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A Matter of Time:

Past Temporal Reference Verbal Structures in Samaná English and The Ex-Slave Recordings

Sali A. Tagliamonte

May 1991



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Samaná English
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is based on two corpora of Black English. The first, the Samaná English Corpus is a series of recorded conversations with very elderly residents of the Samaná peninsula in the Dominican Republic. They are the descendants of American Ex-Slaves who immigrated there just after emancipation. The second, the Ex-Slave Recordings are interviews with American Ex-Slaves conducted in the 1930's. These corpora represent two, of the very rare, oral data bases which can tell us what Black English was like at an earlier point in time.

The work we conducted addresses a number of research objectives: 1) it provides an extensive sociolinguistic description of Samaná English and the speech of the Ex-Slaves, 2) it draws on and expands the knowledge of Black English in general, 3) it explores the relationship of these two corpora to one another, to contemporary varieties of Black English and to standard, dialectal and creole varieties of English, and 4) it provides a diachronic perspective by considering historical data bases of Black English as well as grammars of the English language from different stages in its history.

The focus of our investigation was the past temporal reference system. Here, variable marking patterns among tense/aspect morphemes suggest that there are underlying differences between white and black varieties of English. Despite extensive research on this subject; however, the literature contains two entirely different explanations for the same surface forms: In one, they are English in origin, in lexical form *and* in semantic value. In

What type of analysis can determine the temporal organization of Samaná English and the speech of the Ex-Slaves and in so doing address these contradictory claims?

First of all, we considered *every* verbal structure used to mark past time. This encompasses a wide range of different morphological types — base forms, e.g. *I walk*, suffixal inflections, e.g. *I walked*, suppletive forms, e.g. *I went*, pre-verbal items such as auxiliaries, e.g. *I used to walk*, as well as auxiliary/inflection combinations, e.g. *I have walked/I have gone/I was walking*. Many of these are used interchangeably, possibly as alternative semantic categories, for example the use of simple past tense or present perfect in the same context in English or as different renditions of the same category, for example the use of marked or unmarked single main verbs. Each of these forms was examined quantitatively with respect to many contextual features and from all areas of the grammar — phonology, syntax, semantics and discourse.

Our study employed two different procedures to do this. In the first we examined the distributional characteristics of morphological *types* and in the second we posited four variable *processes* — all marked forms vs. all unmarked forms, suffixal deletion in weak verbs, regularization to invariant base in strong verbs, e.g. *come* as opposed to *came*, and auxiliary deletion, e.g. *I was walking* vs. *I walking*.

We found striking similarities between the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings. Through the distributional analyses we were able to discover the frequency and patterning of morphological types according to different aspects of the surrounding environment. For example, single verbs that were marked, e.g. *walked* and those that were unmarked, e.g. *walk* behaved similarly with respect to temporal distance, temporal relationship clause type, and collocation with temporal conjunctions, adverbs and particles. Such correspondences provide evidence for the fact that these two surface forms represent the same underlying structure. In performing the variable rule analyses we were able to assess which factors contributed a *significant* effect to the choice of variant and to what degree when each of them were considered simultaneously. In the case of suffix deletion, for example, the

importance of preceding and following phonological environment compared to aspect, which was found to be statistically non-significant, demonstrated that the unmarked variants resulted from the removal of an underlying suffix. Taken together the results from the distributional and variable rule analyses provided corroborating evidence which lead us to claim, for example, that the simple past tense of white English is a viable category in these data.

While certain individual factors appear to follow what has been suggested for Creoles, neither Samaná English nor the Ex-Slave Recordings demonstrated *consistent* and *unambiguous* conditioning effects of a Creole-like system. For example there is less marking with temporal conjunctions. However, this cannot be discounted as an English-like, or even more general, linguistic pattern. Other factors, such as temporal distance, were found to be relevant, but in a way directly linked to English. For example, the pertinence of recency to the occurrence of *have* + verb suggests that its function parallels the present perfect category in English and the association of *had* + Verb with anterior events in the past and across all temporal distances suggests its function parallels the past perfect. Still other factors, like the influence of temporal relationship, were found to be localized rather than general. For example while coincidence, repetition and posterior temporal relationships are disambiguated contexts where the Creole unmarked verb might be predicted to occur, only verbs in the posterior case tend to be unmarked. The fact that this effect is isolated to a specific *case* of temporal relationship argues against the operation of a general process. Finally, the classic creole distinction between punctual and non-punctual verbs was not found in *any* of the analyses we conducted.

Our results also suggest some general patterns to temporal structure and organization. For example, we found that the existence of a preceding verbal mark was significant to all the variables we examined. An overt mark or no mark at all, led to more of the same. Such a counter-functional effect, although unattested in any English variety, is distinctly unlike a Creole system where overt marking is said to lead to *unmarked* forms.

Furthermore, the relatively infrequent irregular morphological forms in these data exhibited distributional patterning which suggest that they are synchronic remnants rather than alien intrusions into the grammar. For example, auxiliary *be* in the perfect and the three-verb clusters *had* or *have* + *done* + Verb have been attested in the English language since the 16th century. These findings suggest that language can sustain variation over an extremely long period of time. In the case of preverbal *did*, its use for non-punctual past is also found in contemporary dialects of English in England. Bare past participles such as *I seen*, *I been* and forms such as *I had went*, *I knowed*, are both lexically and distributionally comparable to the English of Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic as well as Ozark and Appalachian dialects in the United States. These similarities also suggest that there may be parallels in the means by which change progresses within varieties having the same underlying structure.

We concluded that there is very little evidence that the variable past temporal reference verbal structures in Samaná English or the Ex-Slave Recordings can be attributed to Creole-like temporal organization. To the question of whether they represent English processes — there is little evidence that they do not. It remains to be seen, however, whether these results will be confirmed or contrasted in other Creole and/or English varieties (either Black or white). This would be an interesting way to further this research as well as to more fully explore the mechanisms by which tense/aspect forms are organized in discourse.

For my parents,

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Sali A. Tagliamonte

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

1. Background

The origins, development and synchronic status of the variety of English spoken by many people of African descent in the United States, henceforth Black English Vernacular (BEV)¹, has been the subject of widespread longitudinal debate in sociolinguistics due to the fact that it shows linguistic patterns distinct from many of the varieties of (white) English with which it is surrounded. A core area of the grammar where these differences are most abundantly apparent is in the past temporal reference system. Here, alternating patterns of morphologically marked and unmarked verbal structures are the foremost characteristic which suggests the underlying difference of its grammatical organization. Thus, there has been a tremendous amount of conjecture as to the form/function correspondences between the visible tense/aspect morphemes, the underlying organization of the system of which they are a part, and by extension the original ancestry of the language. Within the general field of sociolinguistics many researchers from various different disciplines have been engaged in a program of research which pays particular

¹ The "naming controversy" (Schneider 1989:9) surrounding terms used for the variety of Black English that, in any specific study, is subject to linguistic description and analysis is a complex and difficult task that is not without social and/or political ramifications. We acknowledge the impossibility of defining a completely homogeneous variety of Black English since, in fact, such an entity does not, and cannot exist. Nevertheless, throughout the literature on black, white, dialectal, historical and standard varieties of English there are many relevant contrasts which are particularly germane to the issues we address in this dissertation, namely the distinct and systematic contrasts and similarities between most modern varieties of vernacular Black English in the United States and other varieties of English. It is in the interests of profitably examining these contrasts that we invoke the term Black English Vernacular (BEV), to refer to the variety typically used by Black Americans. The definition of this particular 'name' has been circumscribed based on a number of different dimensions: geographically or regionally, i.e. in the inner city areas of northern United States (Labov 1972), stylistically, i.e. in casual speech (Brewer 1980/81; Schneider 1989), socio-economically, i.e. as characteristic of lower and/or working class speakers (Wolfram & Fasold 1974), and in terms of age (Labov 1972). Here, we utilize the most consistently-used term in the literature which we cite. Where specific historical stages, regional varieties or idiosyncratic forms are pertinent to our discussion, these will be differentiated explicitly from our general use of the term BEV.

attention to these forms. However, due to a number of different factors, examination of their contemporary patterning has been fraught with contention.

Features of the past temporal reference system of BEV have traditionally been studied using essentially different methodological procedures and widely varying data sets. Moreover, researchers have typically been divided between one, or the other, of the diametrically opposed origins that have been hypothesized for the dialect — i.e. as originating from varieties of English-based creoles or from earlier and/or dialectal varieties of English. The consequence of taking one or the other of these perspectives is that the specific tense/aspect categories thought to be a part of the favoured system have been imposed on the verbal forms found in the data.

The widespread occurrence of unmarked single main verbs of past temporal reference, e.g. *I walk/come yesterday*, have been described by some as the result of suffixal deletion of an underlying past tense morpheme (Fasold 1972; Fasold & Wolfram 1975; 1972a; Labov 1972b; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969) and by others as the result of insertion rules due to the combined effect of past-tense acquisition in the process of decreolization and the persistent influence of an underlying non-English temporal reference system ((Bailey 1965a; Bickerton 1975; 1981; Dillard 1972a; 1975b; Mufwene 1983) etc.). Additionally, the occurrence of bare present and past participles, e.g. *I walking/coming; I done, I seen*, have been analyzed as the result of processes of reduction of an underlying auxiliary (e.g. (Fasold & Wolfram 1975; Labov et al. 1968)) while others have claimed that these forms are the result of covert tense marking of an underlying relative tense system (e.g. (Dillard 1972a; Mufwene 1983)). Additionally, verbal elements occurring in pre-verbal position, such as *done, been, did*, e.g. *I done walk, I been walking* and others, have been identified as synchronic remnants of unresolved change in progress from earlier stages of the English language and/or the result of auxiliary reduction processes (e.g. (D'Eloia 1973; Herndobler & Sledd 1976; 1983a; Schneider 1989; Traugott 1972)) while others have claimed that they represent aspectual or relative tense categories of an

essentially un-English grammar (e.g. (Bickerton 1975; Fickett 1972; Mufwene 1983; Rickford 1977; Stewart 1968)). This polemic divisiveness has led to easy criticism of much of the research in this area, based, at least partially, on the fact that most studies have not taken into account the alternative hypothesis.

Furthermore, many researchers working within the Creolist framework provide analyses which are descriptive in nature, consisting primarily of anecdotally-extracted verbal forms corresponding to the type under study. The majority of these are taken from data which is either elicited from informants and/or abstracted from literary or historical texts. Much of the research adhering to an English framework on the other hand (although only those applying rigorous sociolinguistic methodology), provide a more quantitative perspective in which all the possible variants of a given structure are taken into account. Moreover, these studies typically utilize audio-recorded oral speech. Because of the incompatibility between the two groups in terms of their basic assumptions, research design and the lack of comparability of their approach, it is not surprising that no consensus for the interpretation of this variation is forthcoming.

Perhaps one of the most critical issues in this controversy, however, is the dearth of appropriate data which can set a baseline for the BEV dialect at an earlier point in time. Historical attestations of language, either because of their sparse availability or sociocultural circumstances which colour interpretations of actual usage, are notoriously suspect with regard to authenticity. This is especially true of non-mainstream varieties, such as BEV, which have a long history of prejudice and misconception. Consequently, trustworthy renditions of BEV speech from earlier time periods in the history of the United States are exceedingly rare, if not nonexistent. Thus, by far the majority of the research on BEV has been based on synchronic speech data which leave the question of its development, as well as its origins unverifiable.

This dissertation contributes additional evidence to these unresolved issues by providing a detailed quantitative sociolinguistic analysis of two audio-recorded corpora of

BEV — 1) the Samaná English Corpus (SEC) and 2) the Ex-Slave Recordings (ESR). Research on BEV can be propitiously enhanced by the study of these unique corpora. First, they represent two audio-recorded data bases of interactive and coherent dialogue. Second, taking the time period of acquisition as the relevant factor for determining the time depth of these materials, the Ex-Slave Recordings represents BE² speech from circa 1844-1861 and Samaná English represents BE speech from the 1820's. Justification for the use of these materials as representative of BE speech from this time period, especially of the latter, is explored in detail in section 2.3.

The work on which this dissertation is based employs the methods of variationist sociolinguistics. Here, systematic quantitative analysis of a large corpus of spoken language provides an accountable data base from which the actual frequency, distribution and conditioning of verbal forms is extracted. This dissertation adopts such an approach to the analysis of (realis) past temporal reference structures, through examination of all potential forms occurring within the circumscribed context of variation in the Samaná English Corpus and Ex-Slave Recordings. First, and foremost, we describe in statistical detail the past temporal reference system of these two varieties of BEV. Second, we pay particular attention to the parallels and differences characterizing each and compare them to attested Creole, BEV and English patterns with respect to phonological, syntactic, semantic and discursive factors. Simultaneous analysis of all the coded features of the contextual environments by the multiple regression procedure embodied in the variable rule program (Rand & Sankoff 1990) allows us to assess the relative importance of each one. Many

² Another aspect of the 'naming controversy' for different varieties of Black English involves the terminology chosen to identify speech from specific points in *time*, most especially those temporally anterior to the ones studied in the large body of literature on this subject up to the present day, i.e. those typically referred to as BEV. While some current research employs the adjective "earlier" or "early" for these varieties (e.g. Brewer 1973, 1974, 1979, 1986; Schneider 1989; Viereck 1988, 1989), this term often lacks the specificity required to situate the developmental changes which are crucial for an adequate interpretation of the data. Here, we make reference to our materials more generally as samples of Black English (BE) speech whose temporal reference is defined as indicated above.

factors relevant for Creole and/or English alone have been cited in the literature on this subject. The results of this study indicate which of these are important to the marking processes involved. Given the claims of the literature which cite the prominence of one feature over the other as indicative of a specific underlying system, these results contribute to an understanding of which of the two systems is the more likely candidate for ancestry.

The relationship between variation and change is a long-standing issue in the field of sociolinguistics. It is widely held that historical patterns can be observed through comparative distributional analysis of competing forms and quantitative assessment of the conditioning factors on their synchronic variation. For example, variable distribution patterns may reflect the progression of change as one form gradually supplants another in specific contexts. In this way previous stages in the development of a given variety can be ascertained from its current usage patterns.

The corpora we examine in this dissertation provide a unique contribution to these issues. Because of the uniform extra-linguistic characteristics of the speakers in the Samaná English Corpus with respect to age, socio-economic class and history of residence, and the Ex-Slave Recordings with respect to age, socio-economic class and education, the data to be presented in ensuing chapters is ill-suited for a study of linguistic variation on the intra-community level either as change in progress or across most social categories. Taken together, however, parallel findings across these two data sets can provide crucial justification for the validity of considering the Samaná English Corpus as representative of a variety of BE spoken during the 1800's. The time-line differential between the two samples, in conjunction with a comparative approach, also provides corroborating evidence for the history and development of the verbal structures to be studied when those results are contrasted with other varieties of black and white English that have been the subject of linguistic research. In the situation described here, the materials to be examined, in comparison with most of the previous research on contemporary BEV, represent a time period which is relatively remote with respect to time. Thus, it is not unlikely that analyses

of variation within these varieties will reveal more clearly the operative system of some earlier stage in the developmental history of contemporary BEV.

