GRGC Workshop 2011

Gramaires Créoles & Théories Linguistiques
Creole Grammars & Linguistic Theories


Université PARIS-DIDEROT
UFR D’Etudes Anglophones
10 rue Charles V— 75004
Paris - France

Conférenciers invités / Invited Speakers: Saliko MUFWENE (University of Chicago)
Sibylle KRIEGEL (Université de Provence)

Comité d’organisation / Organizing Committee: Guillaume FON SING, Fabiola HENRI, Jean LEOUÉ

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2. Anne Sophie BALLY (Université du Québec, Montréal)  
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Morphosyntactic simplicity is commonly assumed to be typical of creole grammars. These are regarded as young but full-fledged languages that developed from pidgins, that is, simplified linguistic systems with a restricted function (e.g., trade) and lacking native speakers. The supposedly creole simplicity is therefore rooted in the creole ancestor: the pidgin. This characterization makes sense in terms of Bickerton’s (1981, 1988) creolization as a backwards process. The received wisdom assumes that, as the number of the African slaves grew and outnumbered that of European colonists, the new comers (i.e., the bosals) had less access to the target language and had to learn from each other restructured varieties of the target. The acquisition of such restructured varieties resulted in a dilution of the target language (i.e., the loss of a great number of lexical and grammatical items) that eventually led to the pidgin: the ground zero of language degeneration (e.g., Bickerton 1988, 1999, McWhorter 2001). Bickerton (1988: 273) further concluded that “Children with no prior language experience but with their native language capacity to guide them will take that same input and make good any deficit between it and a natural language.” The newly created language, however, is “in some elusive sense simpler than […] older languages (Bickerton’s 1988: 274).” This view is embraced by McWhorter (2001) in his article “The world’s simplest grammars are creole grammars” and in related studies, where the label creole stands for a cluster of linguistic traits defining a typological class (of simple languages).

But what if simplicity as understood in these studies is irrelevant for understanding the genesis of a new language in general and the structures of creoles in particular? In terms of a biological approach to the evolution of language, I suggest that a new language (e.g., a creole, a contact language) may emerge from the recombination of distinctive syntactic features (by analogy to gene recombination in biology) from different varieties or languages into a coherent system representing the speaker’s Internal-language. This hypothesis adheres to Aboh’s (2006, 2007, 2009) view that the agents of change are individual speakers acting on linguistic features anchored in functional categories, the locus of parameters and language variation. Adopting Mufwene’s (2001, 2008) evolutionary approach to language change, and work on competing grammars (Pintzuk 1996, Kroch 1989, 2000), I assume that new languages emerge from a process of competition and selection allowing a recombination of features expressed by functional items. A functional item is regarded as a triplet involving semantics, morphosyntax and phonology. I argue that language acquisition or language contact may lead to fission of this triplet such that any component may be affected differently under the pressure of the competing grammars. Therefore, the ecology of language contact/acquisition allows the competing components of functional categories to recombine into new variants. Under this theory, the so-called creoles are linguistically hybrid (in the biological sense). They emerged from the recombination of linguistic features from typologically different languages. As a result, creoles develop diverse and often syntactically and semantically opaque features which could not have arisen in the context of their source languages taken individually. What is needed therefore is not a theory of simplicity (or dilution), but a formal account for how distinct syntactic features may recombine into a more complex viable linguistic system. As such, understanding the genesis of new languages, such as creoles, represents the first step to understand the emergence of (complex) linguistic systems that underlie language evolution.
References


Dans l’étude de la genèse des langues créoles, les approches relexificationnistes permettent de rendre compte de plusieurs propriétés lexicales de ces langues créées au contact des langues du substrat et du superstrat. Ainsi, un nom d’une langue créole reçoit les propriétés sémantiques et distributionnelles (syntaxiques) du nom équivalent dans le substrat, tout en empruntant la forme sonore au superstrat. Si des hypothèses comme celles de Lefebvre et Lumsden (1994), Lefebvre (1998) et Lumsden (1999) font des prédicitions correctes sur la formation des catégories majeures du lexique (nom, verbe, adjectif), elles se heurtent cependant au problème de l’ordre des mots et à celui des catégories fonctionnelles. Un exemple classique de la question de l’ordre des mots concerne les déterminants définis : comment peut-on expliquer que des déterminants de langues créoles partageant le même substrat, mais des superstrats différents, apparaissent avant le nom (saramaka, papiamento, berbice dutch, créole jamaïcain) ou après le nom, quand le substrat est français (créole haïtien, martiniquais, guyanais, guadeloupéen)?

Dans cette présentation, nous verrons que plusieurs faiblesses méthodologiques de ces hypothèses sont à l’origine d’incompréhension de la formation des langues créoles, en particulier, le fait qu’elles soient ancrées dans les présupposés théoriques de la grammaire générative. Nous proposerons une hypothèse alternative à celles déjà existantes. Notre hypothèse rend compte de façon élégante des données observées dans les langues créoles, en insérant les langues créoles dans le cadre de l’acquisition des langues secondes, ce cadre étant lui-même inséré dans un cadre linguistique plus large : celui du signe linguistique saussurien.

Dans un premier temps, nous ferons une brève présentation critique des hypothèses existantes et dans un second temps, nous procéderons à l’énonciation de l’hypothèse que nous proposons. Cette hypothèse part du principe que les langues sont le fruit de la rencontre de deux systèmes indépendants, soit le système conceptuel-intentionnel et le système sensorimouteur. Dans les langues orales, la rencontre de ces deux systèmes correspond à la rencontre d’un concept et d’une image acoustique, nommées respectivement par Saussure (1916) signifié et signifiant. Ce signifié et ce signifiant sont réunis en un seul élément appelé signe linguistique et la relation qu’ils entretiennent dans le signe linguistique est radicalement arbitraire. Être locuteur d’une langue maternelle implique de maîtriser les signes d’une langue donnée ainsi que la façon dont ces signes sont agencés. La linéarisation est une des façons d’agencer les signes dans une langue orale. L’hypothèse que nous développons pour la création d’une langue créole est fondée sur ces propriétés du signe linguistique. Nous partons du principe que les langues créoles sont créées dans un contexte où les esclaves tendent à acquérir la langue de ceux qui les dirigent. Ainsi, la création d’une langue créole est analysée comme un cas spécifique d’acquisition d’une langue, dans un contexte sociolinguistique précis : les esclaves parlent des langues maternelles diverses plus ou moins proches, ils doivent être capables de comprendre des consignes dans la langue du colonisateur (le superstrat), ils ne reçoivent pas d’enseignement explicite de la langue de celui-ci. Nous posons à partir de ces faits que les agents de formation du créole se trouvent dans une situation où ils ont un accès restreint aux signes linguistiques du superstrat. Cet accès restreint se traduit par une relativement bonne perception des signifiants du superstrat (ceux-ci étant sonores, ils sont immédiatement perceptibles), mais une perception partielle des signifiés du
superstrat, qui sont de l’ordre du conceptuel, donc moins accessibles. L’émergence d’une langue créole est donc le fruit d’un essai d’acquisition des signes de la langue superstrate, cette acquisition étant fondée sur les perceptions que les esclaves en avaient. L’impact de ces perceptions est très visible sur les signifiés : puisque les esclaves n’avaient pas un accès total aux signifiés, ils ont généralement tenu pour acquis que les signifiés du superstrat étaient équivalents aux signifiés de leur langue maternelle. Cela a pour conséquence que la langue acquise est un système de signes dont les signifiants sont dérivés du superstrat, alors que les signifiés sont fortement et généralement issus du substrat. Notre hypothèse pose aussi que l’ordre des mots dans le créole est calqué sur celui du superstrat. En effet, la linéarité est une contrainte du système sensori-moteur, elle est imposée par l’articulateur oral. Par conséquent, la linéarité est de l’ordre du signifiant. Or le signifiant du superstrat est très accessible, puisqu’il est immédiatement perceptible grâce à son caractère sonore.

