



Vortrag im Rahmen des Linguistischen Kolloquiums

16. April 2013

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The polyfunctional morphemes gà and kà. PFC marking in Sara-Bagirmi

Focus realization differs from language to language. In the Sara-Bagirmi language group (Nilo-Saharan, Central Sudanic), the morphemes gà and/or kà are among other things used for indicating predicate-centered focus types (PCF), i.e. focus on non-nominal elements of the clause. These types subsume focus on the lexical meaning of the verb ("SoA focus") and focus on sentence operators ("operator focus"). The latter one can be split further into focus on the tense, aspect or mood operators ("TAM focus") and focus on the truth value of the utterance ("truth-value focus"). In my dissertation, I describe, analyze and compare the focal system of six languages of this subgroup, BAGIRMI, KENGA, MBAY, KABBA, NGAMBAY and SAR. One part of the thesis is the description of the encoding means for operator focus: often particles or suffixes which indicate definiteness or certainty of an event are used. For the talk, I will deal with the morphemes gà and kà in two languages of the Sara-Bagirmi group. Even though both languages use them to express predicate-centered focus, the constructions containing gà or kà differ in form as well as in function. While gà in the relevant languages is described as a marker for completeness, kà is predominantly used to express certainty in the future. As will be shown, both functions are closely related to each other and they are connected by the expression of the perfect. In addition to that, they are often used for the marking of operator focus. I will demonstrate that gà and kà in BAGIRMI and KENGA are embedded in different structures. In KENGA on the one hand, both gà and kà occur in similar constructions with an overlapping function: they can be characterized as verbal suffixes which refer to completeness as well as to certainty. BAGIRMI, on the other hand, shows a clear structural and functional separation between the morphemes: while gà functions as a sentence-final particle that marks the whole sentence as completed, ka occurs adjacent to the verb and can be used for indicating certainty with future tense reference. My presentation first aims at a thorough description of form and function of the constructions with gà and kà, before comparing them with each other.

**Ort: Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften,
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Zeit: 16:15 Uhr

Alle Interessierten sind herzlich eingeladen!