1.1. The BEV past temporal reference system

The system for marking past time in BEV (as opposed to present, irrealis or other temporal possibilities) is an excellent choice for the study of its underlying structure since the general realm of past temporal reference requires the representation of a wide array of temporal, aspectual and discursive meanings as well as ordering and associative relationships among verbs. Not surprisingly then, it is the site of the most controversial linguistic research in this area — that pertaining to verbal forms. Although the exact meaning and function of specific tense/aspect categories in BEV are widely disputed, the attested inventory of linguistic elements is actually quite consistent. Both auxiliary-like pre-verbal forms as well as inflections (both suffixal and suppletive) provide information as to tense, aspect and mood. However, the BEV system is said to make more aspectual distinctions than that of Std E as well as to allow much more freedom with respect to the marking of verbs overall in that it permits more unmarked forms. Morphological alternation occurs in three major areas: 1) suffixal or suppletive inflections on single past temporal reference main verbs, 2) pre-verbal markers, and 3) auxiliaries with present and past participles. All of these environments are variably subject to some process which leads to the surface absence of some portion of their potential morphology (either auxiliary or inflection). This produces a verbal structure that is not fully marked for the identification of its complete temporal and/or aspectual semantic specification.

1.2. A proposal for the study of verb morphology

The antithetic interpretations of variable verbal morphology such as those summarized above are not easily resolved. This dissertation attempts to address this issue by pursuing an analysis which examines the alternating forms according to both Creole *and*

English interpretations. This means setting up at the outset of this program of inquiry, various different means of approaching the data. For some analyses we adopt the underlying assumptions provided by the Creolist position, circumscribing a variable context which encompasses the relevant Creole forms and finally examining the relevant factors for surface forms cited in the Creolist literature. For others, we adopt the underlying assumptions provided by the English-origins position, circumscribing a variable context which encompasses the relevant English forms and examining the relevant factors for surface forms cited in the English-origins literature. In circumstances where the verbal environment allows it, the potential exists to examine the relevant Creole *and* English factors simultaneously in order to determine which ones are more significant to the variation observed. Following this general approach, we implement a program of research which amalgamates a number of separate, though related analyses, which partition the past temporal reference system in different ways and from different perspectives.

1.3. The problem of tense

The crux of the issue regarding the underlying structure of BEV revolves around the description and unambiguous assessment of the mechanisms which govern the appearance of its surface tense/aspect morphology. Surface tense forms in languages are determined intra-sententially, but in crucially different ways, depending on the underlying grammatical system of the grammar. Researchers working in creole languages claim that their "relative" tense systems distinguish them from the "absolute" tense systems of their Indo-European lexicalizers. One of the foremost claims with respect to this difference is that the surface tense marking of verbs in discourse will be determined by the relationship the verbs have with each other, for example whether they are sequential or anterior. Simply stated, the problem for the analysis adopted here is whether or not the systems we examine are relative or absolute.

This dissertation addresses this aspect of the controversy over the underlying structure of BEV by providing a quantitative consideration of the features relevant to relative tense marking, e.g. aspect, temporal relationship, preceding mark etc. which produce and/or interact with the morphological forms in the data. Systematic categorization of these coupled with the resultant surface verb forms and their patterning of verb morphology will enable us to determine the distribution and relevant conditioning involved and thereby the mechanism by which tense morphology is selected.

We work under the assumption that the past-reference verbal structures included in the analysis represent "anaphoric" (Quirk et al. 1985:184), and thus contextually determined uses of the past temporal reference categories over and above whatever other pragmatically determined influences are in operation. Such an approach assumes following Mufwene (p.c.) that discourse is context building. As it develops it creates 'contextual domains' in relation to which subsequent parts of the discourse are interpreted, including time reference. Thus, temporal reference is accomplished through a variety of non-local means (e.g. a given primary time (GPT) at the beginning of narratives (Adelar & Lo Cascio 1986), 'knowledge of the world', etc.) within the larger context of the discourse as well as through a variety of more local grammatical features (i.e. tenses, adverbials, conjunctions, syntactic structure etc.). While researchers working within a Creolist perspective often appeal to the more "pragmatic", and thus non-local features of the discursive environment in order to explain surface morphology the means by which these elements can be objectively assessed has never been made explicit. The ambiguity and thus general non-quantifiability of the pragmatic component of temporal disambiguation makes consideration of these beyond the scope of the analysis presented here. Instead, we assume that the more proximate linguistic elements will exert at least some, if not more, effect on the relevant surface morphology. Thus, we focus on purely linguistic features out of the many possible components which contribute to temporal reference, ordering and relationship interpretations.

With respect to temporal ordering and relationship specifically, we focus on the interaction between discursively and syntactically related verbs, i.e. the relationship between the verb under study and the verb to which it is anchored, oriented or associated. Basically, this involves an assessment of whether the order of the verbs in the discourse reflects the order of the verbs in time. In so doing, we evaluate and categorize the relation between the time interval of the verb in question and its reference verb, (cf. (Lo Cascio 1986)) or "the nature of the relationship between the tense locus and the event frame" (Chung & Timberlake 1985:203).

By creating a rigorous methodology, both in terms of circumscribing the variable contexts we examine as well as in the means by which we assess and categorize potential contributing features of the verb, its structural characteristics and influences from the surrounding environment, we create a level of procedural adequacy whereby problems can be easily identified and improved upon.

We hope that addressing these important issues will go a long way towards resolving many of the difficulties that previous research has inadvertently created with respect to the comparability of related research and the replication of results and by extension, lead to more constructive advancement of work in the field. Thus, we aim to, at least partially, resolve the problem of studying tense and aspect phenomena, particularly within the realm of black-white speech relationships.

1.4. Hypothesis

One way to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the underlying structure of a given grammar is to examine the features of linguistic context and extra-linguistic situation which influence the choices an individual makes between alternative forms in their grammatical repertoire. Furthermore, parallel analysis and comparison of these features among different varieties can help us infer the relationship between them.

The hypothesis investigated in this dissertation is that the underlying grammatical structure, and thus the organizational system of the past temporal reference system of the Samaná English Corpus and Ex-Slave Recordings will be discernable from an examination of the distribution and conditioning on verbal morphology in the two data bases. We consider at least three possibilities: 1) that the variation can be explained by processes derived from English grammar, or 2) that the variation can be explained by processes derived from a Creole-like grammar, or 3) that the variation can be explained by some combination of processes from both. The fact that these two varieties, if they have derived from a prior creole at all, were at the time of data collection highly decreolized, does not detract from the fact that the underlying system will retain essentially Creole features. The view of at least some researchers working with Creole grammars indicates that despite the fact that the creole continuum can have a number of different levels, each of these will share the same underlying system (Mufwene 1984:199). Furthermore, Bickerton's (1975) suggestion that distributional verbal patterns such as the ones attested in modern BEV may be masking the primordial grammatical factors conditioning past-tense acquisition in decreolization lends further support to this possibility since contemporary BEV, if derived from a Creole, is also highly decreolized at the present time. Therefore, without establishing a priori what specific level of the Creole continuum Samaná English or the Ex-slaves' speech could potentially represent, we can still expect that if they are Creoles, or creole-derived varieties, the surface morphological marking they exhibit will reflect an underlying Creole system. Although many of the attested BEV tense/aspect markers purported to be of Creole origin are quite rare in these data, again, as would be found in an acrolectal or highly decreolized variety, one would expect that characteristics of the Creole system would still be discernable in the variable morphological patterns exhibited by the tense/aspect morphemes that do occur. Alternatively, if these varieties are derived from English and/or English dialects, one would expect that characteristics of the English system

particularly those attested in the historical record, should still be discernable, especially in present-day isolated dialectal areas where archaic forms are known to be retained.

Form/function correspondences within the BEV temporal reference system are often more attested than proved. Reliance on individual examples specifically selected to illustrate particular semantic interpretations cannot account for the possible interpretation or analysis of *all* potential forms within the circumscribed context of variation nor the highly organized and detailed range of influences beyond the realm of conscious awareness. Large scale quantitative analysis permits the examination of each form within the entire gamut of contexts in which it could potentially occur as well as the separation into individually-considered effects of each of the factors which might condition it. We address this issue by including in our analysis all morphological forms used to relate (realis) events, processes and states in the general realm of past time. This ensures a sufficiently large area in which to examine competing morphological forms and the myriad of linguistic and extra-linguistic constraints which govern their occurrence.

The specific focus of this dissertation, then, is to elucidate the variable marking characteristics of single main verbs and complex verb structures under the assumption that the underlying mechanism which regulates that variation can be inferred from their characteristic distribution pattern, and the statistical significance of those features of the environment which have been selected as informing it.

This type of analysis has been utilized in many areas of sociolinguistics; however, its application to BEV has been extensive. For example, the early quantitative work on BEV in the United States (Fasold 1972; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969) provided direct comparison between the results of environmental conditioning in BEV and white English varieties. One of their primary findings was that the absence of the suffixal inflection *-ed* in past temporal reference single main verbs was conditioned by phonological factors consistent with that of white English. This led to the postulation that deletion rules were

responsible for the frequent unmarked verbs in the dialect and that the simple PAST tense was an operative tense category³ in the black dialect.

The results of this type of work in other areas of the tense/aspect system, however, led to substantially different conclusions. For example, studies of verbal *-s* and auxiliary *have* indicated that these were marginal, hypercorrect or functionally alien intrusions into the dialect (e.g. (Fasold 1971; Labov et al. 1968)). These findings led to the postulation that insertion rules could be inferred for at least some morphological tense/aspect items in the temporal reference system.

More recently, this type of analytic framework has been expanded to include a historical perspective and has been used for determining the evolution of verbal *-s* in BE (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989) and varieties of white English (Bailey et al. 1989). In the case of contemporary BEV, the numerous incompatible conclusions that had been proposed in the literature about the function and history of this verbal form (cf. (Bickerton 1975; Brewer 1986c; Fasold 1972; Labov et al. 1968; Pitts 1981; Pitts 1986; Roberts 1976; Wolfram 1969)) could not be resolved within a synchronic perspective. Although much of this difficulty was found to be the result of incompatible research procedures, an important factor was the inadequate attention to the history and development of this particular verbal morpheme in the history of the English language. Once this information was recovered, it became apparent that the same constraints operating on this form in previous stages of black English were also apparent in earlier varieties of white English — the presence of an NP subject vs. pronoun strongly favoured the occurrence of both singular and plural *-s*. These findings suggest that comparative statistical analyses interpreted within a historical framework can provide important evidence with which to interpret the function and origins of synchronic variability.

³ Throughout this dissertation we utilize the term "tense category" to refer to the fundamental underlying tense classes of the grammar regardless of the rendition of the surface form, either morphologically or lexically.

This leads us to construct a modular analysis which will examine the data from a number of different perspectives — descriptive, comparative, historical and analytic — in order to characterize the nature of the tense/aspect system and to ascertain whether the variation in verbal morphology observed in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings has precedence in the history of the English language, or is consistent with the processes inherent in a Creole-like grammar. We focus particularly on the linguistic contexts of occurrence, the parallels and/or differences between the two corpora, comparison of these with contemporary varieties of black and white dialects of English and English-based creoles, and specific attention to the developments of the temporal reference system from the historical record.

1.5. Goals

The first major goal of this dissertation, then, is to describe in detail the past temporal reference system of Samaná English and that used by the Ex-Slaves. The second is to measure the influence of phonological, syntactic, semantic and discursive factors on the realization of marked past temporal reference morphologies, the factors which serve to disambiguate those verbal forms which are unmarked in any way, and the factors which lead to the occurrence of certain morphological types. This work will draw on and expand current knowledge of the grammar of BEV as illustrated by the tense/aspect system and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of this core area of the grammar. The third major goal is to compare the relevant conditioning factors of Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings and then compare those results to work on contemporary BEV and historical sources of BE, English-based creoles, contemporary varieties of white English and attested patterns of verbal morphology from the historical record of the English language. Such a detailed characterization of the past temporal reference system of BE and of the internal structural similarities and/or differences of various varieties of BE to one

another as well as to standard, dialectal and/or creolized varieties of English are issues of major importance to sociolinguistic research as they contribute to the understanding of historical reflexes and elucidate the mechanisms by which dialects change in varying situational contexts.

In analyzing complex syntactic variables such as verbal morphology, especially those which have had incompatible interpretations, it is of vital importance to consider each form in all its potential environments and to distinguish each item according to all the factors that have previously been cited as relevant to its appearance. This is especially true in the area of temporal reference where not only different morphological alternations, but also different tense/aspect categories are often used interchangeably in the course of discourse. We address these facts on the most basic level in this dissertation by including *every* occurrence of the variable under study. Although this procedure has been followed for some individual tense/aspect categories with past temporal reference, i.e. marked vs. unmarked single main verbs, it has not previously been done for other complex verbal morphologies in the general realm of past time. These have primarily involved descriptive, introspective or anecdotal accounts. Here we include all the various morphologies used for (realis) past temporal reference. We consider, in detail, all the hypotheses and claims of the literature which attests to the characterization of the forms that obtain. In this way, we provide a comprehensive overview of the frequency, distribution and conditioning of the entire spectrum of individual morphological types that occur throughout an entire data base within the same temporal sector.

In the analysis of contextual conditioning of these morphological types, this dissertation treats features from all levels of the grammar and considers both the sentential level as well as the larger context of discourse. By including all these distinctions, the contribution of factors such as aspect, temporal disambiguation and temporal relationship to marked or unmarked verb forms can be analyzed simultaneously with purely linguistic factors such as phonological environment, verb class, verb type and syntactic position.

Simultaneous consideration of all such factors in one analysis has not been made in previous studies of verbal morphology. We argue that it is precisely this type of analysis which can effectively disentangle which, of the many, factors purported to be relevant to the marking of verbal forms actually contribute significantly to the processes involved.

With the results from these analyses, taken in conjunction with the evidence from the historical record, we will also attempt to contribute evidence towards a viable hypothesis with respect to the origins of the observed patterning of verbal forms. In the case of unmarked weak single main verbs and those with a suffixal inflection, we provide evidence for the fact that deletion of an underlying past tense morpheme via phonological reduction processes is the most significant factor conditioning the variation between forms. For unmarked strong single main verbs, we provide evidence which suggests that lexical and class membership of the individual verb is the most relevant conditioning influence. In the case of present participles, we provide evidence for an underlying auxiliary which is reduced in specific discourse contexts, while bare past participles appear to be due to the influence of individual lexical verbs. In general, it will be shown the vast majority of past temporal verbal morphological patterns found in the Samaná and Ex-Slavic data bases are entirely consistent with English, albeit an earlier, and perhaps more dialectal version of it, as most have been attested in the language for centuries. While similar claims have been made in the literature on this subject (cf. (Herndobler & Sledd 1976; Schneider 1981, 1983a, 1983b, 1989; Traugott 1972)) this analysis differs from the evidence presented in these analyses in that we attempt to establish *measurable* comparisons between Standard English (Std E)⁴ and White English Vernacular (WEV)⁵ grammars and our own BE data.

⁴ Our use of the term 'Standard English' refers to the abstract system described in prescriptive grammars and thought to be used by speakers of the 'Standard' language.

⁵ In contrast to the name 'Standard English', we utilize the 'name' White English Vernacular to refer to non-standard varieties of white English. Like our use of the term 'Black English Vernacular', the name 'White English Vernacular' is also not meant to imply a well-defined homogeneous speech variety. However, we use this term in a purely practical sense in order to differentiate between the linguistic

Characteristics of the tense/aspect system, both generally, with respect to usage patterns and more specifically, with respect to particular lexical items, features of temporal disambiguation etc. show evidence of operation in exactly the same way as has been reported, not only for earlier time periods but also for contemporary dialectal varieties of English which could not have been subject to creole influence. Such corroboration from various areas of the grammar provides independent support for the interpretation of forms and thus, a more conclusive analysis.

As with most dialects spoken by speakers who are not members of the dominant culture, the speakers of Samaná English demonstrate a great degree of linguistic insecurity with respect to the quality of their linguistic competence in comparison to "standard" English, as can be seen in example (1a-c) below.