Notre hypothèse fait donc les prédictions suivantes sur la genèse des langues créoles :

1. Les langues créoles sont issues de la construction d’un nouveau système de signes linguistiques, à partir des perceptions que les apprenants ont du système linguistique à acquérir;

2. Les signifiants – autant les formes sonores que leur linéarisation – sont immédiatement perceptibles, donc plus faciles à acquérir;

3. Les signifiés sont moins immédiats, donc plus difficiles à acquérir, ce qui va généralement mener à considérer comme équivalents les signifiés de la langue maternelle et ceux de la langue superstrate.

Au terme de cette présentation, nous serons en mesure de conclure que notre hypothèse de genèse des langues créoles insérée dans le cadre du signe linguistique saussurien permet de rendre compte de façon plus adéquate des données de l’ordre des mots dans les langues créoles que les théories relexificationnistes ancrées dans les principes de la grammaire générative.

Références


Typological approaches involving the study of creole languages have long triggered an unsettled dispute among sociolinguists:

- on the one hand, some creolists claim that creoles do not differ from non-creole languages and can only be defined socio-historically and not structurally (cf. inter alia Mufwene (2001, 2007), Chaudenson (2003), DeGraff (2003, 2005), Ansaldo (2004));
- on the other hand, others claim that creoles are “exceptional” in many respects and/or do form a special class with specific typological properties (e.g. McWhorter (1998, 2001, 2005), Parkvall (2008)).

In an attempt to settle this dispute, Bakker & al (2011) drew on a phylogenetic approach by probing a set of 97 structural features (Holm & Patrick, 2007) on 18 creoles and 12 non-creoles. This was meant to provide “robust evidence that creoles indeed form a structurally distinguishable subgroup within the world’s languages.” (p.5). However, their methods and conclusions appear to be questionable, as they are likely to be flawed.

Standing as a challenge to the fore-mentioned analysis by Bakker & al (2011), this paper will reconsider their methodological and empirical approaches by redesigning the sets of creoles and non-creoles on the basis of identical or near-identical principles. It will ultimately appear that, as heralded by their judgement against McWhorter’s (2005) methods (p.8), their own “conclusion could be an artefact of the selection” as well.

First of all, if the creoles that they have taken as such are definable on the basis of their possessing those 97 “typologically distinctive” features, then any other language that would possess them should logically be classified as a creole. Such a logical reasoning appears to have effectively fostered typological studies if we allude to Benveniste (1993 [1966]) who asked if Takelma, an Indian language in Oregon, should be considered as Indo-European because it possesses the six classifying features enumerated by Troubetzkoy. In the same vein, Degraff (1999) argued that Mon-Khmer languages possess the three features of McWhorter (1998)’s Creole prototype.

Besides this epistemological issue, the choice and treatment of empirical data may be questionable. Some results (mainly in section 6.4) from Bakker & al (2011) are biased. For instance, it is striking to notice from appendix 4 that the first features dealing with unmarked verbs (1. Statives with non-past reference, 2. Statives with past reference, 3 Non-statives with past reference, 4. Non-statives with non-past reference) are all noted absent for English. Another arbitrary methodological procedure is that, in order to narrow down the distinction to binary oppositions, they merged rare features <R> with the category of present features <+>. Moreover, they do not provide any valid explanation of the concept of “the most creole-like profile of the languages” chosen among the non-creoles (p.38).

This paper discusses the results of Bakker et al. (2001) on epistemological and methodological grounds, shedding light on the pitfalls of some theoretical biases that evidently emerge from their work. We will ultimately re-frame the discussion on a more rigorous basis after digging into various empirical data for CCS features.
References


The emergence of morphomic structure in Romance-based Creoles

Because Creole languages are expected to have «simple» morphology (e.g. Plag 2006), it is unexpected that they should possess morphomic structure which is usually felt to be a hallmark of complex morphology. In this talk we bring together evidence from French-based and Portuguese-based creoles to the effect that morphomic structure does arise in Creoles. Focusing mostly on Mauritian and Indo-Portuguese, we provide evidence for a variety of morphomic properties in the synchronic grammar: (i) morphosyntactically opaque distribution of forms; (ii) arbitrary inflection classes; (iii) stem allomorphy; (iv) differential selection of bases in lexeme formation; (v) syncretism.

We then show that the difference between Mauritian and Indo-Portuguese inflectional systems correlates with differences in the lexifier languages: French has a very prevalent conjugation class in -Ce, with multiple syncretism of two forms in -Ce (infinitive, past participle) and -C (present, imperative, subjunctive singular). In some French-based creoles, this fact gave rise to a paradigm of two cells which was morphosyntactically useless because of the syncretism. As a result, various creoles have invested the two cell paradigm with different values, the pattern of Mauritian being strikingly morphomic (Henri 2010).

By contrast, Portuguese has three conjugation classes with predominantly regular stems (Ca-, Ce-, or Ci-) which make class distinctions very perceptible. This may explain why Indo-Portuguese creoles show a strong preference for maximising morphomic contrasts through conjugation class distinctions: Korlai Portuguese and Daman Portuguese have preserved the three Portuguese classes in Ca-, Ce- and Ci- and, in addition, developed a fourth class in Cu- (Clements 1996, Luis to appear).

The data nicely supports psycholinguistic evidence which suggests that morphomic patterns do not pose additional processing difficulties to adult L2 learner (Luis 2008, Plag 2008): a Creole language may inherit, extend (Indo-Portuguese) or even innovate (Mauritian) morphomic distinctions.

Selected references:


What Could Semantic Typology Mean for the Study of West African Postcolonial Languages?

The advancement of semantic typology in recent years (Levinson et al. 2003; Levinson & Wilkins, 2006) has stimulated new research on the study of spatial relations in pidgin and creole languages (Essegbey, 2005) and African languages (Ameka and Essegbey, 2006). Drawing on that research, this paper discusses aspects of locative predication in two West African postcolonial languages (WAPLs), Nigerian Pidgin and Ghanaian Pidgin English.

First, we briefly discuss the use of the focusing particle (FP) construction as the prototypical construction of space in WAPLs. At the surface level, the FP construction is realized as for in English-lexifier WAPLs and na in Portuguese-lexifier WAPLs. Then, we discuss two case studies that provide a preliminary account of locative predication in English-lexifier WAPLs.

In case study 1, we align ourselves with the current work being done in semantic typology by using the methods that have been established to systematically research spatial language cross-linguistically (Levinson & Wilkins, 2006). Our study utilizes the Topological Picture Relations Series developed by Bowermann and Pederson (1993) to elicit the basic locative construction – the most common way to respond to a where question – to obtain instances of a locative copula, as well as the focusing particle for as it used to describe different spatial relations. Case study 1 will enable us to answer the following questions:

1) What determines the choice of locative verb and the use of the focusing particle for in the basic locative construction in Nigerian Pidgin and Ghanaian Pidgin English?

2) How do the basic locative constructions in Nigerian Pidgin and Ghanaian Pidgin English compare to the basic locative construction in the Surinamese Creole languages?

In case study 2, we conduct a corpus-linguistic analysis of the FP construction in Nigerian Pidgin using an 80,000 word corpus developed by Deuber (2005). This method will give us a better idea of the general use of the focusing particle for outside of the basic locative construction. We ask the following questions:

3) What are the semantic constraints on the use of the FP construction in Nigerian Pidgin?

