English and Fulfulde, other punctuation marks always precede closing quotation marks when they occur next to each other.

5.7 Capitalisation

Capital letters are used at the beginning of sentences, for proper nouns, and sometimes after a colon.

First word in a sentence:

Ɓe kaɓɓii ngaari.
they tie.PERF bull
They tied the bull.

Proper nouns:

Ali noddii Buuba, Yunuussa, Habiiba bee Aysatu.
Ali call.PERF Buuba Yunuussa Habiiba and Aysatu
Ali called Buuba, Yunussa, Habiiba and Aysatu.

After a colon IF what follows the colon is a complete sentence:

Ko mi wi'i: Mi warataa.
what I say.PERF: I come.IMPF.NEG
What I said is: I am not going to come/ I will not come.

If what follows the colon is not a complete sentence, a capital is not used:

Raa ko mo hokki Saali: mbaala bee puccu.
here what 3s give.PERF Saali: sheep and horse
Here is what he gave to Saali: a sheep and a horse.

5.8   Parentheses

Parentheses are used to insert background information into a text, as below:

Ɓikkon diɗon (Hassan bee Hariira) ngari.
children two (Hassan and Hariira) come.PERF
Two children (Hassan and Hariira) came.

6   Sample text

This text is from a folktale. The following version is from the Fulfulde Primer "Laawol Janngugo" (SIL, 2009).

Be'el e ngeelooba

Alaasara fuu be'el e yaha wuro ngeelooba ton nder ladde. Ngel wi'a nga yoɓangel nyamaande ceede maagel. Koo ndeye boo ngeelooba sey hokkangel munyal. Be'el sey monna hoota, to fini so"oyoo. Wonnde nyalaade be'el sey wi'i, "Mi hootataa sey to a yoɓiiyam nyamaande am!"

Ton nde jemma waɗi sey raa fowru, e ndu woya. Sey be'el huli fuɗɗi bojji. Ngeelooba sey wi'ingel, "War mi waɗɗinmaa dow ɓaawo am." Be'el ngel yiɗaano ammaa ngel jaɓi ngam kulol, ngel waali dow.

Nde fini ngeelooba jippinoyi be'el ngel sey nga wi'ingel, "Jooni mi yoɓiima ceede maa, koo?" Be'el sey monni hooti. Non boo ngeelooba yoɓiri be'el nyamaande maagel.

Goat and camel

Every evening goat would go to camel's compound far away in the bush. Goat would ask camel to pay back his money. Then camel would ask goat to be patient. Goat would be annoyed, go home and return the next morning. One day goat said to camel, "I will not go back today until you pay back my money."

Out there, in the middle of the night, a hyena appeared and was yelping. Goat was afraid and started to cry. So camel said, "Come, I'll carry you on my back." Goat did not like this, but accepted because of fear and slept up there.

At daybreak camel let goat jump down and told him, "Now I've paid back my debt, haven't I?" Goat was annoyed and went home. This is how camel paid back his debt with goat.

7   Need for further testing of the orthography

Any new orthography needs people to use it for a time before potential problems reveal themselves. It is our hope that this proposal will be a significant first step in allowing the Fulfulde speakers of the North West Region to start reading and writing their language. Further changes, hopefully small ones, will be quite possible. If needed, we will modify this document to include any necessary changes.

Appendix A

Verb forms for Fulfulde-Jaafun

For the active voice perfective verb ending, the default form is the long **–ii**. The focus in such a sentence is on the verb.

> **Buuba warii.**
> Buuba come.PERF.VF
> *Buuba came.*

If someone would instead ask the question, *"Who came?"*, the answer could still be, *"Buuba came".* But in Fulfulde, the verb ending would change from **-ii** to **–i**, in order to shift the attention to the name of the person (who came). By shortening the length of the vowel suffix, the verb is defocused and another constituent of the sentence, in this case the subject, becomes the focus. The same work of focusing attention on different constituents in the sentence is mostly done in English by fronting and stressing the constituent under focus, while in Fulfulde it is done by fronting constituents and by changing the verb to be different from its default focused form.