- (1a) Well, you know they have plenty of us what- they speak the broken, you see, that don't speak correct. ... They have many one what- what don't speak the- don't speak the English correct, you see. But still according how they speak (inc.)⁶ you- you can understand something of what they saying. (004/101-106)⁷
- (1b) You see, we don't speak so correct, but we had no training. (011/327)
- (1c) We try to speak a little bit better as we can, you know, but sometimes it makes us feel shame, we can't speak like-speak properly like you-all you know. (014/440-2)

system which has been characterized in the literature as BEV and that which it has most often been contrasted with — 'white' English, either in its contemporary usage or from the history of the English language. Systematic differences between these two systems, particularly with respect to the issues we address here, makes this separation at least linguistically pertinent, despite the imprecise nature of the term. Whenever we refer to a specific regional, dialectal or historical variety of white English, this will be made explicit.

⁶ The abbreviation 'inc.' stands for 'incomprehensible' and refers to a segment of speech which was unable to be accurately deciphered by the transcriber.

⁷ The numbered codes in parentheses refer to the speaker and line number in the corpora. Unless indicated by the acronym 'ESR', representing the Ex-Slave Recordings, these refer to the Samaná English Corpus.

It is hoped that the findings laid out in this dissertation will show that the deviations from mainstream contemporary English found in these data are not the result of substandard, unsystematic, inadequate or incomplete language acquisition, nor for that matter the result of an underlying grammar alien from English itself, but the result of synchronic retention of features, patterns and conditioning effects from an earlier *version* of English — the same language that the majority of these speakers think of as better than their own. These facts are perhaps irresolvable; however, the results reported here can at least provide a small contribution to an understanding of the fact that the judgements we often make about language, particularly nonstandard renditions of it, are not necessarily linguistic, and assessment of quality based on sociocultural factors is really just a matter of the 'times'.

In subsequent chapters we explore these problems in greater detail. In chapter two we review the history of the controversy over the genesis and development of BEV in order to situate the problems we will address in this dissertation and to elucidate the relevant questions which we will attempt to answer. We also provide arguments for the utilization of the Samaná and Ex-Slave corpora and the validity of their use in the study of these issues. In chapter three we outline in detail the methodology followed to circumscribe and categorize the data. In chapter four we review the literature on past temporal reference structures in BEV, Creoles, contemporary prescriptive English and historical evidence from the history of the English language in order to exemplify the relevant features from each source. Chapter five presents a general overview of the frequency of individual morphological types that characterize these data and their distribution patterns. In chapter six we present the statistical results of our individual variable rule analyses of the two data bases and in chapter seven we interpret and discuss those findings.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

1.6.1. Variation theory

The theoretical approach adopted here falls within the framework of empirical linguistics known as sociolinguistic "variation theory" (e.g. (Labov et al. 1968; Sankoff 1982; 1988a; 1988b; G. Sankoff 1974)). This involves the scientific investigation of language use as manifested in a natural(istic) context; the statistical analysis of variation in linguistic forms as illuminated by features of their linguistic and extra-linguistic environment; and an interpretive assessment of linguistic function with an interest in accounting for grammatical structure in discourse as well as the wider sociocultural mechanisms of language change.

The major tenets of this approach are that variation in language is for the most part not free, but conditioned (Labov 1972a; 1972b; Labov et al. 1968; Weinreich et al. 1968) and that linguistic form-function relationships can be characterized as both unstable and polyvalent (Sankoff 1988a). This viewpoint holds that in the course of linguistic performance speakers are engaged in a multitude of choice processes among discrete alternatives which, for all intents and purposes, have the same referential value or grammatical function within their linguistic repertoire. These choices are influenced by particular features in the phonological environment, the syntactic context, the discursive function of the utterance, topic, style, situation and personal and/or sociodemographic characteristics of the speaker or other participants. The competing forms are referred to as variants, while the larger unit of which they are a part is called the "linguistic variable" (Labov 1966) — the key theoretical construct of this paradigm.

1.6.2. The linguistic variable

In order to study the linguistic "variable" it is necessary to methodically identify and extract not only a number of clear examples of forms involved in co-variation, but also to

examine every context in which the form(s) *could have* occurred. This procedure begins with a sample containing the outcomes of these choices in every environment in which they were used, with each of these contexts defined as a specific configuration of conditioning factors, categorized into factor groups of like features. In other words every single instance of each surface form that is within the circumscribed area of variation is included along with a detailed and systematic notation of its environmental characteristics. The statistical procedure, to which this information is subjected, enables the analyst to extract regularities and tendencies from this information, and thereby, to determine how the choice process is influenced by the specific configurations of conditioning factors which characterize the environment in which a specific form occurs. In this way it is possible to ascertain what factors (within a factor group) favour a given alternative and how strongly, and what factors disfavour it.

The statistical method we employ here is Goldvarb 2.0, a variable rule application for the Macintosh (Rand & Sankoff 1990) — the latest version of the variable rule program. This package embodies a multiple regression procedure which is able to assess the relative contribution of different environmental factors to the occurrence of the defined variants. The mathematical basis, pertinence and applicability of this statistical method to the study of language is widely discussed in the literature (e.g. (Cedergren & Sankoff 1974; Kay 1978; Kay & McDaniel 1979; Rousseau & Sankoff 1978; 1978a; Sankoff 1978b; 1982; 1985; 1988b; Sankoff & Labov 1979; Sankoff & Rousseau 1979)) and, as we will outline below, is particularly relevant to the issues being addressed in this study.

The major contribution that the analysis proposed here can make to the controversial subject of BEV temporal reference and organization comes from the fact that the statistical procedure can assess which factors contribute a *significant* effect to the choice of variant and to what degree when all of them are considered simultaneously. In a system as highly variable as tense/aspect, in which a multitude of factors are involved in the choice of form, it is impossible to evaluate the combined effect of such influences without the aid of an

automated statistical procedure. Such a procedure can process an immense amount of information rapidly and without mathematical error in addition to keeping strict account of each recorded factor and its relationship to all others. This provides important distributional evidence with which to assess the magnitude and relevance of each individual effect and therefore, to pinpoint the significant processes involved in the linguistic differentiation observed and thus evaluation of the underlying mechanism by which the morphology arrays itself in the course of discourse.

1.6.3. Importance of an empirical study

In general, the use of quantitative techniques and automated procedures has successfully overcome many of the difficulties associated with analyses which evaluate anecdotal data by intuitive judgement. Such descriptive accounts are widespread in much of the previous research in (socio)linguistics particularly with respect to BEV. A more objective procedure is particularly crucial in the study of nonstandard dialects for at least two important reasons. First, in obtaining linguistic data, normative pressures, consciously or unconsciously, often inhibit the use of vernacular or nonstandard forms, which irreparably skews an accurate portrayal of the variety under observation. Second, "categorical perception" on the part of the observer tends to flag a nonstandard form and inflate its importance while ignoring common standard forms that occur along with it, perhaps far more productively (cf. (Maynor 1987)). The effectiveness of the quantitative paradigm is that it has the potential to remove the analyst from data tabulation procedures while at the same time maintaining a close link between the original utterance and the complex analytic assessment and evaluation that were involved in characterizing its form for the statistical procedure. Thus, this methodology is particularly suited to the study outlined here.

In this dissertation we make propitious use of the findings from the qualitative and introspective procedures utilized in many previous studies by attempting to assess their results quantitatively. At the same time we work with and build upon the findings of

previous quantitative studies by attempting to compare and contrast their results with our own.

We examine the occurrence of variable morphological marking in past tense/aspect structures in the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings in comparison to 1) reported research on BEV (e.g. (Fasold 1972; Fasold & Wolfram 1975; 1972a; Labov 1972b; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969; 1974) etc.), 2) evidence from work on English-based creoles (e.g. (Bickerton 1975; 1979; Mufwene 1984; Rickford 1974; 1975; 1977) etc.), 3) evidence from dialectal American and British varieties (e.g. (Abbott 1957; Atwood 1953; Christian et al. 1988; Feagin 1979; Hackenberg 1972; McDavid & McDavid 1986) etc.), 4) historical data bases of BE such as the Slave Narrative Collection (e.g. (Brewer 1973; 1974; 1979; 1980/81; 1986a; 1986b; 1986c; Schneider 1983a; 1989; Viereck 1988; 1989) etc.) and 5) grammars of the English language at different stages of its history (e.g. (Curme 1977; Frank 1972; Fries 1940; Jespersen 1909/1949; 1924; 1964; Joos 1964; Kennedy 1970; Marckwardt 1958; Mencken 1971; Mossé 1952; Palmer 1965; Quirk & Greenbaum 1972; Quirk et al. 1985; Sweet 1891; Traugott 1972; Wardale 1937; Wright 1905; Wyld 1927) etc.)

Our emphasis on crosslinguistic comparison is important to provide a strict delimitation of which specific forms are characteristically "creole-like", which are typical Standard (or dialectal) English constructions, which are typical of forms found at earlier stages of English and where, if at all, the boundaries between these break down or become less clear cut. For example, although *done* occurs in English-based creoles to denote remote aspect, the occurrence of a three-verb-cluster of the form *have + done + a verb form* is "absolutely untypical of Creoles" (Schneider 1983a:57) and is amply attested in historical sources. Furthermore, auxiliary *be* occurring with past participles in BEV has been considered a characteristic of the verb phrase which provides evidence for the questionable status of the PRESENT PERFECT category in the variety. Yet, evidence from the historical record outlines the development of the Std E PRESENT PERFECT from an

earlier stage in which both *be* and *have* were productive auxiliaries (Brunner 1963; Traugott 1972; Visser 1970). Thus, the appearance of these verbal structures in Samaná English, as illustrated in (2a-b) below, or in the Ex-Slave Recordings cannot, without further analysis, be taken to represent either Creole or English structures.

- (2a) You know, he had done been St. Thomas and place. (001/647)
(2b) I'm reach to this age and I ain't been, so it's alright. (002/1458)

Chapter 2:

2. The controversy

2.1. The genesis and development of BEV

Research interests in BEV have been defined by a long history of controversies (cf. (Bailey & Maynor 1989:12)). The focus of these debates involve its relationship to white dialects of English, particularly Std E and/or English-based Creoles. The first of these addressed the issue of genetic inferiority and challenged the notion that the variety of English spoken by Blacks was "the product of physiological differences between blacks and whites" (Ibid p. 12). The second addressed the issue of *linguistic* inferiority and challenged the idea that BEV was a deficient dialect due to cultural and/or verbal deprivation. The third began to explore and pinpoint the precise linguistic differences and/or similarities between black and white speech and thus began the antithetical arguments over its genesis and development. The sociocultural/socio-political ramifications of these debates are extensive and are discussed to various degrees in numerous places in the sociolinguistic literature (e.g. (Labov 1982; Schneider 1989 Introduction, etc.)); however, we concentrate here on the linguistic issues involved.

The focal issue of the third controversy is the characterization of the underlying grammatical system of BEV. From the inception of this debate, linguists, at least, have been united in their agreement that Blacks are neither physiologically nor linguistically inferior, nor are they suffering from cultural deprivation; however, different disciplines within the general sphere of sociolinguistics have differed substantially in their assessment of the nature of the *relationship* between the black and white grammars. Although all would agree that BEV forms a distinct system in and of itself, the nature and comparability of that system to Creole and/or standard and nonstandard, northern and southern (U.S.) varieties of white English has been the focus of intense scrutiny and argumentation. The positions

taken by researchers within a number of different areas of sociolinguistics — dialectology (Krapp 1924; Kurath 1949; McDavid 1950; McDavid & McDavid 1951), creole and creole-influenced studies (Bailey 1965b; Bickerton 1973; 1975; 1979; Dillard 1968; 1972a; 1975b; Loflin 1970; Loflin et al. 1973; Mufwene 1983; to appear; Rickford 1975; 1977; Stewart 1965; 1967; 1968) and variationist sociolinguistics (Fasold 1972; Labov 1972b; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969; Wolfram & Fasold 1974), for example, have all provided different and in fact diametrically opposing claims with regard to this issue. Moreover, the positions taken by individual researchers themselves have varied considerably over the duration (e.g. (Labov et al. 1968) vs. (Labov 1982) vs. (Labov 1986) and (Mufwene 1983) vs. (Mufwene 1988)). This reflects the healthy evolution of this subfield of linguistics in terms of the raw materials that are used as evidence, the accumulating body of findings, on-going developments in research design and methodology as well as the general symbiosis of these issues with the wider social scenario.

The controversy revolves around two competing hypotheses with regard to the structure and origin of BEV. In their most extreme form, they illustrate the polemic nature of this debate. Numerous publications outline the pertinent linguistic and social issues involved (Bailey 1987; Bailey & Maynor 1989; Butters 1989; Labov 1987; Montgomery & Bailey 1986; Rickford 1987a; Vaughn-Cooke 1987; Wolfram 1987; Wolfram 1990); however, the following discussion contrasts the essential differences between the two positions.

2.1.1. The creole origins hypothesis

The first is known as the *Creole Origins Hypothesis*⁸, which holds that the speech of Blacks in the United States has a completely different grammar than Std E dialects and

⁸ This position is also referred to as "creole-substratum" theory

that black and white vernaculars represent distinct languages with only superficial similarities between them. These ideas evolved from observations of the resemblance between grammatical structures found in BEV with those in Jamaican Creole (Bailey 1965a; 1965b) and Gullah (Turner 1949). Stewart (1966; 1966/1971; 1967; 1968) and Dillard (1968; 1971; 1972a; 1972b; 1974; 1975a; 1975b) developed this position, underlining the parallels between BEV and Caribbean Creoles and positing a characterization of their grammars within the general typological framework of West African languages from which the Creoles were thought to be derived.

The core assumptions of this hypothesis suggest the following historical scenario: Africans who became slaves on American plantations spoke a pidginized form of English which was used as a lingua franca in West Africa, and which they had already learned. In the new world, this pidginized English became so well established that it became the principal medium of communication between black slaves. It was then passed on as a creole language to succeeding generations of American Blacks as their native tongue. Because of the breakdown of the plantation system, emancipation and increased education for Blacks since the 18th century, this language gradually began to lose its creole characteristics, becoming more like the language of whites, or decreolizing. Although it took on more and more of the features of the local white dialects (both spoken and written) with which it came in contact, it maintained distinctive features within the tense and aspect system characteristic of its West African origins (Stewart 1967:226). In this view BEV differs structurally (qualitatively), not just quantitatively, from WEV.

2.1.2. The standard origins hypothesis

The second position is known as the *Standard Origins Hypothesis*.⁹ This hypothesis holds that black and white dialects are essentially the same language and have

⁹ This position is also referred to as the "anglicist" hypothesis.

the same underlying grammar. These ideas evolved from the work of dialectologists who claimed that Black English was the same, class for class and education level for education level (Krapp 1924; Kurath 1949) as the earliest varieties of WEV spoken in the United States. This view suggests a historical scenario in which the black slaves acquired whatever dialects of English were spoken at the time and within one or two generations their linguistic system had the same inventory of structural features as the English that was spoken by the whites with whom the slaves were most closely associated. In the view of Eliason (1956:108) these would have been largely illiterate and semiliterate overseers who were a mixture of a number of different population groups from all over the British Isles. In this view, differences between black and white speech are thought to be differences in frequency of occurrence (quantitative) rather than qualitative or categorical (structural) differences (Atwood 1953:41). Under this analysis Black English continues to retain features of the earlier white English varieties with which it was in contact, due to social and/or cultural factors, hence the currently existing differences from the speech of present-day white WEV.