4) Are the semantic constraints on the FP construction in Nigerian Pidgin derived from the restraints on locative predication in its substrate West African languages or its Indo-European lexifier language?
References


DEPREZ, Vivianne (Rutgers University / ISC, CNRS)

Specificity and Definiteness in Creole Languages and L2 Acquisition

It is a common claim in the Creole literature that Creole languages favor a specificity distinction over a definiteness one in their determiner systems (Bickerton 1981, Givón 2001, Ionin 2003, Bobyleva 2009 among others). While Creoles are not alone to favor specificity cf. (Samoens, Gungbe, Twi among others), specificity based article systems seem, at least superficially, less frequent crosslinguistically than definiteness ones. To wit, WALS has a definite feature that distinguishes 197 languages in their sample (the largest number in languages with determiners) but makes no use of a specificity feature. Yet, the overall validity of such generalizations has proven difficult to verify. This may be due, in part, to the fact that authors use diverging definitions of these semantic/pragmatic notions. Moreover, motivations/explanations for this alleged Creole specificity prevalence has so far remained elusive. Finally, wherever in depth semantic studies have been conducted with adequate formal definitions, the picture has almost inevitably become more complex for Creole and non-Creole languages alike. To wit varieties of English, have been argued to have a three-way distinction, with a specificity determiner on top of the definite/indefinite ones Ionin (2007). In this paper, we compare the determiner system of a number of French based creoles Seychelles, Mauritian, Martinique, Guadeloupean and Haitian Creole and argue on the basis of corpus research and native speaker judgment data that the superficially identical so called definite determiner \textit{la}, common to these creoles, is in fact not uniform with respect to definiteness/specificity across them. In some of these Creoles (Mauritian), \textit{la} seems closer to a specificity marker, in others (Martinique, Haitian Creole), it seems closer to a definite article. Yet, in none do we observe a determiner system identical to that of a clearly definiteness based language like French. Since the picture proves more complex than initially thought, we argue that the features of specificity and definiteness are in need of further decomposition to account for the diverse uses of the determiner \textit{la} in the distinct creoles. Based on the similarities between pronouns and determiners found all over Romance clitic systems, Longobardi (2008) has argued that definiteness should be assimilated to person features in the determiner system (cf also Bernstein (2009)). Person features in turn appeal to notions like speaker (+sp = 1\textsuperscript{st} P), hearer (+hear = 2\textsuperscript{nd} P), both/Neither (-sp,-hear = 3\textsuperscript{rd} P) orientedness, which following Ionin (2003) and Heim (1991), are also used in the definitions of specificity (speaker’s intended reference (cf 1\textsuperscript{st} P) vs. definiteness (speaker + hearer common ground (cf 3\textsuperscript{rd} P)) used in current formal semantic works on the topic (cf (1) below). First, we show how using the person based decomposition of specificity and definiteness we propose, building on Longobardi’s insights, allows for a better understanding of the determiners systems of the French based creoles, beyond the specific/definite dichotomy. Then we argue that this person based system has the further advantage of suggesting an interesting potential source for the specificity bias alleged to characterize Creole determiner systems. Specifically, it relates specificity, which relies on a speaker’s only perspective, to the pragmatic egocentric bias that has been argued to guide children L1 (Maratsos 1974,78, Shaeffer & Mathewson 2005) and, more controversially, adult L2 (Guella, Deprez, Sleeman (2008, 10) acquisition of determiners. These authors show (contra Ionin et als in press) that the same pragmatic egocentric perspective can be taken to influence L1and L2 acquisition by adults, if it is understood to stem from an increase in computational demands, rather than from a developmental deficit, as experimentally demonstrated by (Epley et als 2004). In this sense, specificity appears like a more basic notion, i.e. a simpler speaker self-centered calculus, in contrast to definiteness that must implicates the speaker & hearer common ground, and thus requires a more complex calculus of dual shared perspective that could demand an increase in
computational resources. On this view, the alleged specificity bias in Creole determiner systems could arguably result from the grammaticalisation of a characteristic L2 and L1 acquisition process.

(1) Ionin’s definition of definiteness and Specificity
If the form [D NP] is:
a. [+definite], then the speaker assumes that the **hearer shares the speaker’s** presupposition of the existence of a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP
b. [+specific], then the **speaker intends** to refer to a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP, and considers this individual to possess some noteworthy property

**Selected References**


Guella, H. Déprez, V. Sleeman, P. (forthcoming) Specificity effects in L2 determiner acquisition: UG or Pragmatic egocentrism? GALANA 2010


This paper explores the continuity and transmission of African substratal structures (especially Bantu), as reflected in some negative structures of Belizean Creole (BC). Previous research suggested that the BC counterfactual (a preverbal combination of past/anterior and future morphemes \([me \ wan]\)) could be traced to West African structures. This hypothesis is extended to another feature of the creole: the marking of negation. BC has three negative structures, two preverbal negative particles (\(no\) and \(neva\)), as well as a multiple negative construction. \(No\) and \(neva\) occur in complementary environments: \(No\) occurs in non-past contexts, and \(neva\) in past completive contexts. There are English dialects that use \textit{never} to negate a single past event, but BC \textit{neva} is different in that it has the particularity of marking irrealis both in hypothetical and consequent clauses, as represented below:

\[
\text{If dey } \textit{neva} \text{ get tu an kwik i me.wan drown}
\]

\[
\text{if 3P NEG.PAST get to 3S quick 3S PAST.FUTURE drown}
\]

'If they hadn't got to him fast, he would have drowned.'

\[
\text{Di pin neva ben di story neva en}
\]

\[
\text{the pin NEG.PAST bend the story NEG.PAST end}
\]

'If the pin hadn't bent, the story wouldn't have ended.' [Anansi story]

There are several West African languages (i.e., Ibibio, Mandinka, Swahili) in which negation is a type of aspectual marker that may also combine with tense. Zarma uses \textit{si} as Imperfective/negative morpheme and Mandinka \textit{man} as Perfective/negative. This paper further investigates negation in various West African languages and evaluates the possibility of a transmission of African perceptual patterns that may have survived in Belizean Creole, and could explain why this variety differs markedly from its English superstrate in the presentation of unrealized (and negated) events. BC appears to be more conservative in certain respects than other Atlantic English-based creoles, reflecting more closely African influence. Possible explanations for traces of African continuity in the expression of negation can be found in the distinctive sociolinguistic history of Belize (African slaves lived in relative isolation in logwood camps with limited contacts with whites since Belize was not a plantation society), but also in the potential impact of African lingua francas (such as Efik, Kituba or Swahili) that is likely to have been spoken by slaves originating from the Gold Coast and may have provided convenient reference points for transported Africans developing a new creole.
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*Les Prépositions modales en Haïtien*

Cet exposé défendra l'hypothèse que certaines prépositions locatives en haïtien doivent être analysées comme des modaux, si l'on adopte une définition sémantique de la modalité comme celle proposée par Le Querler (2001) : « l’expression de l’attitude du locuteur par rapport au contenu propositionnel de son énoncé », définition illustrée (1) :

1. a. Jean doit nager (probabilité / obligatoire)
   b. John peut venir (autorisation / possibilité / capacité)

Dans la littérature linguistique, l’étiquette *modaux* est attribuée à une sous-classe de verbes. Ouattara (2001) écrit par exemple : « un verbe peut être qualifié de modal parce qu’il a parmi ses emplois au moins un emploi modal ». Cette conception est due au fait que, dans les langues étudiées, les expressions responsables de la sémantique modales présentent la flexion caractéristique des verbes (anglais : may/might, can/could, will/would, want(ed) ; français peut/pouvait, etc.)

En haïtien, une sémantique modale est parfois associée à des lexèmes qui dérivent historiquement de verbes français, et qu'on peut pour cette raison considérer comme des 'verbes' :

2. a. Jean dwe vini.
   Jean devoir venir
   ‘Jean doit venir.’ (Obligation / souhait)
   b. Jean vle venir.
   Jean vouloir venir
   ‘Jean veut venir.’

Toutefois, une sémantique modale peut aussi être associée à des lexèmes dont l'étymologie n'est pas verbale. Des linguistes comme Sylvain (1936) ; Magloire (1982), Chaudenson (2003, 2007) ont étudié le morphème *pou* comme particule modale en haïtien.

3. a. Jean pou danse.
   Jean POU danser
   (i) ‘Jean est pour danser (= Jean est favorable à l'idée de danser).
   (ii) ‘Jean peut danser.’ (possibilité)

On peut se demander si *pou*, qui est à l’origine une préposition, a changé de catégorie en (3). Chaudenson (2007) fait l’hypothèse que le *pou* modal est dérivé de l’expression française « être pour ». Etant donné l’absence de la copule *être* en haïtien, rien n'oblige à supposer que *pou* modal a changé de catégorie.