> **Buuba wari.**
> Buuba come.PERF.VD
> *It is Buuba who came (and not someone else).*

In the case of the suffixes for middle voice imperfective verbs, it is also the length of the final vowel of the suffix which marks a difference. The default form is **–oto.**

A kumnoto fitilla na?
you light.IMPF.VF bushlamp QM
Will you light the bushlamp?

In the above sentence, the focus is on the verb. The sentence has the normal subject, verb, object order. It has turned into a question by adding the question marker **na**.

However, in the sentence below the speaker wants to draw attention to the object. Four things happen: The object shifts to the front, the subject pronoun **a** (*you*) gets suffixed to the verb, using a -**ɗ**- as connector, and the middle voice imperfective suffix gets lengthened to **–otoo.**

Fitilla kumnotooɗa na?
bushlamp light.IMPF.VD.you QM
Is it a bushlamp that you will light?

It is not always easy to hear the difference in vowel length. Rachelle Wenger writes:

> Vowel length, although contrastive, is neutralized utterance-finally, and even, in some dialects, word-finally. Therefore it is sometimes very difficult to distinguish between **–i** and **–ii,** (or **–oto** and **–otoo**) and the forms in question may have to be tested by cliticizing a subject or object pronoun in order to hear the length of the vowel. (2008:2)

All the verbal suffixes have a default focused and unfocused form, but only the above two sets mark the difference with vowel length only, and they do it in opposing directions. E.g. in the case of the active imperfective voice, the distinction is much easier as the whole suffix changes. See below.

Buuba waray.
Buuba come.IMPF.VF
Buuba will come.

Buuba warata.
BUUBA come.IMPF.VD

It is Buuba who will come (and not someone else).

Here are tables showing the suffixes:

	active voice	middle voice	passive voice
perfective (VF)	**-ii**	**-ake**	**-aama**
perfective (VD)	**-i**	**-ii**	**-aa**

	active voice	middle voice	passive voice
imperfective (VF)	**-ay**	**-oto**	**-eteema**
imperfective (VD)	**-ata**	**-otoo**	**-etee**

Appendix B

Verb suffixes for Fulfulde-Jaafun

This appendix is taken from *Language Learning Notes on Nigerian Fulfulde* (Wenger 2010) and has been adapted for Cameroon Fulfulde-Jaafun by the authors.

Active voice (affixes only)

	Non-progressive	progressive	defocused	participle	negative
Perfective	-ii	-i	-i	-u-	-aayi
Imperfective	-ay	-a	-ata	-ay-/-oo-	-ataa
Stative	e … -i				-aa
Progressive	e … -a				
Infinitive	-u				
Imperative (2 sg)	-u				taa …-u
" (2 pl)	-ee				taa …-ee
" (1 pl)	en …-u				taa en …-u
" (3 sg/pl)	-a				taa o/ɓe ..-a

Middle voice (affixes only)

	Non-progressive	progressive	defocused	participle	negative
Perfective	-ake	-ii	-ii	-ii-	-aaki
Imperfective	-oto	-oo	-otoo	-otoo-	-ataako
Stative	e … -ii				
Progressive	e … -oo				

Infinitive	-aa				
Imperative (2 sg)	-a				taa ... -a
" (2 pl)	-ee				taa on ...-o
" (1 pl)	en ...-o				taa en ...-a
" (3 sg/pl)	-o				taa o/ɓe ...-o

Passive voice (affixes only)

	Non-progressive	progressive	defocused	participle	negative
Perfective	-aama	-aa	-aa	-aa-	-aaka
Imperfective	-eteema	-ee	-etee	-etee-	-ataake
Stative	-aa				
Progressive	e ... -ee				
Infinitive	-ee-				

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