The conceptual breadth between these contrasting perspectives was exacerbated by the social and political scenario of the ensuing decades. The Creolists developed a fervent polemic against the position taken by the dialectologists whose approach was thought to uphold an essential denial of the persistence of Creole (African) traits in the speech of Blacks in mainland United States and to imply the basic inferiority of BEV as an incomplete or imperfectly acquired variety. Furthermore, they completely rejected the dialectologists' basic view that British dialects had influenced the structure of BEV.

The extreme polemic of the positions of creolists and dialectologists was perhaps most attributable to their data, their methods of analysis and the resulting interpretations. Dialectologists, who restricted themselves to linguistic Atlas records, didn't consider some of the rarer syntactic features attested in BEV nor did they pursue the finer details of inherent variation in the linguistic patterns observed (Labov 1982:177). Creolists, on the

other hand, restricted themselves to attestations in literary sources of BEV thus providing a questionable reconstruction of the history of black speech. Much of their research, either historical or synchronic, was based on small amounts of data, small samples (sometimes single informants) or anecdotal evidence. Furthermore, their selective citation of forms similar to Caribbean Creoles, while ignoring or treating as borrowed those that were more consistent with white dialects (cf. (Labov 1982:176; Myhill 1989:2)) lead to an incomplete and unbalanced view of the BEV grammar.

2.1.3. Quantitative analysis

One of the discipline-internal developments that contributed a great deal to addressing these problems was the inception of quantitative techniques for the study of linguistic variation and the application of these to BEV (Labov 1966; Labov 1972a; Labov et al. 1968). This conceptual framework with its attention to the social and linguistic conditioning of variable forms, provided a detailed description of BEV (in New York City), emphasizing the underlying linguistic system rather than individual linguistic features and providing a quantitative as well as qualitative inventory of the differences and similarities between black and white speech. The results of this research led to the conclusion that:

1. BEV is a distinct system from other dialects in several important grammatical categories of the tense aspect system.
2. BEV extends many of the rules of other dialects by including new environments and raising output probabilities in older environments. No new transformations are required to account for the special forms of BEV involving negation, quantifiers, modals, and other functional elements of the grammatical mechanism.
3. BEV shows its systematic character in a set of interrelations between rules of types 1 and 2 such that they operate jointly to preserve the major grammatical and semantic functions of language. (Labov 1972a:61)

The applicability of this new analytical technique led to an extension of the research on BEV to other northern U.S. cities, including major sociolinguistic studies by Wolfram (1969) and Fasold (1972). The degree to which the results of these independent studies

replicated each other was striking and they largely confirmed Labov's contention that the underlying grammatical system of BEV was not radically different from that of WEV.

Although this early work on BEV addressed the question of how black and white speech is related in the north, it said nothing about their relationship in the American south (Montgomery & Bailey 1986:17) — the focal geographic region from which any putative Plantation Creole would necessarily have had to develop. Subsequent sociolinguistic studies (Anshen 1969; Dunlap 1973; Fetscher 1971; Graves 1967; Houston 1969; 1970; 1972; Summerlin 1972) addressed this important issue by examining black-white speech relationships in the southern United States. These studies found that there were, in fact, significant differences in the speech of blacks and whites. Wolfram's (1971; 1974) studies attempt to resolve this apparent dichotomy. His results suggest that while many linguistic processes are similar in black and white speech, their frequency and manner of operation are often significantly different. This view is echoed in Fasold's (1981) moderate conclusions which illustrate the sociolinguists' position in relation to the earlier polemics of the dialectologists and creolists:

To the question of whether or not there exist significant differences between black and white languages in the South, I would answer, "Yes, to some degree, for some features." When the relevant data are investigated sufficiently carefully, it appears that some aspects of some variables show significant differences in the speech of blacks from what is to be found in the speech of whites. These differences are of sufficient theoretical interest that they should not be ignored, but *they by no means indicate widespread deep differences in grammar and phonology.*

As far as history goes, the conclusion I have come to is that the creole hypothesis seems most likely to be correct, but is certainly not so well established as Dillard (1972), for example, would have us believe. Decreolization, however, seems to have progressed so far as to have obliterated most of the original creole features ((Fasold 1981:164) Emphasis ours).

Deeper knowledge of BEV through the replication and extension of large-scale studies in both northern and southern United States, the on-going developments and application of new analytical and experimental techniques to the data, and the refinement of

field methods led to a short-lived respite from the earlier polemics of the creole-origins/standard origins debate such that Labov (1982) observed that "by 1979, the field ... had reached a consensus on the nature and origin" of black English in which most linguists had come to a compromise in agreeing that:

1. The Black English Vernacular is a subsystem of English with a distinct set of phonological and syntactic rules that are now aligned in many ways with the rules of other dialects.
2. It incorporates many features of Southern phonology, morphology and syntax; blacks in turn have exerted influence on the dialects of the South where they have lived.
3. It shows evidence of derivation from an earlier Creole that was closer to the present-day Creoles of the Caribbean.
4. It has a highly developed aspect system, quite different from other dialects of English, which shows a continuing development of its semantic structure. (Labov 1982:192)

As stated, this consensus meant that the earlier statements of both dialectologists and creolists had been substantially broadened to encompass a compromise position that had developed out of the sociolinguistic work. In this new viewpoint the structural differences between BEV and other English dialects was recognized as well as the structural similarities. This perspective is one which encompasses *both* the "creolist" and "anglicist" hypotheses, namely that "British dialectal influence and a previous creole stage do not exclude each other" (Schneider 1989:27) and that properly understood BEV likely has characteristics of both. Thus, the focal issues changed to address the degree to which either source was influential, within which areas of the grammar and during what time period. With acknowledged credence given to the dissimilarities between black and white vernaculars, the range and the source of those differences and their linguistic, cultural and pedagogic significance became the foremost research concern (Montgomery & Bailey 1986:4).

2.1.4. The divergence/convergence hypotheses

Whatever currency this "consensus" actually held (cf. (Mufwene 1983:1)), the truce was only short term and has evolved into yet another controversy in which, not only the origins, but also the present course of development of BEV has come to the forefront of debate. Currently, one of the focal areas of dissension with respect to black-white speech relationships concerns the "divergence" hypothesis (Bailey 1987; Bailey & Maynor 1987; 1989; Labov 1987; Rickford 1987a; Spears 1987; Vaughn-Cooke 1987; Wolfram 1987). This hypothesis has become extremely controversial and has promulgated yet another round of debate in sociolinguistic research.

The idea of divergent development of BEV evolved as research into this variety gained the advantage of a longitudinal perspective. Some linguists began to notice a number of features in their most recent BEV speech samples that had not been attested in earlier studies of the dialect (e.g. (Bailey & Maynor 1987; Myhill & Harris 1986)). This suggested that BEV was developing in ways that were deviating from co-existing dialects of WEV. The controversy surrounding this hypothesis is clearly outlined by Bailey and Maynor ((1989); see also *American Speech* 62:1 (1987), (Butters 1989; Wolfram 1990)). Proponents of the "divergence" hypothesis believe that although black and white vernaculars had been converging for many years, these varieties have in the recent past begun evolving independently. Labov (1985) has claimed that the BEV spoken by Blacks in Philadelphia (and other urban areas) "is developing in its own direction and becoming more different from the speech of whites in the same communities". His continuing research suggests "evidence of new grammatical features, reinterpretations of features of other dialects, and combined divergence of the tense, mood, and aspect system" (Labov 1987:6). The research of Bailey and Maynor (1987) in Texas also suggests that "BEV is becoming less like, not more like, white varieties of English; and some of the most significant differences between black and white speech are the results of grammatical changes in progress, not the persistence of creole features".

This hypothesis has been addressed by linguistic evidence from the phonological and morphosyntactic subsystems of the grammar; however, features relevant to the representation of tense and/or aspect have tended to have the most impact. Two variables which have instigated much of the recent debate are verbal *-s*, from the present temporal reference system and invariant *be* from the past temporal reference system.

2.1.4.1. Verbal *-s*

The earliest quantitative research on BEV (Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969, Fasold 1972) concluded that BEV speakers did not have a subject-verb agreement rule although sporadic occurrence of *-s* nonetheless indicated general awareness of its existence. In a recent quantitative study on a Philadelphia dialect of BEV, Myhill and Harris (1986) studied the distribution of verbal *-s* in narrative and other discourse from five BEV speakers. They found it to be associated with narrative clauses, regardless of person and number of the subject (Ibid. p. 27), and virtually absent from present-reference contexts. This led them to surmise that a previously functionless morpheme has become reinterpreted as a marker of Historical Present in narrative. They argue that this function is essentially distinct from English dialects where, although inflection on non-3rd p. sg. subjects has been reported, it has never been attested specifically as a marker of narrative clauses (Ibid. p. 30). Due to these facts, they view this usage as an innovation which developed out of an inflection with no clear grammatical function. In fact, Labov (1985) has characterized this usage of verbal *-s* as the "single strongest piece of evidence" in favour of divergence of BEV from Std E.

2.1.4.2. Invariant *be*

While the (so-called) invariant *be* is one of the most studied features of the BEV tense/aspect system (e.g. (Bailey 1965a; Dillard 1972a; Fasold 1969; Fasold 1972; Labov et al. 1968; Loflin 1970; Stewart 1965; Wolfram 1969)) only recently has it become the

focus of interest with respect to the divergence hypothesis. Its specialization before Verb+ing, as in (3) below, has been described as a syntactic/semantic feature that indicates that BEV is currently diverging from other dialects of English.

- (3a) Yesterday we went to the Sommerville, where all the people
be swimming.
 (3b) I usually win, and the person that I *be* playing with is sixteen
 and stuff.
 (Bailey & Maynor 1987)

This claim is based on the work of Bailey and Maynor (1986; 1987; 1989), Bailey (1987) across different generations in the American South who have identified linguistic change in apparent time through quantitative analysis of this form. Noting a marked difference between the frequency of *be2* before the category Verb + -ing (as opposed to similar marking rates and forms in all other environments) between Texas adult folk speakers and children, Bailey and Maynor (1987) conclude that this marker of habitual or durative action is the result of recent historical change and points to a "syntactic reanalysis" of the aspectual system of BEV. Myhill (1988b) confirmed these results with a quantitative analysis of a sample of Philadelphia BEV speakers.

Although the construction, *be2* + Verb + -ing, has a history in BE, having been reported in Linguistic Atlas materials (Bailey & Bassett 1986) and in the WPA Narratives (Brewer 1979), the position taken by these researchers is that its increasing frequency in recent years signals its possible development as productive marker in the dialect. Through a multivariate analysis of its function Myhill was able to determine that it marked "habitual actions used in situations in which the speaker disapproves of the conduct of the subject". He suggests that it fills in a space in the BEV tense/aspect paradigm and also claims that it is a recent innovation. Further confirmation of these results comes from Rickford (1990) who compared current usage of BEV in old, middle-aged and young black speakers in East Palo Alto, California. Calibrating this apparent time evidence with real time data from

earlier studies in other U.S. cities as well as exploring linguistic internal constraints, Rickford also found that invariant habitual *be* showed some evidence of divergence.

2.2. Evidence for divergence?

Despite the fact that these linguistic forms are perhaps the most widely studied "divergent" features of BEV, there is actually no bilateral consensus for the interpretation of their diachronic status within the BEV grammar. While Labov and Bailey & Maynor are essentially arguing that changes in the function of verbal *-s* and invariant *be* are indicative of deep-rooted structural adjustments that point to divergence of the underlying grammar of BEV, Butters' (1989) assessment of their linguistic status concludes that neither one can be used as evidence for divergence. First, with regard to verbal *-s*, Butters (1989:91) claims that the occurrence of present-for-past morphologies in narrative discourse in both white and black vernaculars as well as in Creole varieties and even other languages (Spanish) suggests that it reflects some kind of universalist tendency rather than a grammar-internal innovation and thus cannot be interpreted as an indicator of divergence. While this is essentially true, that is, that patterned, systematically-arrayed *present-for past* morphologies in narrative discourse are attested in many languages (Fleischman 1985; Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989; Schiffrin 1981; Silva-Corvalán 1983; Wolfson 1979), this was *not* characteristic of the form that Myhill & Harris identified. Instead, the variation they studied is described as essentially distinct from the Historical Present in English dialects¹⁰. Second, Butters claims that "far from being a profoundly fundamental feature, *be2*'s "new" meaning is relatively superficial, requiring little adjustment of the speakers' grammars" (Butters 1989:22). In either case, the notion of "divergence" is rejected as an adequate explanation for the linguistic variation described.

¹⁰ The characteristics of variation between marked, i.e. simple PAST tense morphology and *-s*-marked PRESENT morphology, and unmarked, i.e. verbs which could be either, verbs in narrative complicating action clauses have been a subject which lacks clarity in a number of studies.

It is important to note that at least some of this argumentation suffers from misinterpretation. Nevertheless, such fundamental discrepancies to the functional interpretation of forms emphasize the nature and complexity of this controversy and thus the degree to which the internal details of a given analysis must be attended to in order to fully understand the validity of the issues addressed.

Furthermore, researchers have argued that the substantial degree of conflicting evidence for both "divergence" *and* "convergence" puts both hypotheses in question. Among the many linguistic features put forward as possible diagnostics of change in progress, some are claimed to be "divergent" features in the present-day development of BEV while many others are reported to be "convergent", i.e. absence of third singular, possessive and plural -s, absence of past tense marking (Rickford 1990). To take one example, absence of postvocalic /r/ was found to be a divergent feature in the American South (Bailey & Maynor 1989) while Myhill (1988a) found it to be a convergent feature in Philadelphia. Furthermore, some linguistic variables may well exhibit stable variation. Thus, consensus on any one feature is still far from settled. Such widespread and pervasive differences have led, once again, to a median position succinctly stated by Myhill (1988b)

If I were forced to take a guess now as to what the actual situation is, I would say that probably black and white vernaculars are diverging in some ways and converging in others, and the extent of divergence/convergence varies widely depending upon who we take as representing typical speakers of BEV. ... My own research is directed toward determining HOW black and white vernaculars are diverging and HOW they are converging, I report divergence here because that is what I found in my data; in Myhill (1988), I report convergence where I find convergence in my data. (Myhill 1988b:320)

The foregoing discussion gives some indication of the breadth of the controversy concerning the present-day development of BEV. Despite the robust accumulation of data and more refined analyses, current research in this area suggests that there is no simple answer to the divergence controversy. While the focus on synchronic materials has led to an unprecedented understanding of the complex relationship between contemporary black

and white vernaculars, the interpretation of the on-going development of BEV cannot be complete without the perspective of its historical development and origins.

2.2.1. Admissible Evidence

The original claims for the divergence of black and white vernaculars are based on studies that have been heavily criticized on a number of different counts (see *American Speech* vol 62.1). This led to an unprecedented appeal to researchers working in this area of sociolinguistics to hone their research design and methodology in order to meet a number of requirements for "admissible evidence" (Wolfram 1987). The first requirement for admissible evidence is "time-depth". Many researchers have pointed to a "far-reaching lack of valid historical data" (Schneider 1989:29). Indeed, this is precisely the crux of the severest critiques of the divergence hypothesis (e.g. (Rickford 1987a; Vaughn-Cooke 1987; Wolfram 1987)). Wolfram's (1987:42) principle of admissible evidence for language change states that "evidence for the increasing divergence of a vernacular variety should consist of comparable data which represents an authentic time-depth dimension showing that structures are systematically becoming more different from those structures in corresponding varieties". Unfortunately, truly reliable data on an earlier form of BE are difficult to come by. Thus, much of the work on BE is based on inferences drawn from synchronic materials which must address the "time-depth" and "apparent-time" dimensions through various methodological techniques. However, the exacting conditions required for the correct interpretation of age effects (Wolfram 1987) and the difficulties of inferring change in progress from synchronic age distributions (Butters 1989; Labov 1981) leave opponents to the divergence hypothesis unconvinced. In the last decade or so these difficulties have led to an independent rise of interest in analyzing the few historical representations of BE available.