D’autres prépositions locatives semblent pouvoir être associées à une sémantique modale : par exemple *sou*, dont les emplois modaux sont jusqu’ici peu étudiés :
Dans l’exemple (4b), *sou* exprime une sémantique modale. Je défendrai l’hypothèse que *sou* modal, comme *pou* modal, ne change pas de catégorie syntaxique. Je chercherai à expliquer comment on passe du sens locatif de *sou* à l’effet modal.

Conclusion : les *modaux* ne doivent pas être considérés comme une catégorie syntaxique. La sémantique *modale* doit être définie indépendamment de la morphosyntaxe. L’haïtien nous enseigne qu’au moins deux types de prépositions (*pour* et certaines prépositions locatives comme *sou*) sont à même de développer une sémantique modale.

Question générale pour la typologie : quels types de morphèmes sont-ils a priori capables de développer une sémantique modale, et pourquoi ?

**Références**

ABOH, Enoch Oladé (2007), « *Fu/fu, fi/fi* et *ni/ni* : étude comparative de la complémentation dans les créoles des Caraïbes et dans les langues gbe (Kwa) d’Afrique ».  

(4)  
a. Jan sou tab la.  
   Jean sur table DF  
   ‘Jean est sur la table.’  
b. Jan sou vini.  
   Jean SOU venir  
   ‘Jean a très envie de venir.’
This paper bears on three sentence patterns illustrated in the Haitian examples in (1)-(3), which have attested counterparts in at least two other French-lexifier creoles, those of Guadeloupe and Martinique. The surface property shared by all three patterns is the fact that the item which occupies the V position is reiterated in another position within the minimal predication: in our presentation below, this replica of the verb is designated as Hv (= Homonym of V). In Pattern I, VP may be transitive or intransitive, and Hv is linearly preceded by the singular cardinal yon and/or a lexical modifier. In Pattern II, VP must be intransitive, and Hv is linearly followed by a possessive pronoun. In Pattern III, VP may be transitive or intransitive, and Hv is bare and positioned in the clause periphery, on the left of the subject. The interpretive effects associated with these constructions are often difficult to convey with perfect adequacy by means of English translations:

**Pattern I: Subject VP (Q) m Hv**

(1) a. Djo kouri ti kouri.  
   Djo run little run  
   (i) 'Djo runs/has run a little.'  
   (ii) 'Djo runs poorly.'

b. Djo kouri yon ti kouri.  
   Djo run a little run  
   (i) 'Djo ran briefly.'  
   (ii) 'Djo ran poorly.'

c. Djo bwè kleren BON bwè.  
   Djo drink brandy good drink  
   'Djo REALLY DID drink brandy!'

**Pattern II: Subject VP Hv poss**

(2) Djo kouri kouri l.  
   Djo run run 3SG  
   'Djo runs/ran as he {pleases/pleased}.'

**Pattern III: (X) Hv Subject VP**

(3) a. (Se) KOURI Djo kouri (li pa jis MACHE VIT).  
   it-is run Djo run 3SG NEG just walk fast  
   'Djo RUNS/RAN (he doesn't/didn't just WALK FAST).'

b. MANJE Djo manje diri a (li pa jis ACHTE l).  
   eat Djo eat rice DET 3SG NEG just buy 3SG  
   'Djo really EATS/ATE the rice (he doesn't/didn't just BUY it).'

The pattern-III subtype is the one which includes the Klivaj Predika variant (e.g. (3a) with initial se), which has so far received the most attention in the linguistic literature. For each of the three patterns it has been hinted by at least one author that the phrase having Hv as its
lexical head is a 'cognate object' of a sort. To our knowledge, however, no unitary formal analysis covering all three patterns has been proposed and fleshed out.

Our goal is, precisely, to provide empirical evidence in support of such a unified analysis. Our leading assumption is that the Hv phrase stands in all three patterns as a VP modifier (an adverbial), rather than as a cognate object. The data under discussion provide empirical support to the general assumption (cf. Kayne 2009) that lexical roots are categorially unspecified — in other words, that syntactic categories boil down to structural positions. The diachronic issue (how did the three patterns emerge in the relevant creoles?) will be addressed but left open.

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Sylvain, Suzanne, 1936, Le créole haïtien, morphologie et syntaxe, Port-au-Prince.
In the present paper, I will reassess the assertions made by Bickerton (1981) regarding TMA marking in Papiamentu (PA).

In defense of his Bioprogram, Bickerton (1981) was compelled to account for several ‘odd’ features relating to TMA marking in synchronic PA, most notably (a) the presence of a future marker lo which can precede the subject, (b) the presence of an overt perfective past marker a, where most creoles have a zero, and (c) the lack of an anterior marker. Drawing mainly on synchronic evidence, I will argue in line with Bickerton that lo and a constitute post-formative additions to the original TMA system with the aim of reducing the typological distance to the TMA systems of the surrounding languages of prestige, particularly Spanish.

Subsequently, and in spite of claims to the contrary (e.g. Maurer 1985), I will corroborate Bickerton’s (1981:87) claim of “an original anterior-non anterior distinction in Papiamentu” by reconstructing the anterior marker *taba and by arguing that PA’s original TMA system was furthermore characterized by a minimal perfective (Ø) – imperfective (preverbal ta) opposition, thus meeting some of the essential predictions made by the Bioprogram. I will then draw on basic notions of contact linguistics and grammaticalization such as gap filling and equivalence (cf. e.g. Heine & Kuteva 2005) to show how PA’s verbal system has shifted from an originally relative (aspect-prominent) to a more absolute (tense-based) way of encoding temporal relations and focus on how this shift correlates with the post-formative integration of the above-mentioned markers (a and lo) into the original TMA system.

On the basis of these analyses, I will reach the sum conclusion that PA does not constitute counter-evidence to the creole proto-type proposed by Bickerton (1974, 1975, 1981, 1984), but, instead, has undergone several cross-linguistically common paths of contact-induced change and grammaticalization drawing its TMA system away from the proto-type, while still “leaving clear traces of the more creole system that must have existed at an earlier stage” (Bickerton 1981:88).

References


One common pattern of phonological conditioning in allomorphy chooses allomorphs which best satisfy syllable markedness constraints. Thus, English a is chosen before consonant (*a glass, not *an glass) to avoid an unnecessary coda, whereas an is chosen before vowel (*a apron, not *a apron) to avoid vowel hiatus. Allomorphy of the postposed definite determiner in Haitian Creole (HC) appears as an unexpected case from the syllable markedness perspective. La is chosen after a stem ending in a consonant or a glide which results in an otherwise unnecessary coda (1a, b), whereas a is chosen after a stem ending in a vowel. This results in vowel hiatus after a stem-final a and lax mid vowels (1c, d). A glide is inserted when the stem ends in other vowels (1e, f).

(1) (a) pitit la ‘the child’ (c) diiri a ‘the rice’ (Valdman 1978) (b) kaj la ‘the house’ (d) vε a ‘the glass’ (f) pje a ‘the foot’ Some have claimed that HC determiner allomorphy “do[es] not appear to relate to any universal well-formedness generalizations” (Paster 2006: 76). Several accounts have been proposed in Optimality Theory (OT), but these analyses have had to enrich the lexicon as listed in (2).


The problem with the approaches in (2) is that they all violate the OT principle of Richness of the Base (RoB; Prince & Smolensky 1993/2004) – the idea that “languages cannot differ systematically in their lexicons” (McCarthy 2008: 88).

