

The morphosyntax of negation in Wolof

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This article concerns the morphological and syntactic forms and attitudes of the negation in Wolof.

Wolof is a language of the West Atlantic branch of the Niger Congo language family. It is spoken predominantly in Senegal. More than 80% of the Senegalese population speak the language and use Wolof as a colloquial language in the country. Wolof is also spoken in the Gambia and Mauritania.

The negation is a productive phenomenon in Wolof. Depending on mood, aspect or person the negation carries either the same form in Wolof or not. Therefore different negation markings and forms exist namely:

“-ul”, “-u”: Indicative perfective; in a subordinate clause

“du”: Indicative imperfective

“bañ”: Narrative perfective, narrative imperfective

“bul”: Injunctive/ imperative