2.2.1.1. The WPA Ex-Slave Narratives

The largest and most studied of these are the "WPA Ex-Slave Narratives" (Brewer 1974; 1979; 1986c; Pitts 1981; 1986; Schneider 1981; 1983a; 1983b; 1989). The sheer size of this massive compendium of interviews is indeed impressive, consisting of forty volumes of 'narratives' by more than 3,500 former slaves interviewed in the 1930's in 26 states. Based on the assumption that informants did not make radical adjustments to their vernacular over their lifetime, these materials have been taken to reflect the Black English spoken in the mid 19th century.

2.2.1.2. The Hyatt Corpus

A second source, the Hyatt Corpus, collected around the same time and representative of approximately the same period as the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives, has recently been exploited by Viereck (1988; 1989). As described in these papers, the Hyatt Corpus consists of interviews with 1,602 Blacks (and one white man) on the subject of voodoo. It was collected by an Episcopalian priest named Harry Middleton Hyatt between the years 1936 and 1942 and represents geographic areas from New York City to Florida and Louisiana/Arkansas. The recordings were subsequently transferred into normal orthography and published in five comprehensive volumes. As reported by Viereck (1989) the socioeconomic class, age and regional distribution of these interviews are comparable to those informants that provided the Ex-Slave Narratives and thus "should be at least as reliable" (Ibid. p. 181).

2.2.1.3. Evidence from "early" Black English

The few existing examinations of these "early" materials appear to cast doubt on some of the evidence marshalled in favour of the divergence hypothesis. Viereck (1988) has reported the widespread usage of *be₂* as a durative/habitual aspect marker — the feature characterized by Bailey & Maynor (1985; 1987), Myhill (1988b) and Rickford (1990) as a

recent innovation in contemporary BEV — in the Hyatt corpus. The speakers represented by this corpus, although several generations removed from the elderly speakers in Bailey and Maynor's study, are roughly comparable in age and education. The fact that the same linguistic form with the same apparent function was present in BE at an earlier point in time makes it clear that the variable is not new and that black speakers used invariant *be* as a habitual marker before *V+ing* two or more generations ago (Butters 1989:30). Similarly, specialization of verbal *-s* as a marker of narrative present (Myhill & Harris 1986) — the finding considered by Labov (1985) as the strongest evidence in favour of divergence — had been reported by Roberts (1976) as occurring in Botkin's (1945) *Lay My Burden Down*, a selection of WPA Ex-Slave Narratives. The obvious incompatibility between the claims for innovation and these historical attestations have led researchers to attempt to resolve this discrepancy. Most have pursued an indepth scrutiny of the representativeness of the historical data bases themselves.

2.2.1.4. Reliability of the "early" Black English corpora

While it might seem tempting to dismiss the divergence hypothesis on the basis of these findings, serious questions have been raised about the linguistic authenticity and reliability of the transcripts of these BE corpora. First of all, researchers have begun to question the effect of the data collection procedures on the actual speech sample obtained. Second, with the availability of additional historical materials and thus comparable data with which to corroborate the findings, researchers have begun to uncover a number of inconsistencies across data sets thought to represent "earlier" varieties. Studies examining the known historical BE corpora are especially important as they reveal the surprising result that those consisting of written materials are far more nonstandard than those that were audio-recorded. Moreover, it seems questionable that the WPA Narratives should ever have been thought to provide adequate sociolinguistic data. The chief editor of the project himself states in an introduction to these texts that "the slave narratives do not generally

provide a reliable source for those seeking to study black speech patterns and black English." (quoted in (Viereck 1986)).

Montgomery (to appear) emphasizes numerous problems with the manner in which the interviews were conducted. These point to the extreme social artificiality of the interview setting and the linguistic inhibition that must have obtained. Very few of the interviews were done by fellow blacks and the untrained, white interviewers who conducted the majority of the sessions were often unsympathetic or condescending toward their ex-slave subjects. In fact, quoting from the historian Blassingame (1977) Montgomery points out that interviewers often even pressured the responses of their informants in favour of positive, and not necessarily truthful, reminiscences of slavery. Such conditions could hardly have produced "natural" vernacular dialogue.

Furthermore, although the corpus is referred to as the Ex-Slave "Narratives", this title is a misleading misnomer. The contents of this data base cannot be assumed to (completely) consist of narrative discourse in the sense of "structured narrative" (Labov & Waletzky 1967) nor is it even a verbatim account of whatever type of discourse *did* obtain. Instead, some unknown and irretrievable portion of the interactions between ex-slaves and interviewers were "taken down in pencil or pen, most often after the interview, from memory or from scattered field notes supplemented by memory." (Rawick 1977:XXX f.). Thus, despite the WPA project's efforts to collect the most authentically rendered transcripts possible, the corpus is essentially a *written reminiscent* record. Thus, in no sense can it be considered an accurate representation of natural speech.

Moreover, the means by which the dialogues were recorded is also problematic. Wolfram (1990) provides a detailed critique of the transcription conventions utilized in this data base (which include "eye" dialect and linguistic stereotyping), and points out the virtual impossibility that linguistically naive interviewers could have attended to, let alone recorded, all of the detailed phonetic and grammatical elements involved in the representation of at least a dozen or more variable linguistic processes simultaneously and

still maintain a coherent, interactive interview. This feat seems even more questionable given the knowledge that much of this data was recorded from memory subsequent to the interview itself. Even if some of them *had* been able to authentically represent the speech patterns, however, there is indisputable evidence (Montgomery to appear) that the narratives were extensively edited subsequent to their submission to the state WPA offices as well.

In fact even the Hyatt corpus, which was a mechanically recorded data, base does not provide the linguistic authenticity that might be expected. Viereck (1989) emphasizes the cumbersome procedure of recording these interviews on Ediphone and Telediphone cylinders involving, not only transporting heavy equipment, but also the painstaking and surely difficult task, in the case of the Ediphone, of repeating "into the speaking-tube every word or phrase spoken by the informant" (Ibid.). Again, hardly a situation which could possibly have reproduced the actual utterances of the speakers nor the interactive patterns of sustained, coherent discourse.

In sum, the linguistic materials in both the WPA Narratives and the Hyatt Corpus were significantly mediated through the interviewers. Thus, we cannot overlook the possibility that these historic corpora (and the analyses based upon them) are as representative (if not more so) of the linguistic system of the transcribers as of the speakers themselves. This seems even more likely in light of the fact that a few studies comparing different versions of some of the WPA Narratives (Dillard 1987; Maynor 1987) discovered evidence of editing from one version to the next. Furthermore, in a comparison of linguistic features in two different corpora of early BEV speech, one written and one oral, Maynor (1987) found that the discrepancies between them were due to corrective change in the former — the linguistic data which had been interpreted by a member of the dominant (white) culture — *away from* the standard language. She found extensive use of 'nonstandard' forms in the WPA Ex-Slave narratives, which were written down by interviewers, as opposed to relatively 'standard' language patterns in the speech of ex-

slaves who were recorded on audio-tape (cf. discussion of the Ex-Slave Recordings in section 2.3.2 below). Thus, it appears likely that in the former case, the sample is irreparably skewed by categorical perception, unsystematic editing and other unknown factors.

Although the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives and the Hyatt Corpus are undeniably important resources, it remains questionable whether they can be used to address specifically *linguistic* questions about black speech in the United States. At the very least, the criticisms summarized above tend to cast doubt on research based solely on their records. The fact that the data are actually written or repeated translations of actual speech means that the linguistic materials on which analyses are conducted, are at best, several significant degrees removed from the original utterances of the speakers. Thus, the complex minutia of linguistic features far beneath the range of conscious control or conscious attention would surely have been lost or unintentionally reinterpreted according to the transcribers' own grammar.

In the most ideal situation actual BE speech would be most closely approximated from audio-recordings collected according to appropriate sociolinguistic methodological procedures at some earlier point in time. Unfortunately, a data set meeting both of these requirements is impossible to obtain: the availability of high-quality, unobtrusive recording equipment and accountable data collection practises have only been developed and refined in the last few decades. Thus, the analyst must exploit whatever materials sociocultural circumstance, the political situation and serendipity makes available. Fortunately, we do have recourse to at least two corpora which allow a plausible reconstruction of a baseline for BEV through evidence from extra-linguistic historical research in conjunction with the study of grammar-internal mechanisms and comparative linguistic analysis.

2.3. Relevance of this dissertation to the controversy

While this dissertation is not directly concerned with the divergence hypothesis, it is based on two data bases which are two, of the extremely rare, samples of oral BE speech which significantly pre-date most of those that are available. These corpora provide a historical point of reference from which it is possible to establish the linguistic characteristics of the dialect at some previous, and relatively remote, past time. The first, the Samaná English Corpus, is a variety spoken natively by a small community of residents of the peninsula of Samaná in the Dominican Republic who are the descendants of American Ex-Slaves (Poplack & Sankoff 1987). The second, the Ex-Slave Recordings, consists of actual recordings of eleven former slaves born between 1844 and 1861 (Bailey et al. to appear).

These data have important implications for understanding the origins and development of present-day of BEV in the United States by providing crucial data which meet at least two of the most stringent requirements of admissible evidence described above. First, they are representative of, or can be construed to be, a lineal descendant of historical BE varieties (the time depth dimension). Second, both of these corpora consist of audio-recorded oral discourse, thus providing a far more (relatively) reliable data base against which the opposing positions in the current debate may be assessed. A detailed technical description of the corpus itself appears in the methodology in section 4.1.1. below.

2.3.1. Samaná English

Samaná English is the synchronic result of a transplanted variety of BE. After emancipation, thousands of escaped slaves and freedmen left the United States. Although many went to Africa, South America and Canada, the historical record indicates that approximately 6,000 migrated to the Dominican Republic (Hoetink 1962). They were sent there through arrangements between the Haitian rulers of Santo Domingo and American

church and philanthropic agencies (Commission of Inquiry 1871; Hoetink 1962; Rodríguez Demorizi 1973; Puig Ortiz 1978) who were interested in populating the island of Hispaniola. During the 1820's, these people settled in several regions of the country, one of which was the Samaná peninsula. At that time, and up until the turn of the century this was a remote and scarcely populated area on the northeastern coast of the island. By 1870, the American colonists in and around a town of the same name, Samaná, numbered between five and six hundred. Most were farmers and many owned their own land. The informants of the Samaná English Corpus are the third and fourth generation descendants of the American settlers who founded and developed this community.

This type of data can furnish much-needed historical insights into the current structure of BEV, providing we can establish its relationship 1) to the language spoken by the original input settlers and 2) of that language in turn to varieties spoken by blacks in the U.S. over a century and a half ago. Arguments relating to these issues were developed in Poplack & Sankoff (1987), the earliest published work from the Samaná English Project, of which this dissertation is a part.

Copious inquiry into any historical documentation of the exodus from mainland United States revealed that most of the relevant demographic statistics of the settlers were either extremely difficult to obtain or irretrievable. Poplack & Sankoff (1987) found that there was actually no precise documentation of the migration as original passenger lists and census records of the time period were either withheld or deliberately falsified. Despite these drawbacks, corroborating evidence from various different sources make for a plausible composite of the sociological characteristics of the original input settlers. Newspaper reports from the same era record the release of slaves from Virginia and North Carolina, sometimes including direct manumission of entire plantations, although exportation occurred at various ports along the eastern seaboard, including New York. Poplack & Sankoff (1987) point out that these facts suggest that the input settlers may have

included, but could not have been limited to, northern blacks and must have had representatives of both field and house slaves.

The fact that Samaná oral tradition maintains that most of the "immigrants" were recently escaped slaves is consistent with this hypothesis, as illustrated in the quotations in (4a-f) below.

- (4a) Because they was slaves ... the people came out from yonder ... I understood that they- they were slaves. (018/242)
- (4b) I knew that they came running from slavery ... (021/683)
- (4c) But I know all them speaking English people came from the State the time of the slave and they was running away from the slave ... (014/233-234)
- (4d) They was slaves, then Bishop Allan sent them out. (004/121)
- (4e) They came out, look like in the time of slavery. (002/57)
- (4f) Well, of the same slaves, the people yes, they came from slavery. (011/698)

Once the emigrants arrived in on the island, however, there is no way to discern the exact port from which they disembarked nor demographic information on settlement patterns and residency, since specifics were not provided beyond the general destination of "Haiti", nor is it known that any particular group of settlers better survived the widespread incidence of typhus. Poplack & Sankoff (1987) conclude that the original input settlers likely represented a sampling of the major populations elements whose language constituted the precursor of BEV.

2.3.1.1. External Linguistic influences

Whatever variety the immigrants to Samaná might have spoken it would likely have been subject to the normal processes of language-internal evolution typical of all speech communities subsequent to their arrival; however, Poplack & Sankoff (1987) argue that these changes are likely to have been minimal based on the Samaná community's unique isolation from any invasive linguistic influences. They review three potential external sources of linguistic change, 1) Spanish, the dominant and official language of the region

for at least the last 110 years, 2) Haitian creoles and other French varieties to which the first settlers were exposed during the generation 1824-1845 and 3) contact with individuals from other English-speaking populations.

2.3.1.1.1. Contact with Spanish

Poplack & Sankoff (1987) provide ample evidence for the fact that there has been little influence from Spanish. First of all, the informants who make up the Samaná English Corpus are third and fourth generation residents of the Dominican Republic, yet they speak English almost exclusively, (e.g. (5a-c)).

- (5a) I don't hardly use the Spanish. The English what I learnt so that remain here. (003/111)
- (5b) I never practise, you know, to speak Spanish at home ... English alone. (005/209)
- (5c) My parents taught me to speak English. They never taught me to speak no other language. (006/245)

Although extensive bilingualism is documented as early as 1871 by the American Commission of Inquiry the characteristic linguistic interactions of these elderly speakers, as observed by Poplack & Sankoff (Ibid.), indicate that English is used in virtually all domains within the community and as such there is no case for English being used restrictively.

From a linguistic perspective, Samaná English shows only superficial influence from Spanish. Poplack & Sankoff (1987) list the few established loanwords and a small number of grammatical elements, all of which are pronounced with English phonology. They also note some evidence of calquing and phonological transfer, although this appears to be minimal and idiosyncratic. They conclude that there has been no massive influx of either lexical items nor grammatical constructions that might be expected from the influence of the dominant culturally-sanctioned language.

In fact, the prestige attributed to English, at least in earlier times, worked against assimilation to Spanish. This is obvious from the high regard held by these informants for

their language, (cf. example (6a-b), compared to the deprecatory remarks about other varieties in the environs, particularly Haitian (French) patois, as in example (7a-c).

- (6a) I dearly loves my English. (010/652)
- (6b) But I dearly love my father language. I love to speak English. (017/142-3)
- (7a) 'Cause if they could have spoken the French, well it would have been something else, but not that patois. That is too ugly. It sound- it have a ugly sound, you hear. (002/785-7)
- (7b) They talk the patois, the bad, you know. They talk the patois. All it mixed up. (008/685-6)
- (7c) I didn't like patois. I don't like it yet. (013/296-7)

In contrast, their children (who are approximately in their sixties) are bilingual, but mostly Spanish dominant, while their grandchildren are mostly monolingual in Spanish. Although there has been a concerted effort to maintain the English language, the youngest generation of speakers are resistant to learning it, as can be discerned from example (8a-b).