This paper proposes to reconceptualize HC determiner allomorphy in terms of the length of the available allomorphs and the major class of the stem-final segment to which they attach. It develops an OT account which respects RoB in the choice between input allomorph /la/ versus input allomorph /a/. Crucial to the analysis is the notion of local constraint conjunction which rules out the “worst of the worst” (Smolensky 1997; McCarthy 2008). The local conjunction of two constraints is violated only if both constraints are violated. A violation of just one of them passes the conjoined constraint. The member constraints are ranked low and, hence, might not affect the language which invokes the conjunction. HC allows vowel-final stems because MAXIO outranks */V# as an individual constraint.

Following earlier analyses, I assume that resyllabification is not an option at the juncture of stem and definite determiner in HC – syllables and stems must align at the right edge.

(3) NoResyll: “Assign a violation mark for each resyllabified segment.”

The first constraint in the conjunction is */V# which is used elsewhere to force apocope.

(4) *V#: “Assign a violation mark for each stem which ends in a vowel.” (McCarthy 2008)

The second constraint in the conjunction is taken from Lee (2009) and favors short allomorphs.

(5) DefaultAllomorph (Default): “A phonologically simpler allomorph is preferred.” Default is violated once when an allomorph with more segments is chosen from the input where one with fewer segments is available. Allomorphs – like segments – are tracked as in correspondence theory (cf. McCarthy 2008).
Consonant-final stems emerge correctly with the longer allomorph *la because they satisfy the constraint *V# and, hence, pass the constraint conjunction. Competitors with the shorter allomorph *a pass DEFAULT and, hence, the constraint conjunction, but they fatally violate ONSET as in (6b) or NORESYLL as in (6c).

Forms such as *papa *la are out even though they have otherwise perfect sequences of CV syllables: The stem ends in a vowel, but /la/ was chosen from the input even though the competitor with fewer segments, /a/, was available. Hence, the conjoined constraint is violated. Forms like papa *a emerge correctly as optimal because they respect DEFAULT and hence pass the conjoined constraint even though they feature vowel hiatus.

This account applies analogously to forms with inserted glide.

The constraint DEFAULT punishes forms which utilize /la/, as before. Thus, the conjoined constraint is violated in (8a) because the stem also ends in a vowel. Glide insertion – where possible in HC – supplies onsets (8c) and, thus, is better than candidates with vowel hiatus (8b).

The phonological behavior of determiner allomorphy in HC is unusual and difficult to analyze in terms of syllable structure. The present paper views it in terms of the length of the input allomorphs involved: The shorter input allomorph is optimal in the output when the stem ends in a vowel; the longer input allomorph is optimal in the output when the stem ends in a consonant. In other words, consonant-final stems are as long as they can be, whereas vowel-final stems are as short as they can be. No argument for the theoretical complexity or simplicity of creole languages can be derived from the present analysis of this allomorphy: It can be handled in OT without invoking lexical stipulations. Constraints and analytical devices used for non-creole languages suffice to account for it.

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KRIEGEL, Sibylle (Université de Provence)

*Title to be announced*
LEUFKENS, Sterre (ACLC / University of Amsterdam)

Transparency and language contact

Transparency
A transparent relation is a one-to-one relation between meaning and form. A transparent language is a language that has a relatively high amount of such relations. Only few languages in the world are transparent; most languages exhibit numerous non-transparent features.

To measure the degree of transparency of a language, a list of non-transparent features is proposed. These features all violate a one-to-one correspondence between pragmatic and semantic units on the one hand, and morphosyntactic and phonological units on the other. Opaque phenomena are divided over three categories. Firstly, the redundancy category comprises relations between one meaning and multiple forms (e.g. negative concord, modal concord, apposition, etc.). Domain disintegration includes all instances of non-parallelism of semantic and formal boundaries (e.g. fusional morphology, discontinuity, etc.). Finally, the form-based form category includes all instances of form and formal operations that are not triggered by pragmatic or semantic information, but by morphosyntactic or phonological considerations (e.g. agreement, grammatical gender, expletives, consecutio temporum, grammatical relations, etc.).

Transparency of creoles
In Leufkens (2010), four creoles are studied on the features on the opacity list: Nubi, Pichi, Diu Indo-Portuguese and Sri Lanka Malay. Strikingly, while there are cases of redundancy and domain disintegration in all languages, they have very few ‘form-based form’ features. None of the creoles exhibits agreement, grammatical gender, consecutio temporum or grammatical relations. The results show that creoles are relatively transparent.

Please note that transparency is not the same as simplicity – the statement that creoles are relatively transparent does hence not imply that creoles are simple. To show the difference between the notions, consider example (1) from Turkish (Mark Schmalz, personal communication).

(1) avrupa-lı-la-ş-tur-il-a-mı-yan-lar-dan-sınız
Europe-NMLZ-VR-REC-CAUS-PASS-OPT-NEG-PART-PL-ABL-2PL
‘You belong to those who cannot be Europeanized.’

The Turkish sentence is morphologically complex (defining complexity as the amount of linguistic material that has to be expressed), but very transparent (every morpheme has one meaning). Interestingly, Turkish children acquire this complex morphology relatively early: verbal morphology is mastered before the age of three (Aksu-Koç and Slobin 1985). This shows that acquisition is facilitated not by simplicity (a low amount of linguistic material) but by transparency (a consistent one-to-one mapping between form and meaning).

Direction of linguistic change
Creoles are languages that emerged in a situation of intense language contact. They are more transparent than their source languages, which indicates that languages in contact become more transparent. This is confirmed in a recent study by Lupyan & Dale (2010). They find

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1 ABL = ablative, CAUS = causative, NEG = negation, NMLZ = nominaliser, OPT = optative, PART = participle, PASS = passive, PL = plural, REC = reciprocal, VR = verbalizer
that languages with many linguistic neighbours (and hence more language contact) tend to have specific linguistic features such as isolating rather than fusional morphology. Many of these features are transparent features.

So if languages in contact become more transparent, the opposite could be true as well: languages will become more opaque over time (that is if there is no or little language contact). This is confirmed by studies in language acquisition: interlanguages of L1 (Slobin 1977) and L2 (Kusters 2003) learners are relatively transparent. Transparent features are shown to be acquired before non-transparent features. For example, we already saw that Turkish transparent morphology is acquired strikingly early. In Dutch, the extremely non-transparent grammatical gender system is mastered only around the age of eight (Blom et al. 2008).

Now why would language contact lead to transparency? Supposedly, this has to do with the high intelligibility of transparent relations. A speaker who wishes to communicate with someone speaking another language will select the most transparent forms in her/his language in order to be intelligible. The repeated selection of transparent forms explains the transparency of creoles and other contact languages.

But when a language is spoken in a relatively isolated community (without non-native speakers), there is no need to use highly intelligible forms. It will be less problematic to use for example reduced (fusional) forms. Thus, isolation leads to non-transparency.

The hypothesis in my current research is that the appearance of non-transparency in languages is not random, but ordered. In earlier transparency studies (cf. Hengeveld forthcoming), it is shown that there is a pattern in the emergence of non-transparent features. By comparing 25 languages, I will describe this pattern in an implicational hierarchy in which all non-transparent features are ordered. One aspect of this hierarchy was already mentioned: form-based form features are only present in the most non-transparent languages. Thus, the presence of such features (e.g. grammatical gender) in some language implies that domain disintegration and redundancy features will be present as well. Patterns can be observed within the categories as well. For example, fusion occurs in all languages studied so far, but discontinuity only appears in more opaque languages.

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Some students of the evolution of language have espoused uncritically Derek Bickerton’s claim that pidgins are suggestive of his phylogenetic “protolanguage.” I have argued against the position, chiefly because the producers of pidgins did not regress to the state of Homo Erectus’ mind. Unlike the latter, they were also speakers of full-fledged modern languages, guided by Late Homo Sapiens’ “language organ.” On the other hand, a population studies’ approach to the emergence of pidgins can provide different useful hints about the phylogenetic emergence of language.
The Bauxite language, a French-based early pidgin

The data on a primitive contact idiom, named by the anonymous author “the Bauxite language” represent six typewritten pages which were subsequently scanned. This idiom seems to have been recorded in the 1970s. It was a code used in the communication between Russian specialists who have arrived in Guinea on bauxite mining and the local population. It is a classic example of an early stage pidgin, a reduced auxiliary language, used by two groups of people who had no language in common in standard communicative situations [Holm2000; Romaine 1988]. The unknown author of the work, probably an interpreter, pointed out that Russian specialists were convinced that they spoke the language of the local population, while the locals tried to speak the dialect of the foreign specialists. The case of “the Bauxite language” may cast light on the early stages of a primary contact language formation and its sociolinguistic settings.

1) Lack of common language. Russian knew neither French nor local African languages; local population spoke French as a second language, their mother tongues being susu, mogofin etc. English which could be used as a lingua-franca was unknown to both sides.

2) French, a language of inter-cultural communication, was therefore foreign to both sides. At the same time, the Bauxite clearly was a French-based pidgin as almost all the lexical items were of French origin. This contradicts the common idea that the more prestigious group’s language usually becomes a lexifier [see also Selbach 2008]. Local ethnic groups hardly were more prestigious than foreign specialists. Most likely, we deal here with the case of the prestigiousness of the French language per se regardless of the people who use it.

3) The case of Bauxite also shows that the most important component in a pidgin formation is the lack of motivation to a serious study of the other side’s language. It is sometimes supposed that Europeans could deliberately corrupt their speech not to make possible for slaves and servants to master their tongue [Singh 2000]. However, Russian specialists in Guinea had at least secondary or higher education and had opportunities to study French, though they obviously had no such intention. The basic mutual understanding seemed to be sufficient.

4) The Bauxite language demonstrates the typical combination: vocabulary goes back to one language (in this case to French), while phonetics and phonology go back to other languages (depending on the first tongue of the speaker). E.g. diphthongs characteristic for French were pronounced as two separate vowels, which is typical of the “cartoon” Russian accent.

5) This jargon could be learned quickly. However, this means that it still had to be learned. As the unknown author of the Bauxite language description put it: “One learns this language in eight minutes and remembers for a lifetime. Unlike other languages, which one studies all the life and forgets in eight minutes”.

6) A significant part of the Bauxite language vocabulary is deictic words and formulas of address. Lexical units had rather broad sense, the precise meaning being specified by the context. Thus, an utterance could be understood only in the situation of actual intercourse. Other language functions (accumulation of information, narrative, etc.) were not performed.

7) The selection of French words was influenced, however, by the Russian language. Some lexical items were chosen because of their proximity to certain Russian words.
(so called “language bargaining”, see [Thomason, Kaufman 1988]). E.g. the negation
no (< French non) was supported by the Russian adversative conjunction no ‘but’. Many words of the pidgin had equivalents in Russian where they are loans from French: madam, mesjé, ansambl, bonjur, transporté, préparé, stoppé and others.

8) When the pidgin resources were not enough for communication, speakers used words of their native languages. However, these elements should not be regarded as an integral part of the pidgin. One term goes back to the Russian “foreign-talk”: kaput ‘finished’, ‘dead’ [Perekhvalskaya 2008].

Morphology. Words of all classes are invariable.

Personal pronouns

1 Sg mua
1Pl. Incl. mua-tua
2 Sg tua
d 2Pl. (tua)
3 Sg -
d 3Pl -
e.g. parti meson ‘he/she has left’ with the 3Sg null-subject.

Other deictics:

sa ‘this, that, this one, that one’ is used as a substitute for any inanimate object or as a noun modifier; sa mesye ‘this man’. Sa may also be used as a copula. isi ‘here, there’.


Syntax. The word order is strict: SVO with the direct object expressed by a noun, and SOV' with a pronominal direct object.: mangé préparé ‘dinner is ready ‘; préparé mangé ‘cook a dinner’; mua tua rygardé ‘I will come to see you’.

Unlike other pidgins and creoles Bauxite had a copula (deictic sa): do mil sa no normal ‘two thousand francs is a heavy price’.

There was neither a verb of existence (to be, to be situated) nor a verb ‘to have’. The verb préparé could be used as auxiliary: kaput préparé ‘he died’.

Reduplication was widespread: kombien? ‘how much does it cost?’ — kombien! kombien! ‘It is too expensive!’; peti-peti ‘a little’ (“small-small”).

The total corpus of the Bauxite language consists of 110 phrases, some of which being one word long. Still this material is very instructive for the theory of early pidgin formation.

References

In the literature there has been a long debate regarding the nature of future reference; whether it expresses future tense or whether it falls under the category of modality (see Hornstein 1990; Huddleston 1995; Sarkar 1998; Declerck 2006; Matthewson 2006; Tonhauser to appear for discussion). The debate on this issue has not been settled yet and this paper aims to contribute to this discussion by focussing on future reference in Saamáka. This paper studies the semantic and syntactic characteristics of the future reference morpheme ó in Saamáka and it aims to establish to position of this morpheme in the hierarchy of functional projections. In this respect it is important to establish whether ó in Saamáka is a future Tense morpheme or a Modality morpheme.

The morpheme conveys four different readings: simple future, future-in-the-past, past-in-the-future and assumptive epistemic, as exemplified below.

(1) Simple Future
Mi ó folóisi gó a fóto.
1SG FUT move go LOC Paramaribo
‘I will move to Paramaribo’.

(2) Future-in-the-Past
A bi musu táki táa á ó bebé dí dési.
3SG PST MOD say COMP 3SG.NEG FUT drink DET Medicine
‘She should have said that she would not drink the medicine’.

(3) Past-in-the-Future
Té wi kó a wósu nóó dí muyémíi ó kóti déé físi.
when 1PL come LOC house NARR DET girl FUT cut DET.PL Fish
‘When we come home, the girl will have cleaned the fish’.

(4) Assumptive Epistemic
Dí marip á ókó deé bigá a bi dé a wáta.
DET maripa FUT come dry because 3SG PST BE LOC Water
‘The maripa should/will have become rotten because it was in the water’.

a. ModT = Present; EvT = Past

A close investigation of the data reveals that, syntactically, the morpheme ó has a number of characteristics in common with the necessity modal musu and the possibility modal su in Saamáka:
- availability of two time intervals for modification by adverbs
- temporal interpretation of epistemic reading is tied to the state vs. event distinction
- similarity regarding ordering restrictions
- inability to occur with bi in their epistemic reading

In a sentence containing ó two time intervals are available which are both able to be modified by temporal adverbials; the topic time and the time of situation, as exemplified below. In (5), the temporal adverbial modifies the time of situation, whereas in (6), it modifies the topic time. The availability of two time intervals is highly unexpected under a Tense analysis (in the sense of Hornstein 1990; Zagona 1995; Declerck 2006).

(5) Amanyá mi ó dé a kamía.
	tomorrow 1SG FUT BE LOC. Place
	‘Tomorrow I will be at home’.

(6) Nóúnóu akí yoó. ába kíkí.
	now here 2SG.FUT cross. Creek
	‘Now you will cross the creek’.
Interestingly, the temporal interpretation of an epistemic sentence correlates with the dynamicity of the verb; stative verbs have a present temporal orientation of the modal evaluation time, while eventive verbs have a past temporal orientation of the modal evaluation time, as exemplified in (7) and (4) respectively. In both sentences, the modal anchor time has a present temporal perspective (in the sense of Condoravdi 2002; Laca 2008).

(7) Bigá ée yá gó a sikóo wán dáka nóó yá ó sábi soní aki, because if 2SG.NEG go LOC school ART day NARR 2SG.NEG FUT know thing here, ée ná sembe kondá dá i.

if NEG person tell give 2SG

‘Because if you didn’t go to school you will/might not know these things if no one has told it to you’ (Kuse, 1977, 3).

a. ModT = Present; EvT = Present

Thirdly, the morpheme ó shows similarities with the necessity modal musu with regard to their syntactic distribution. These morphemes cannot co-occur, as exemplified below.