- (8a) Because, the children now they don't want to speak the English. Everything is Spanish. (007/638)
- (8b) Right now here in the town with the tourists what's coming in the town, the little Spaniards is breaking their head to learn English and our'n- our'n is refusing it. (006/305-8)

As reported in Poplack & Sankoff (1987), language shift is a clear outcome in this community which will ultimately result in the loss of the particular variety of English characteristic of Samaná. Vigo (1986) came to similar conclusions based on an administration of a questionnaire to a random sample of residents of several communities in the Samaná region. Thus, the variety we refer to here as "Samaná English" is actually the speech of the oldest (and last) generation in the community who are *native* speakers of English. No claim is made about the behaviour of any of the younger generations, either the children nor the grandchildren of our speakers, who in any event have incomplete or non-native acquisition histories of English. Unfortunately, it seems that English of any kind, e.g. (9a), but especially the variety maintained by the elderly speakers in our sample, will die out with them, as they themselves acknowledge, e.g. (9b).

- (9a) 006 ... the English-speaking people is- ya is- is is throwing away the English.
 Int: Why?
 006: Well, I don't know why. Throwing away the English. Because look at this young man. This young man, his father and his mother good English-speaking people and he- he- he don't speak it correct. But his father, his mother good English-speaking people ... It's the time what's bringing that ... It's the time what's bringing that. It ain't the school ... The school can't cut it out, it-it's the time what's- what doing it, you see. (006-291-305)
- (9b) When we die, us, the oldest ones, the English will be scarce here. (006/428)

2.3.1.1.2. Contact with dialects of French and English

Factors which led to the social, psychological and religious distinctiveness of the Samaná community recuperated from various historical sources led Poplack & Sankoff (1987) to suggest that Samaná English also remained relatively isolated from the influence of Haitian patois and Caribbean creoles. This was due in large part to the concerted efforts at preservation of its cultural and social cohesion which was unique in comparison with any other colonizing nucleus of the same age in the Dominican Republic (Hoetink 1962).

Organized religious practice and association with the Wesleyan Methodist Church and later, the African Methodist Episcopal Church contributed greatly to the maintenance of a distinct American community and language. Although this also meant influence from the outside, i.e. a British missionary in Samaná during much, if not most, of the period from 1838 through the 1930's, intermittent visits from white missionaries from the British possession of Turks Island about 500 miles north, and the attendance of at least one or two local preachers in church synods in foreign cities, Poplack & Sankoff (1987) argue that their impact on the community was actually extremely limited. They suggest that these would surely constitute standardizing effects on Samaná English, but they point out that it is unclear how many of the settlers might have had significant exposure to these individuals. Correspondence of several of the early ministers with church authorities

includes complaints that few of their American parishioners could read or write. Poplack & Sankoff (Ibid.) suggest that the influence of the teachers/ministers did not extend beyond the small proportion of individuals attending school for more than a few years. They do not, however, believe that this had more than an indirect and attenuated effect on the speech patterns of the population as a whole since their linguistic analyses reveal that there is some evidence of internal sociolinguistic differentiation of the community. Hoetink (1962) states "there clearly exists an elite, living in the little town itself ... their English, somewhat archaic perhaps and with an elaborate use of biblical parables, is much better understandable than that of the isolated farming people in the surrounding area". Evidence of this sociolinguistic stratification has been verified in linguistic studies of various features of the tense/aspect system (Poplack & Sankoff 1987; Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989; Tagliamonte & Poplack 1988) as we discuss below.

Non church-related English language influences appear to have been even more limited. Moreover, Poplack & Sankoff rightly point out that if Samaná English had (at least up until the present) so successfully resisted convergence with Spanish, the language which had indisputably dominated and surrounded the English-speaking enclaves in the Dominican Republic for over a century, they question how likely it would be that the much more limited contacts with external English-speaking communities would have transformed this variety, say from some basilectal or mesolectal creole, to something approaching modern BEV.

The crucial fact is that during the period which is relevant to the acquisition of the present-day variety of our informants (i.e. before the First World War) the peninsula of Samaná was geographically remote and extremely isolated. This weakens the hypothesis of externally-motivated linguistic change (i.e. convergence *or* decreolization) considerably. In fact, these are precisely the characteristics associated with the concept of linguistic enclave or "isolated area" which are widely accepted in historical linguistics and dialect geography to retain conservative features. Based on this evidence Poplack &

Sankoff conclude that "it is improbable that outside English dialects had any major effects on Samaná English".

This summary outlines the major points which have been presented as extra-linguistic evidence for the representativeness of the Samaná English Corpus as a precursor of BEV. It is important to emphasize that to the best of our knowledge, this information exhausts the available materials that can be obtained about the origins, history and sociocultural characteristics of these speakers. Although suggestive, these facts alone do not conclusively validate our assumption that Samaná English can be taken to represent a relevant historical sample of BE speech. However, exploited within a proper analytical context, in which internal linguistic results are compared with other putative historical materials, it seems clear that data such as this can provide an ideal test case for the synchronic investigation of linguistic forms associated with BEV and/or English-based Creoles.

A research program specifically designed to bolster the available external information through the analysis and interpretation of linguistic evidence has proceeded via an examination of a number of core grammatical features of Samaná English (Poplack & Sankoff 1987; Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989; Tagliamonte & Poplack 1988) corroborated by comparative analysis with other varieties of contemporary and historical black and white varieties, and perhaps most importantly, the only other known source of direct audio-recorded BE speech from an earlier point in time — the Ex-Slave Recordings (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989). This research has shown that at least within these specific areas of the grammar, Samaná English displays remarkable similarities with BEV, and in some cases with standard, dialectal and/or historical varieties of (white) English. The conditioning of copula presence has been shown to be quite similar to, and in fact even more conservative than, those characteristic of present-day BEV, while differing significantly from English-based Creoles. The (simple) past (Tagliamonte & Poplack 1988) and the (simple) present (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989) tense paradigms are comparable in form and function to

those attested for Standard, dialectal, and/or historical varieties of (white) English and again, were shown not to follow the constraint hierarchies documented for creoles. In fact, detailed quantitative comparison of a number of conditioning factors (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989) revealed that two constraints reported from the history of English remain operative in these BE materials.

In addition to establishing for the first time the existence in BE of tenses previously thought to be absent (the HISTORICAL PRESENT and simple PRESENT tenses), the conditioning of variability revealed by these studies suggests that the underlying temporal system of the grammar is organized along lines consistent with WEV. The consistent, patterned results of our research suggest that the individual variants of these variables were deeply entrenched both in form *and* in function in the underlying grammar of these varieties. This argues favourably for the hypothesis that they were not hypercorrections towards a prestigious white 'standard' nor recently-acquired forms due to decreolization. Moreover, the degree to which these results are comparable to the Ex-Slave Recordings allows for a plausible reconstruction of the historical scenario which can account for the variation we observe.

Thus, as representative of an earlier stage of BE these data have important implications for understanding the present-day development of BEV in the United States. They, in essence, are a time capsule containing an unprecedented opportunity to examine the past of BE directly from those who speak it.

2.3.2. The Ex-Slave Recordings

The second data base examined in this dissertation is referred to as The "Ex-Slave Recordings". The speakers represented in this corpus were born between 1844 and 1861, and (with the exception of one) were born and raised in the southern United States (Texas, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Virginia). Their speech may be taken to represent the BE

of the earlier time period when they were in the process of acquiring their language. This would have been some four or five decades after the ancestors of the Samaná informants. This corpus is the only known audio-taped record of the speech of former slaves who had never left the southern United States. Although it consists of only a few hours of audible speech and thus, in many cases, does not provide sufficient data to allow for systematic study of the key grammatical structures of interest (see also (Butters 1989:12)), it is an invaluable source for comparison with our Samaná materials.

Systematic comparison of this data base both with the Hyatt Corpus (Viereck 1988; 1989) and with the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives (Maynor 1987) already indicate conflicting results and their conclusions are consistent in the doubt they cast on the reliability and representativity of the written materials. The yet to appear (at the time of writing this dissertation) volume edited by Bailey et al. (to appear) will be an important collection of research papers based on comparisons of this data base with other varieties and corpora of BE.

Comparison of the Ex-Slave Recordings with the Samaná materials, on the other hand, reveals striking similarities. In a factor by factor analysis of the distribution of -s across the verbal paradigm, Samaná English and Ex-Slave Recordings demonstrated not only parallel distribution but the effects of phonological and syntactic conditioning were also consistent (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989). These findings also provide perhaps the strongest corroborating evidence for our suggestion that the Samaná materials are indeed representative of an earlier form of BE.

It is through a combined analysis of both these unique corpora that we addresses the "time-depth" and "reliable data" requirements for admissible evidence to the debate over the origins and development of BEV. In so doing, this dissertation provides one of the most striking demonstrations yet accomplished of the relationship of different corpora of earlier varieties of BE to each other and to their putative Creole and/or English roots.

However, the successful recuperation of relevant and reliable historical corpora are not the only requirement for a successful research design.

2.4. The linguistic issue

The implicit theoretical and methodological issues that are raised by research involving the divergence hypothesis point to the importance of the choice of the linguistic variable itself for the elucidation of relevant evidence. Labov (1980:372) argues that "there is greater 'linguistic profit' in structural characteristics" than in isolated "lexical items and their cultural correlates". This argument is used both by Labov and Bailey & Maynor for deciding that the changes in the function of verbal *-s* and invariant *be* represent a major structural shift in the BEV grammar because they represent qualitative changes in the underlying system rather than quantitative ones. What seems clear, however, is that the assessment of structural shift is not as simple as this earlier research would have us believe. Wolfram's (1990:47) detailed critique of the divergence controversy points to the fact that there are deeper aspects of organization in the underlying tense-aspect-mood system that need to be considered in the analysis of morphosyntactic differences between dialects in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of their grammars.

We reviewed in section 2.2.1. the appeal for accountable research addressing the "time-depth" and "reliable data" issues for admissible evidence in the controversy over the origins and development of BEV; however, the "linguistic issue" — what particular features of the grammar to examine and how they should be interpreted vis-à-vis the underlying system — has not received as much attention, perhaps due to the relative importance of the former ones. This issue addresses the question of whether the choice of variable is relevant to the interpretation of on-going linguistic change¹¹ (Labov 1980). It is

¹¹ That "linguistic profit" can be attached to linguistic variables is not without controversy itself. Although he accepts the concept in theory, Butters (1989) cautions against its use as a metric due to its lack of quantifiability as well as what he claims is its use a general crutch by researchers who wish

an important dimension to consider, however, especially in light of the fact that the linguistic variables which have received the most attention with regard to the divergence controversy are themselves highly controversial on a number of counts.

2.4.1. Problems with the choice of variable

2.4.1.1. Paucity of data

Studies of syntactic/semantic phenomena such as tense/aspect forms, despite the fact that they represent an area of the grammar fruitful for discovering differences between black and white dialects, are often limited by the relative rarity of their occurrence. Researchers have criticized the studies of divergence based on the low-frequency morphemes used in their analyses and questioned the reliability of scholarly judgments based on "minuscule amounts of data" (Butters 1989:12). This criticism, however, can be levelled equally, if not more profitably toward the persistent claims for Creole-origin patterning, which are perhaps even more guilty of overgeneralization. Nevertheless, it is clear that individual tense/aspect forms studied in isolation cannot provide the necessary overview of an entire temporal system particularly when it is becoming increasingly obvious that the *inter-relationships* between tense/aspect forms are one of the most important mechanisms by which temporal marking proceeds.

2.4.1.2. Style shifting or age-grading vs. grammatical restructuring

The most frequently-questioned aspect of data used as evidence for divergence involves the degree of formality and/or age-grading. Some researchers suggest that differences in linguistic form may actually reflect a stylistic shift whereby one variant is

to buttress their position. Butters (1989:183) argues against such a metric insofar as it is used to make "inflated claims" for particular features, e.g. invariant *be*, as being "fundamental" to the underlying system of a grammar when, in actuality, it may well represent "an interesting, but relatively superficial" (1989:36) change after all.

used in formal, and the other in informal, speaking mode (Bailey & Maynor 1989:17). While Bailey & Maynor have addressed this problem through careful field methods specifically designed to elicit informal speech, Butters maintains that the inherent saliency of invariant *be* as a "high-visibility vogue term nurtured in part by mass media, in part by geographical mobility, in part by 'Black pride' "can confound grammatical and stylistic effects" (Butters 1989:20). There is also a suggestion that invariant *be* may involve the "age-grading" problem which maintains that the speech of children and adolescents is characteristically different from the speech of adults (c.f. (Wolfram 1973)). In such a case the discrepancy between linguistic variation in younger vs. older speakers does not represent change in progress but stable variation which is typical of specific age groups. Here, variables become part of the adolescent repertoire due to extra-linguistic influence such as peer group solidarity, sex, or self-identification and disappear with the onset of adulthood and/or a change in socio-economic circumstance. If invariant *be* is, as Butters suggests, "part of what is trendy today in BEV among Black youth nationally" then it may be the case that it is a linguistic form that adults, by the mere fact that they are adults, don't typically use.

Examination of this problem in other areas of linguistic variation reveal equally conflicting results. In two independent studies of the realization of unstressed initial syllables among different generations of BEV speakers (Cukor-Avila 1988; Vaughn-Cooke 1987), the first found evidence of change in progress, while the second showed stable variation. These studies emphasize the difficulty of using apparent time data in the assessment of linguistic change.

2.4.1.3. The morpho-syntax of verbal -s

In addition, the interpretation of the morpho-syntactic patterning of particular marked and unmarked verb forms themselves, suffer in a number of counts. The comparative analysis of at least one of the major linguistic features used to examine the

BEV grammar — verbal *-s* — has been subject to a great deal of misinterpretation (cf. (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989) for problems with conflicting results, lack of comparability and selective analysis of data). Much has made of the putative "discourse-pragmatic" function of the Creole unmarked verb. Discovering that this form surfaces in narrative discourse where unmarked HISTORICAL PRESENT verbs can appear in English, researchers have suggested a "historical present" analysis to describe the variation between marked and unmarked verb forms (Bollée 1977; Corne 1977; Rickford 1987b). In fact, Givón (1979) goes so far as to suggest that Std E may have a stylistic/dialectal level which "dispenses with tense," and where the unmarked form of the verb is used "just like in creoles". He cites an "identical discourse function" between the "informal" Std E rendition of past punctual events in (foregrounded) narrative clauses, which features present-tense marking (i.e. the HISTORICAL PRESENT), and the creole zero form, which is predicted to occur in precisely the same clauses (Ibid. p. 128).

However, such observations of the distribution of the putative HISTORICAL PRESENT (unmarked) vs. marked forms in Creole do not correspond to those attested in empirical discourse analyses of the internal structure of narratives in Std E (Schiffrin 1981; Wolfson 1979). As pointed out in Poplack & Tagliamonte (1989:521-522) it is the *patterning* or alternation of HISTORICAL PRESENT and simple PAST in complicating action clauses that characterizes Std E narratives, rather than the exclusive occurrence of one or the other tense in a particular narrative section. This means that a typical Std E narrative discourse pattern involves systematic alternation between marked (PAST e.g. *walked* and PRESENT (3rd sg.) e.g. *walks*) forms vs. unmarked forms (PRESENT (non-3rd sg.) or unmarked PAST e.g. *walkØ*). Attention to such underlying principles of organization provide the only unambiguous and therefore relevant facts with which to compare and/or contrast linguistic variation in different data sets. Thus, it is necessary to delve beyond morphosyntactic markers viewed from within a sententially limited

perspective to consider relevant morphosyntactic *intrasentential* patterns in order to ascertain the meaning and function of observed tense/aspect forms or categories as a function of the underlying temporal organization (Wolfram 1987:47).