(8) * Dí wómi ó musu mbéi dí wósu. 
* DET man FUT MOD make DET House

(9) * Dí wómi musu ó mbéi dí wósu.
* DET man MOD FUT make DET House

Additionally, both morphemes must precede the possibility modal sa when they co-occur, as exemplified for ó below.

(10) Dí míi ó sa lési.
DET child FUT MOD Read

‘The child will be able to read’.

(11) *Dí míi sa ó lési.
DET child MOD FUT Read

Finally, the necessity modal musu and the possibility modal sa as well as the morpheme ó cannot cooccur with the past time reference morpheme bi when these morphemes are interpreted as epistemic. Only their circumstantial reading surfaces (for the modals) or a counterfactual interpretation (for the morpheme ó), as illustrated for musu and ó below.

(12) Mi bi musu yasá beée.
1SG PST MOD bake bread

‘I was obliged to bake bread’.
or *‘I must have baked bread’.

(13) Mi bi ó balí wósu.
1SG PST FUT sweep House

‘I would clean the house’.
or *‘I will have cleaned the house’.

After investigating the semantic interpretation and the syntactic distribution of ó, I argue that ó is a modal morpheme which has a universal quantificational force (in the sense of Copley 2002; Matthewson 2006; Tonhauser to appear). In (1) - (3), ó has a circumstantial modal base and an ordering source of prediction or expectation, whereas in (4) ó has an epistemic modal base and an epistemic, informational or stereotypical ordering source (in the sense of Kratzer 1977, 1991). Since the functional category of ó is established, the position of the morpheme in the functional hierarchy can be derived. When ó conveys a circumstantial reading, it is situated in Modcircumstantial which is located below Tense, whereas when ó conveys an epistemic reading, it is located in Modepistemic which is situated above Tense (in the sense of Cinque 1999, 2001; Hacquard 2006, 2010).

By arguing in favour of a modal analysis of ó, it is possible to provide a unified analysis which explains all the characteristics of this morpheme. This paper contributes to the debate whether future reference falls under the functional category of Tense or of Modality by studying a underrepresented language. Additionally, it demonstrates the importance of combining the study of semantic interpretation and syntactic distribution of a morpheme to establish the functional category of a morpheme and its position in the hierarchy of functional projections.
Due to the socio-historical circumstances under which they arose, creole languages represent the only known instance of spontaneous natural language emergence in historical times, and, therefore, are in some sense privileged in providing an unique window on the linguistic principles responsible for the particular way that their grammatical systems developed. One must ascertain, however, that the properties under investigation trace back to the time of their genesis, rather than being late developments. We claim the formation of complex predicates constitutes such an aspect of grammar. Complex events are something all natural languages have to express one way or another at all times, and these are typically expressed by concatenating more than one predicate into a complex predicate. Therefore, the study of complex predicate formation can contribute to a deeper understanding of the syntactic and semantic factors involved in the underlying grammatical processes leading to the emergence of these languages.

As is clear from the vast literature (e.g. Alsina et al 1997), there is an astonishing variety of constructions that go under the umbrella-term complex predicate. Our focus will be on the following three groups: (i) serial verb constructions; (ii) causatives, restructuring verbs, and light verb constructions; (iii) resultatives and depictives. The question is whether there is one analysis for all constructions or different classes of complex predicate constructions should receive different analyses (cf. Muysken 1988a, Veenstra 1996, Ogie 2009). We explicitly argue against a single analysis for all instances of complex predication.

In this talk we will discuss the syntactic structure of complex predication in a selected set of creole languages, focusing on verb serialization in particular. Four issues will be dealt with. First, do the two or more (sub-)predicates that make up serial verb constructions form one clause, or are they distributed over several clauses? If the former, they do indeed seem to be instances of complex predicates; if the latter, they lean more towards being a clause linking (‘paratactic’) device. We argue for an analysis in terms of “parallel construal” in the sense of Koster (2000), thereby emphasizing the paratactic side of the phenomenon. Second, we explore the precise syntactic relationship between the predicates. Svenonius (2008) identifies three configurations: (i) lower predicate is complement of higher predicate; (ii) lower predicate is adjunct, predicated of the event; (iii) lower predicate is adjunct, predicated of an argument. The question is whether there is one configuration for all constructions or different classes of complex predicate constructions display different configurations. In particular, we evaluate the recent proposal of Aboh (2009) that serial verb constructions and other complex predicates should receive an analysis in which the predicates are in some complement relation. In order to address this issue, we turn to the Indian Ocean Creoles, i.p. Mauritian Creole, because it exhibits a process of verb allomorphy that is sensitive to the theta-theoretic status of the phrase following the verb, basically argument vs. adjunct (cf. Veenstra 2009, Henri 2010). We show that restructuring verbs and serial verbs display decisively different patterns, the former licensing the short form, the latter a long form:

(1)  a. restructuring verb
    Li inn komans zwe petank (*komanse)
    3SG A start play petanque
    ‘He started to play petanque.’

  b. serial verb
    Sunil inn marse inn al lakaz. (*mars)
    Sunil A walk A go house
    ‘Sunil walked to the house.’
These results thus suggest that serial verbs do not reduce to restructuring verbs, and that the lower predicate in the former is an adjunct, whereas it is a complement in restructuring contexts. We argue that this is captured in an analysis in terms of parallel construal.

Third, we discuss a related issue that concerns the status of the higher predicate (Cinque 2004, Svenonius 2008, Aboh 2009). Questions include: (i) to what extent is the higher predicate a full lexical verb, a semi-lexical verb, or a functional verb?; (ii) what is the relation between serialization and light verb constructions?; (iii) what is the relation between causative and resultative serial verb constructions? We show that the first verb in the construction show all the classic hallmarks of full verbs in Mauritian Creole as well as the Surinamese creoles, i.e. Saramaccan. Relevant tests include the availability and placement of ideophones in serial verb constructions in Saramaccan (Veenstra 2003).

Fourth, we explore the question of how much structure the lower predicate does project (Svenonius 2008). Aikhenvald (2006) makes a difference between single marking and concordant marking languages, according to whether verbal categories are marked once per construction or marked on every component. In particular, she observes that if a serializing language has concordant marking for at least one of tense, aspect, mood or modality, it must also have concordant person marking. Although, there has been no systematic study on concordant marking in creole languages, Mauritian Creole seems to have it for TMA-marking (obligatory) and person marking (optional) (Veenstra 2009), whereas Sao Tomense and Saramaccan do not exhibit any concordant marking for person, but do allow for double Aspect marking. The latter, we argue, is not a case of concordant marking, however, since it leads to interpretative differences (Hagemeijer 2000, Veenstra 1996). The pattern exhibited by Mauritian Creole is very different from what we find across creoles. We show that it is matched by East-Bantu languages from the P-Zone, and as such, can be treated as continuities from the substrate.

The overall conclusion, then, is that there is no unified analysis of complex predication. We have to distinguish at least two sorts of analyses, a complementation-type analysis and an adjunct-type analysis. The latter type is in terms of “parallel construal.” We show that such an analysis not only accounts for some of the coordination-like properties of serial verb constructions as originally discussed by Sebba (1987) and Veenstra (1996) for the surinamese creoles, but also for balanced-coordination effects found in serial verb constructions in Mauritian Creole.

References
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V Ø N / V ek / ar N en créole mauricien : ambitransitivité et/ou doublet lexical ?

Les unités ek / ar (et, avec) remplissent des fonctions de coordonnant et de préposition en créole mauricien. L’analyse de ek / ar, conjonctif et comitatif, a été fort bien menée par Kriegel et Michaelis (2007). Dans cette communication, je souhaiterais mettre en lumière un autre aspect du fonctionnement de ek/ar. En effet, une trentaine de verbes du créole mauricien comme bat en 1 et 1’

1. li bat bug la (il frappe l’homme)  
1’. li bat ek bug la (il rencontre l’homme (fortuitement))

apparaissent dans deux constructions différentes : une construction directe (Agent _ Patient) et une construction oblique introduite par ek / ar, qui modifie la transitivité du verbe. À la suite de D. Creissels (2006 : 2 et suiv.), j’emploierai le terme d’ambitransitif pour désigner « […] (ces) verbes (qui) peuvent figurer en construction transitive ou en construction intransitive sans cesser de représenter le même type d’événement ».

Le propos de cette communication est de décrire i) les effets sémantiques de ces modifications de transitivité comme en 2 et 2’ ou 3 et 3’ également,

2. li koz li (il parle de lui)  
2’. li koz ek li (il parle de lui)

3. li dres piti la (il réprimande l’enfant)  
3’. li dres ek piti la (il se dresse contre l’enfant)

et dans d’autres contextes lexicaux, et ii) de caractériser les relations entre les modifications de transitivité et la question de la voix comme en 4 et 4’,

4. li divors bug la (il a divorcé l’homme)  
4’. li divors ek bug la (elle divorce de l’homme).

Au-delà de ces exemples, je m’interrogerai sur le statut lexical et/ou syntaxique de l’ambitransitivité de ces unités verbales.

Références

Noun phrase organization in French-lexified Guianese Creole

The aim of this presentation is to provide a sketch of research questions concerning the noun phrase organization in French-lexified Guianese Creole. The author is preparing a comprehensive study based on written and oral corpora with a possible diachronic extension based on older Guianese Creole texts from the 17th-19th century. The synchronic data will be collected in a field study with native speaker informants in French Guiana in autumn 2011.

The noun phrase in Guianese Creole shows features that cannot be found in exactly the same way in other American French-based Creoles such as the demonstrative marker sa N-la or the postposed plurality marker yo that supposedly developed from older yé la. Yé also functions as the 3rd person plural pronoun and la is a definite marker. In older Guianese texts, we find cases of plural marking that only use yé (notably in combination with the anteposed possessive determiner).

Another interesting aspect in Guianese Creole is the ability of the definite/demonstrative and the plurality markers to determine complex NPs that include a relative clause. Guianese plurality marking contrasts at least formally with the postposed plurality marker yo in most modern Haitian varieties and the Antillean discontinuous plurality morpheme sé N-la. In older Caribbean Creole texts Hazaël-Massieux (1996) reveals forms as la yo and Klingler states that “combinations of la / le and ye are found in nineteenth-century Louisianan texts, but they have disappeared from the language today: zéronce là yé ‘those brambles’; pauve chiens leyé ‘those poor dogs’” (Klingler 2003, 180).

Besides the formal, syntactic and semantic properties of the Guianese overt determiner paradigm (including the definite/demonstrative, indefinite and the plurality markers) that have to be carefully studied, we also have to take into account so called bare nouns that appear frequently and allow for plural readings in some cases, as has been observed in other French-based Creoles.

The findings on the noun phrase organization in Guianese Creole constitute an important basis for further research in creolistics, historical and general linguistics: First, the Guianese data can be used to test generativist approaches to DP/NP-structure such as Déprez’ Plural parameter as exemplified for Seychelles, Mauritian, Haitian and Cape Verdean Creole in Déprez (2007).

2 The interest in aspects of noun phrase organization in Creoles has apparently risen; consider for example Baptista/Guéron (eds.) (2007). However, for French-lexified Guianese Creole a comprehensive study on noun phrase organization remains to be undertaken.

3 All following illustrating examples for Guianese Creole are taken from a diachronic corpus of available texts from the 19th century.

4 The terms ‘definite’ and ‘demonstrative’ markers are only used for convenience. The exact semantic and syntactic properties of French Guianese sa and la will have to be studied as scholars have recently done for Antillean and Haitian French-lexified Creoles (cf. Véronique 2002, Déprez 2007, Zrbi-Hertz/Glaude 2007).

5 The anteposed possessive determiner is a specific feature of Guianese Creole shared with Louisiana Creole and absent in the Caribbean French Creoles where the possessive determiner is always postposed to the noun. In our diachronic corpus, we encounter examples where yé could be interpreted either as a plurality marker or as a plural pronoun:

(a) So oueil yé grands, yé bels
Poss //PL/3PL grand 3PL beau (De La Landelle 1842)

(b) Toute nation qui guin esclave, yé là ka gadé
tout nation qui posséder esclave PL/DET TMA regarder (Pariset 1848b in Sournia 1976)

In example (b), yé could eventually allow for pronominal readings as in example (c):

(c) A ça qui ca kiód mo, qué yé la. ‘C’est ce qui me tue avec eux/ceux-là’ (Parépou 1885)

Besides, determination does not seem clear in a complex NP including two nominal elements:

(D) Ca zot pou débat’ ké maît’ bitation yé
PRES 2PL pour s’arranger avec maître habitation PL (Pariset 1848a in Sophie 1985)

5 ‘C est à vous de vous arranger avec le maître des habitations/les maîtres des habitation’

6 Similar constructions are also found in the Caribbean French-lexified creoles where “le déterminant –la connaît […] une expansion qui le conduit non seulement à déterminer N, mais également SN (c’est-à-dire un N déjà déterminé)” (Véronique 2002, 210).

7 To date, little explanatory approaches account for these formal differences. Zrbi-Hertz/Glaude (2007, 277, footnote 17) propose that “this dialectal variation may be correlated with the fact that French locative là may not only be the DP-internal correlate of the demonstrative determinant” (example a) “but also a DP-external adjunction” (examples b and c):

(a) Ces chiens-là, eux, aboient rarement.
Those dogs rarely bark

(b) [les/ces] chiens, eux, là, ils aboient trop. lit. ‘The/those dogs, there, they bark too much’

(c) [les/ces] chiens, là, eux, ils aboient trop. lit. ‘The/those dogs, there, them, they bark too much’

8 We should therefore investigate the specific factors in French Guianese Creole that determine or restrict the distribution and interpretation of bare nouns such as “previous introduction of the NP in the discourse, animacy, number (singular versus plural), Tense (generic versus episodic), syntactic distribution (subject versus object position), uniqueness, and pragmatics” (Baptista/Guéron 2007, 4). For bare nouns in 17th century French varieties see Chaudenson (2007).
Second, comparing data from Guianese with recent findings on the other Atlantic French-lexified Creoles may provide new insights into their genetic and historical relationship: Whereas Hazaël-Massieux (1990) and others assume a relatively late separation after a “époque où les créoles de la Caraïbe étaient moins différenciés qu’ils ne le sont aujourd’hui, tant au plan interne que dans la perception des locuteurs” (Fattier 1996, 10), Baker (1987) considers an independent genesis of Guianese Creole even if he does not exclude a possible Antillean influence either. Whereas sociohistorical archive data hints at an independent Creole genesis in French Guiana between about 1660 and 1740, there still remain unexplained aspects such as striking similarities between Louisiana and Guianese Creole, i.e. concerning possessive NPs.

What is more, comparative work on noun phrase organization may help us to achieve a better understanding of the precise role of language shaping factors such as Universal Grammar (UG) or Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in different stages of creolization. This should “be checked by referring to historical-demographic evidence about numerical proportions of first and second language speakers” (Arends 2002, 56), a point that seems particularly important for French Guiana: Sociohistorical data reveals, in contrast to the Caribbean, an extremely weak demographic development, small plantation size and therefore a relatively good access to the French superstrate. Therefore, not only the possible role of children’s UG should be considered, but also imperfect adults’ SLA: For instance, Plag (2008) argues that in Creoles as in interlanguages, we find “the unexpected emergence of totally new structures […] and the loss of structures that are shared by both languages involved” whereas “L1 transfer will not occur across the board, but when the structure to be transferred is processable within the developing L2 system” (311ff).

References


10 According to Baptista/Guéron (2007, 8) it should be possible to ‘carefully examine the creoles, searching for those properties of their nominal structure which differ from the corresponding properties of the European lexifier and asking whether they share these properties. If our study shows that the creoles share properties not found in the plausible African source languages, then we have an argument for considering comparative work on creole languages as providing a direct window on the variety of grammatical systems which UG makes available’.

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