The problem then, is to find a number of linguistic variables which occur frequently, are relatively non-salient and thus unlikely to be interpreted as an overt stylistic or generational marker, and have a sufficient degree of relevance to the grammatical structure in order to successfully elucidate the putative *underlying* difference between white and black vernaculars.

2.4.2. Individual tense categories vs. the underlying system

Despite the history of controversy in the study of BEV, the variety of issues that have been addressed and the varying foci of attention throughout this extensive debate, the single most consistent issue that is implicit in each and every analysis and program of research has been the characterization of its underlying grammatical system. The linguistic forms which are held to be "different" between black and white varieties of English have not substantially changed over the duration. At least some features of the tense/aspect system have always been regarded as essentially distinct, either in function, or at least, in frequency. However, the major problem is not which linguistic variables are different, but what *explains* the dissimilarity. The proposals that have been made, as we have seen, have been variable, but their goal is unchanged, and unfortunately an entirely adequate answer is still forthcoming. The same question that Labov asked in 1972, is relevant nearly twenty years later:

Are the observed differences in surface structure indications of even greater differences in the deep structure, or merely the results of low-level realization rules, lexical inputs, phonological and late transformation rules?

However, analyses which have regarded tense/aspect forms unilaterally have missed being able to address this underlying issue — the characterization and assessment of the organization of the grammar. Many studies relying on previously studied categories

in BEV and related varieties for comparative and corroboration purposes, have focussed on tense categories that are typical, if not characteristic of the Std E tense/aspect system. But Creolists have long criticized research on BEV which posits underlying Std E configurations in the relationship between the variants of the variable being studied, i.e. "contraction" and "deletion" vs. "insertion". If a grammar is underlyingly Creole-like, they claim, then its temporal reference system will not be organized in such a way as to be functionally comparable to the English system. In fact, they claim it will have a far more contextually oriented organization (e.g. (Bickerton 1975; Mufwene 1983; Rickford 1977)). In Creole, tenses are highly dependent on each other for their surface morphological realizations as well as other aspects of the surrounding discourse context. Under a creolist interpretation the variation in morphological surface forms is explained by the underlying relative organization of the tense system rather than from independent language internal processes such as phonological reduction, syntactic constraints or discourse phenomena.

Working under these assumptions, this dissertation pursues an analysis of variation in morphological form by consideration, not only of the immediate phonological and syntactic features of the sentence, but also features of the relevant discourse environment. While previous analysis of BEV tense and/or aspect have been able to determine distributional patterning and the phonological and syntactic conditioning factors on the particular temporal structures under study, they do not consider the potential relationship *between* tense forms or their possible influence on one another. With tense categories that are absolute in nature, as the Std E simple PAST tense, this particular line of inquiry is not crucial since by their very nature absolute tenses are interpreted with respect to speech time. They are not, however, uninfluenced by other tense forms in the surrounding discourse as some Creolists have suggested and this is another problem of misinterpretation that we discuss further below. However, in the present situation in which the underlying system of BEV is still in question, and Creole and/or English are possible, we propose an analysis of variation in morphological form which will examine both. In light of the continuing

controversy over the underlying grammatical structure of BEV such an approach addresses the linguistic issue described above as well as providing crucial evidence for the longstanding claims as to its underlying temporal organization.

Chapter 3:

Past Temporal Reference

3. Previous studies of the past temporal reference system in related varieties

In order to ascertain the underlying grammars of Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings, it is first necessary to understand the mechanism governing the marking patterns for past temporal reference, and hence the morphological forms that are a product of it, in the linguistic systems of those varieties from which they may be considered to have derived. In the following chapter we review in detail the origins, history and development of past temporal reference verbal structures from the historical record of the English language, current prescriptive and dialectal Std E tense usage, the results of linguistic analyses of contemporary BEV, "earlier" BE, and English-Based Creoles. As we have described, both Creoles and English have, at one time or another, been cited as the source of many of the contentious verb forms that appear in black varieties of English. It will be particularly important to consider the similarities and differences in these forms in contemporary vs. historical and/or dialectal English and contemporary and "earlier" varieties of BE. Developmental changes in these varieties will provide important evidence for situating and describing the linguistic systems of our BE speech data.

This is particularly important in light of the general fact that much of the research claiming that BEV has a grammatical system different from English have based their conclusions on comparisons of BEV features with standard (prescriptive) contemporary English usage rather than with early dialectal varieties of English to which Black English varieties must have had closer historical connections (Montgomery & Bailey 1986:13), or with related present-day *nonstandard* white vernaculars (Butters 1989:194; Rickford 1990; Vaughn-Cooke 1987:68) to which it might be more appropriately compared. Nevertheless, from the advent of the standard origins debate researchers have pointed out that almost all

Modern English analogues (e.g. (D'Eloia 1973:93; Herndobler & Sledd 1976; Traugott 1972:194) etc.) Moreover, on-going research into present-day varieties of American English, both Southern WEV and other regional WEV varieties, British English dialects (Ihalainen 1976) as well as research on other territorial variants of the English language (e.g. Tristan da Cunha, an island in the South Atlantic (Scur 1974) and Newfoundland, Canada (Noseworthy 1972)) have confirmed that many of those same features are not unique to BEV, but appear in a wide geographic range of English dialects, many of which are entirely beyond the range of creole influence. Thus, in studying the numerous and varied verb forms in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings, it is important to take these synchronic and diachronic factors into account in order to adequately explore the verbal structures of their grammars. This is especially important in light of the fact that the most profound overall changes in the English language in the last four centuries have been in the temporal reference system of the grammar (Strang 1970:59).

3.1. The development of past temporal reference verbal morphology in English

3.1.1. Old English

In Old English, there were only two tenses — past and non-past. While the non-past served for durative and non-durative present and future reference, the past covered not only what is represented by the simple PAST of today, but also meanings corresponding with durative past time (e.g. PAST PROGRESSIVE, HABITUAL), as well as the PRESENT PERFECT and PAST PERFECT of our contemporary system (Strang 1970:311). In other words, there were no overt forms to distinguish between habitual and progressive aspect and between perfective and non-perfective (Traugott 1972:90-91) meaning. This can be seen in example (10) below, where habitual activity has no representative auxiliary (10a), and (10b) in which the simple PAST tense inflection marks a context that today would be overtly marked with the auxiliary and tense inflection combination of the PRESENT PERFECT.

context that today would be overtly marked with the auxiliary and tense inflection combination of the PRESENT PERFECT.

- (10a) ce cyning ba ricostan men *drincap* myran meolc'
and that king and those richest men *drink* mare's milk'.
(Traugott 1972:89)
- (10b) oe cyan hate oæt me *com*¹² swioe oft on gemynd hwelce
wiotan iu wæron giond Angelcynn
'to-you tell command that to-me came very often to
mind what wise-men before were throughout England'
Let it be known to you that it has very often come to my
mind what ... (Traugott 1972: 89)

In fact, the two tense categories simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT were not yet differentiated and it was often the case that the preterit form was used even when the action could unambiguously be identified as relating to present time (Brunner 1963:86). This means that there was extensive ambiguity among the different aspectual readings of events, processes and states due to the fact that they were often represented by the same surface form. In other words, surface verbal morphology corresponding to the simple PAST was often used for contexts which in contemporary Std E usage might be represented by PRESENT PERFECT, PAST PERFECT, PROGRESSIVES, HABITUALS and even the PRESENT.

The verbal morphology itself, however, was characterized by an extensive set of inflections elaborately arrayed into specific verb classes and types in which the first, second and third person singular were distinguished from plural in both past and non-past. The basic division was between strong and weak verbs, with strong verbs organized into at least seven classes based on vowel gradation inherited from older Germanic and Indo-European (Mossé 1952:68; Wyld 1927:1927). This refers to a process of apophany in

¹² In many dialects of English during this time period the verb *come* had only one form for the 1st and 3rd plural of the present and preterite.

which the type of ablaut in the vowel series represented in the principal forms of the verb — the infinitive, the preterit, the present participle and the past participle — determined its class. Grammar books are replete with lists of the major lexical forms and classes and their respective inflections and will not be repeated here.

3.1.2. Middle English

One of the chief characteristics of the transition between the Old English and Middle English temporal reference system is the gradual loss of many of these verbal endings coupled with a corresponding elaboration of the verb structure in which a network of modal, aspectual and clause-contrastive systems, mainly signified by separate words (operators or auxiliaries), rather than inflections, were grafted onto the two-tense (past vs. non-past) inflectional verb system (Strang 1970:98). These changes are the beginning of a the four-century long changeover from a highly inflectional or (synthetic) tense system to a periphrastic (analytic) one. While a synthetic language is one in which meaningful linguistic categories are given overt inflectional morphology, an analytic language will express these functions by separate words such as auxiliaries or particles, or no overt form at all; however, neither Old English nor Modern English can be characterized as fully one type of system or the other. In fact, the extensive generalization towards analytic morphology in Middle English was only made possible by changes that had already begun in the earlier Old English period (Traugott 1972:110).

Historians are not in total agreement as to the exact cause for the loss of the inflections and the resultant preponderance of analytic structures. Many scholars have argued that it was the result of phonological change (e.g. (Wardale 1937:101; Wyld 1927:254)) in which the contrasts between final unstressed syllables of the inflectional system collapsed. For example, the distinction between [-e, -a, -u] and [-es, -as] were levelled when all unstressed vowels became [ə]. This would surely have had a profound effect on a system whose morphological distinctions were based on different vowel grada-

tions. However, others have pointed out that these inflections must have already diminished in meaningful function or else their loss would have produced a corresponding loss in communication (Strang 1970:281; Traugott 1972:92). A case in point is the [-en] suffix which was retained when it had the grammatical function of past participle (i.e. *ridden, hidden, seen*). It is instead, more likely that a combinations of factors — non-functional inflectional losses and increasing word order restrictions — led to the process of inflection reduction. This demonstrates the continual "give and take" of the various sub-systems of a grammar as one change produces the environment for another as evident in the following quotation from Traugott:

... many inflectional losses could not have occurred if word order had been as variable as it was in OE, since the overt relationships between elements in the sentence would be insufficiently marked for satisfactory communication to take place in the absence of both case inflections and heavy word order restrictions. It was at those points, where the structure reduced or restructured. In turn, as inflections became less distinct, word order became more constrained. So we can postulate a kind of cyclical development with some word order patterns allowing the partial collapsing of inflectional distinction, this collapsing itself becoming a condition for further restrictions of word order, and these restrictions in turn allowing for more collapsing of inflections, and so on. (Traugott 1972:111)

Another hypothesis that has been suggested as a major cause of inflectional loss was the influence of foreign languages — French, Scandinavian, Latin and to a far lesser extent Greek — which were considered prestige languages in comparison to English during this time. Strang (1970:281) suggests that exposure to bilingualism led to restructuring existing patterns along lines typical of other languages.

Whatever the origins, two far-reaching changes in the verb phrase were well underway in the Middle English period: one process led to the general decrease in verbal inflection, another led to on-going elaboration of other linguistic means to represent tense and aspect distinctions. The first of these changes led to pervasive variability in English verbal morphology in general, and in past temporal reference verbs specifically, due to their

fluctuating classification and the alternative morphologies that were available for their surface forms. The second process led to additional verbal forms to represent the new temporal reference functions, sometimes through an extension in the use of certain main verbs so that they became used as auxiliaries in segmentalized verbal structures. Both processes had the result of producing notable overlaps between form and function in the representation of meaning in the surface structure of the grammar. In the following sections we review in detail the various areas within the (past) temporal reference system which have evidenced variability in the context of these morpho-syntactic changes in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying the surface forms used to convey various tense/aspect meanings in English. It is particularly important to note the types of tense/aspect category overlaps that obtain, the lexical verbs which have evidenced long-term variability as well as the numerous morphological variants which have competed within similar temporal/aspectual contexts. All these were actively present within the English language just previous to and during the time period when we hypothesize the ancestors of our speakers were acquiring English.

Though contemporary prescriptive usage strictly requires the presence, not only of past temporal morphology to mark past time, but also specifies exactly which morphology is the appropriate one, particularly with respect to the simple PAST and PERFECT tenses, the type and classification of the inflections used in the modern system is still not stable. Actually, the changes that began in the Old English period show no sign of having arrived at a state of equilibrium even to the present day!

3.1.3. Elaboration of the verb phrase

One of the most important changes that has taken place in the English temporal reference system is the development of separate elements within the verb phrase, in addition to the suffixal inflection on the main verb, to mark tense and/or aspect. This is characteristic of what are referred to in English as the "compound" tenses, i.e. those which

combine both auxiliary and suffixal marking. This division of the functional parts of the verb phrase into various parts occurred in a number of different ways as new tense and/or aspect distinctions, in addition to the original past tense, began to be given overt verbal morphology in the English language.

3.1.3.1. Have/had

Perhaps the most prominent expansion of the tense system was the development of the PRESENT and PAST PERFECT tenses from the stative main verbs *have* and *be*. The PRESENT PERFECT arose first, based on the present tense of transitive verbs, as in (11) below.

(11) I *have* the letter written (i.e. in a written state)

Because a written state implies a previous action, the structure *have written* gradually acquired verbal force, serving as a verbal form, pointing to the past and bringing it into relation with the present (Curme 1977:358). Originally the simple PAST tense, which derived from the Germanic languages, had covered this meaning, but the gradual shift in emphasis to explicitly *past* time that was accorded this form, led to the need for a new verbal structure that could function to represent a close relationship between past and *present* time.

In Old English the past participle, e.g. *written*, was an objective predicate participle adjective and in its predicate function had strong stress, i.e. *I have the letter written*. Sometimes, however, it transferred its strong stress to the preceding object noun, since the object usually receives stronger stress than the verb, i.e. *I have the letter written*. At the next stage the strongly accented object was placed after the participle due to the general tendency to place strongly accented words after ones with weaker stress, i.e. *I have written the letter*. This led to a formal differentiation between '*I have the letter written*' and '*I have written the letter*', the latter becoming the new perfect tense. The PAST PERFECT, in turn, developed by analogy to this verbal structure.

While the original context for this tense was with point-action transitives, durative intransitives followed closely thereafter, also by analogy, e.g. *I have/had worked*. Point-action intransitives, however, which call attention to a specific point in the past, were more resistant since the present time association of the new PRESENT PERFECT tense was more pronounced at this time. In effect, the perfect participle served as a predicate adjective indicating a state, e.g. (12a-b) while the auxiliary verb (either *have* or *be*) performed the function of predication, e.g. (12c) (Curme 1977:359).

- | | | | |
|-------|---------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| (12a) | The tree is fallen | = | the tree is in a fallen state |
| (12b) | The tree was fallen | = | the tree was in a fallen state |
| (12c) | The tree had fallen | | |

In Middle English, however, forms with *have* and *had* began to occur alongside the forms with *be* and there arose variability between the two auxiliaries. In general, *have* was found when the emphasis is placed on the action rather than the fact that it is completed, i.e. when the past participle is clearly verbal (Curme 1977:359), as in example (13a-b) below.

- | | |
|-------|--|
| (13a) | He took his wif to kepe whan he <i>is gon</i> vs. and also to <i>han gon</i> to solitaire exil |
| (13b) | the yonge sonne <i>hath</i> in the Ram his halfe course <i>yronne</i> vs. as rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne that in the Ram <i>is foure degress up ronne</i>
(all Chaucer from (Brunner 1963:87)) |

The distinction between them is also described as one in which the auxiliary *have* is used with transitive verbs and the auxiliary *be* is used with intransitives (Brunner 1963:87; Traugott 1972; Visser 1970:2192). In mutative verbs, i.e. verbs of motion, however, *have* is generally used.

During the Middle English period *have/had* gradually generalized to more and more verbs although some were quite resistant, e.g. *come*, *become*, *arrive*, *enter*, *run* and *grow*, and favoured *be* + past participle. The auxiliary with *be* was also retained in a few set

expressions and poetic language, e.g. (14a-b), where the perfect participle clearly expresses the idea of a state and thus its adjectival sense as well as in the passive (14c).

- (14a) The melancholy days *are come*
 We *are* (or *have*) *assembled* here to discuss a difficult question'
 Our friend *is* (or *has*) departed (i.e. dead). (Curme 1977:359)
- (14b) The King himself *is rode* to view their battle. (Shakespeare, Henry the Fifth, IV, III, 2)
 I *am* this instant *arrived* here. (Witham Marsh, Letter, written at Alban, N.Y., April 18, 1763, to Sir William Johnson) (Curme 1977:359)
- (14c) Besides I met Lord Bigot and Lord Salisbury, with eyes as red as new-enkindled fir, and other more, going to seek the grave of Aerthur, whom they say *is* (now *has been*) *killed* to-night on your suggestion. (Shakespeare, King John, IV, II, 162) (Curme 1977:359)
- Since writing I *am* (now *have been*) credibly *informed* that, etc. (Sir William Johnson, Letter, written at Johnstown, N.Y., Feb. 9, 1764, to John Penn) (Curme 1977:359)

3.1.3.2. Done

A further segmentalization of the verb phrase within the realm of perfective meaning during the Middle English period was the development of a "three-verb structure" (Visser 1969:338ff) of the type, *He had done speak*, which occurred alongside of the two-verb clusters *he does speak* and *he did speak*. While the origins of this form are obscure, it clearly represented a completed past temporal reference action, as in (15a). Inflection on the past participle was apparently variable as the form of the main verb originally surfaced as an infinitive, e.g. *speak*, but was gradually replaced by the past participle, e.g. *I had done spoke*, likely by analogy from forms such as *I done it* (Visser 1970:2210). Similarly, as Traugott (1972:146 fn 18) points out, the past participle inflection *-ed* on weak verbs, e.g. *invent* is not required. Hence forms such as *has done invent* and *has done invented* were synonymous, as in (15b).

- (15a) Also he seyde ... he *hadde do sherchyd* att Clunye.
'Also he said ... he had done searched at Cluny.'
(He had finished searching) (Traugott 1972:146)
- (15b) And many other false abusion The Paip (=Pope) *hes done*
invent. (Traugott 1972:146)

Between Middle and Modern English the form with *done* became stigmatized as nonstandard and did not survive past the fifteenth century in Southern England (Williams 1975:273); however, in the Northern dialectal regions it remained common.

3.1.3.3. Did

The development of periphrastic *do* during the Middle English period has a complex and interesting history which has been explored extensively by many researchers (e.g. (Ellegård 1953; Engblom 1938; Kroch 1990; Kroch 1989)). Whether it developed out of the use of a causative *do* construction, from a semantic development of the full verb *do*, or from the influence of the corresponding use of *faire* in French, (cf. (Visser 1970:1488) for references) it came to be used interchangeably with the simple verb form without any (attested) semantic differentiation, i.e. *I love* varying with *I do love*; *I loved* varying with *I did love*.

Although the periphrastic form had been in use in the spoken language in Old English, it was during the Middle English period that it began to spread to the written language, particularly in poetry. Visser (1970:1418) attributes its rise in this medium to the advent of non alliterative verse in the thirteenth century which required strict iambic metre. Writers began to use the periphrastic form to facilitate their ability to manipulate the intricate metrical patterns. According to Ellegård (1953) this began in the south-western districts, then spread to the east. It gained rapid prominence and eventually spread to prose, where it became just as frequent as in poetry. Visser (1970) lists numerous examples, typical of this time period, such as (16) below.

- (16) Joseph hath led þat childe away, As Angel to joseph *dyd byd*
and *say*. And Sir Thomas *did write* to me that I shuld shippe
be sarpler.

Eventually it began to be used everywhere — in all types of writing and discourse and in all dialects (Williams 1975:272), although more frequently in the South. Its usage in affirmative declarative sentences, e.g. *I did love*, along with the bare tensed verb, e.g. *I loved*, point to pervasive variability in this area of the verbal paradigm during this time period and the lack of any obvious grammatical function for this form distinct from the preterit. This is apparent from the interchangeability of *do* + Tense + Verb and Verb + tense¹³ in different manuscripts (Traugott 1972:138) and the presence of alternation of these forms in all writers of the time. In fact, the alternation between the periphrastic *do* form and the single verb form was so redundant and/or common that most grammarians don't even mention it and those that do imply that there was no meaning difference between the two forms. For example, Palsgrave (1530) quoted in Traugott (1972:138) and Visser (1970:1503) observes that "*I do* is a verbe moche comenly used in our tonge to be put byfore other verbes: as *it is all one* to say 'I do speke ...' and 'I speake ...' " It does seem to have had a somewhat stylistic function, however, as Traugott (1972:138) quotes a French contemporary of Shakespeare as saying that the English "*doe* adde commonly the verb *Faire*, before the other verbes, for the replenishing and sounding of their tongues *with more grace*" (italics, added). Visser's (1970:1502) general impression of this form, however, is that its usage was "wholly a subjective matter" and quotes Sweet as saying that "the *do*-pattern was used according as caprice, convenience, and clearness of construction, or euphony suggested." The choice between the two constructions may also have had to do with the fact that the periphrastic form was used more often with verbs which had no special morphological form to indicate the temporal reference, i.e. *sweat*, *put*, and when the

¹³ The form *gin* + Tense + Verb was also involved in this variation, however, this verb structure was short-lived in the English language and by the late sixteenth century it had completely disappeared except in songs (Traugott, 1972:141).

subject was a personal pronoun other than third singular, i.e. *I, you, we, they* (Grainger 1907; Trnka 1925:207) (quoted in (Visser 1970:1503)). Visser points out that these claims are not borne out by the data, however, since preterit morphology occurs in these contexts as well. Of course, the distributional patterns from which these generalizations were made cannot be determined without recourse to the raw data, which is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

The use of this verbal construction started to decline by the late sixteenth century. Evidence for this comes from Shakespeare's colloquial styles where periphrastic *do* is used primarily in verse where older forms tend to be preserved, in poetic prose and in fixed formal phrases, while it is rarely used in the everyday speech of his characters. In contrast, the usage of tense carrier *do* for negatives and questions continued to increase. In the seventeenth century periphrastic *do* in positive declarative units remained in use in poetry and prose and was still interchangeable with the simple verb. Towards the end of that century it had declined substantially in the written language and by the middle of the eighteenth century the simple verb had become the rule. It was not entirely lost in the Standard language until the Modern English period, however, and can still be found in dialectal varieties (cf. section 3.2. below). Even in Std E, however, the form is still used in contexts of emphasis.

3.1.3.4. Used to

The form *used to* + Verb is one of the more stable analytic construction of the English past temporal reference system, having been in use in the language in all periods we have discussed. Up to the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, it was used with animate subjects only (Visser 1970:1413). The construction expresses either habitual activity or usual states or conditions. This can be seen in the meaning contrast between *used to tell* and *used to stand* in example (17) below, where iterative or repetitive meaning is found only in the case of the event verb and not with the stative.

- (17) Father *used to tell* me that in each guest-chamber, at the foot of the bed, there *used to stand* a table loaded with silver, piles of dollars covered with a cloth. (Visser 1970:1413)

At an early period this construction also developed an additional meaning which is always present in its meaning in contemporary usage — that of completion. For example, the interpretation of (17) above, contains the notion that the events and states being described do not exist at speech time.

An interesting, albeit unusual construction from the perspective of modern-day usage, is mentioned by Visser (1970:1414) whereby past habitual marking by an auxiliary, i.e. *used to*, is not required in all clauses with this interpretation. In the event that two customary actions are mentioned in a single utterance, "one in the principal unit, the other in the dependent unit" *used to* is only used once, as in (18).

- (18) We *used to get up* early we *went* to church. (Visser 1970:1414)

3.1.3.5. Would

Another construction, similar in meaning to *used to*, is *would* + Verb. These two forms have been current alongside of each other for centuries, and thus might be expected to have identical functions; however, in some contexts they are difficult to differentiate. Both have the connotation of completion, although less so with *would*, and refer to durative past time. One difference is that the structure with *used to* can be used to express states as well as actions whereas *would* is used only with events and actions (Visser 1970:1710). The meaning difference has also been attributed to personal perspective. For example, Visser (1970:1414) quotes Zandvoort as identifying the *would* construction with an added connotation of personal interest, and *used to* as being more objective. Despite these differences the two constructions are said to be most often used interchangeably, even in the same utterance, as in (19a-b).

- (19a) He *used to go* to the mass here on Sundays and I *would see* him ... (Visser 1970:1710)

- (19b) We *used to have* a good laugh over that. He *used to come* in whenever he wanted a cigarette, *take* a packet out of his pocket and *put* one into ... the box. And then he'd *take* it out again. He'd *do* that a dozen times every day. (Visser 1970:1710)

As with the *used to* construction Visser (1970:1710) points out that the auxiliary itself is not always explicit in the expression of past habitual actions. Instead, it is "often implicit in a simple preterit form", as can be seen in (20) below.

- (20) Towards the end of each financial year the General's flying columns *would lumber out* into the surrounding country on the heels of the fugitive population and *returned* in time for budget day laden with the spoils of the less nimble. (Visser 1970:1710)

Implicitly, at least, it also seems to be the case that habitual action can be expressed with a bare verb form at the surface in the case that they are preceded by *used to* and/or *would*. Note the verbs *take* and *put* in example (19b) above. Although Visser does not specifically mention them, they too encode the habitual/iterative meaning of the surrounding verb forms. We return to relevance of this observation in section 5.0 and 6.0. below.

3.1.3.6. Historical present

Another change that took place in the tense system during the Middle English period was the development of the "historic" or "historical" present (Mossé 1952; Traugott 1972; Visser 1970:705-44). The foremost characteristic of this tense category was its alternation with the simple PAST (Mossé 1952:98), as can be seen in example (21) below, which occurred even in the best usage.

- (21) Sche *fond* and *gadreð* herbes suote; she *pulleð* up some be
 ðe rote, And manye wið a knyf sche *scherō* And alle into hir
 charc sche *bero*.

'She found and gathers sweet herbs; some she pulls up by the root and many she cuts with a knife, and all she carries into her car. (Mossé 1952:98)

Furthermore, from a description of this patterning between preterit and present morphology found in Visser (1970:709), it is clear that the only requirement for the alternation was that the temporal reference time had been previously established, after which consistent usage of either simple PAST or HISTORICAL PRESENT was not necessary:

...when — as was always the case — in the beginning of a story or tale the time in which the incidents happened was clearly indicated ... the *possibility* existed of using presents in alternation with preterits further on in the narrative

As Mossé (1952:111) points out, occurrence of these forms result in "abrupt transition from present to preterit and vice-versa, even in the same sentence".

Because this form had not been attested in earlier varieties of English, many scholars attribute its appearance to the model provided by French literature of the period; however, two facts tend to discount this theory. First of all, the same patterns are found in narratives which could not have been influenced by French and second, the alternating patterns that were typical of French are not obvious from translated works since it can be observed that both present and past tense morphology in the French texts were replicated as English preterits (Visser 1970:709). The fact that all Germanic languages use this form, and the fact that it is "a dominant stylistic trait" in written narratives from older languages, e.g. Old Icelandic, suggests that it was a linguistic reflex that was encouraged by the models of both Scandinavian and French.

An alternate hypothesis once again appeals to literary usage of the time. Like the segmentalization of *do*, in the two-verb structures *I do love/I did love*, the HISTORICAL PRESENT was first noted in English exclusively in poetry. This has led Visser (1970) to claim that the determinative factors that led to this alternation were, in fact, the desire to accommodate to poetic rhyme and meter. For example, Visser (1970:711) points out that:

The poet who wrote the lines 'The erl went home to hys ynns,/And grete yoy he *begyns*; The blode braste owt at hys *eerys*./And hys stede to grownde he *berys*' preferred the forms *begyns* and *berys* (instead of *began* and *bore*) to the drastic recasting of the whole wording.

With respect to the patterning found for this alternation, Visser notes that PRESENT or PAST tense forms tended to occur in sequence, either "because of attraction or for consistency's sake". He notes the same tendency with respect to metre whereby the morphology, either past or present, that was consistent with the fixed number of syllables required by the line was used regardless of other features of the linguistic context. For example, once a present tense is used, the same forms continue up to the point that another preterit form is required as a rhyme (Ibid.). On the other hand, a present-to-preterit pattern is said to characterize Chaucer's work. Although these observations are essentially contradictory, they suggest that both patterns occurred, although unambiguous reconstruction of which was the more dominant sequence of alternation or why, remains in question. This patterning eventually "became more arbitrary, perhaps for stylistic or euphonic reasons" and gradually spread to prose in the later part of the Early Modern English period (Traugott 1972:142).

Visser claims that this usage, which he calls the "substitutive present", is distinct from the present-day HISTORICAL PRESENT usage, which he defines as "a means to represent in a vivid way the suddenness, unexpectedness, importance or oddness of an incident witnessed in the past". The patterning he describes for the substitutive present, however, is entirely *consistent* with the findings of contemporary empirical studies of HISTORICAL PRESENT/PAST alternation in narratives (i.e. (Schiffrin 1981; Silva-Corvalán 1983; Wolfson 1979), cf. also section 2.4.1.3. above). For example, Visser claims that a characteristic feature of the HISTORICAL PRESENT is vivid reporting via PRESENT morphology that is used *throughout* the recounting of the past incident, despite the fact that he mentions a number of examples to the contrary. In actuality, morphologically present verbs do *not* function as the *unique* marker in narratives but typically alternate, in a characteristic distribution pattern, with the morphologically marked

past tense forms. And in fact, it has been found that the tense switch itself is a relevant linguistic feature marking organizational segments (Fleischman 1985; Wolfson 1979), internal evaluation (Schiffrin 1981), expressive (Silva-Corvalán 1983), or high-saliency events (Fleischman 1985).

What these facts suggest, is that the alternating occurrence of present and past morphology in narrative discourse is a pattern that has existed in the English language for centuries; however, the initial historical motivation for that alternation has ceased to be operative in the modern-day system. With the demise of all the old inflections and the extension of these patterns to prose and undoubtedly colloquial speech, considerations of rhyme, meter and choice of inflection have become redundant. It is interesting to note that the patterning that had been established seems to have been grafted onto the contemporary system within which it has gained new functions. Important to our considerations here, are a number of characteristics of this phenomenon that have been consistent across the centuries:

- 1) Alternation between verbs inflected with present and past tense morphologies in narrative discourse has been a longstanding, well-documented feature of the language from the middle English period (Traugott 1972; Visser 1970).
- 2) Once the temporal reference time has been established, the possibility of alternating present and past morphologies becomes possible (Visser 1970).
- 3) Sequences of similar tense morphologies tend to group together (Schiffrin 1981; Visser 1970)

In view of such characteristic patterning in verbal morphology, at least in narrative discourse, apparent both from the historical record and modern analyses of English, it is important to consider this environment and the aforementioned facts in our examination of past temporal reference verbal structures in our BE data — particularly in light of the fact that alternating patterns of morphologically marked (preterit) and unmarked (present) tense

verbs are cited as prime evidence for its relative, and thus creole, rather than absolute, and thus English, tense system.

3.1.3.7. V-ing

Yet another segmentalization of the verb phrase was the development of the PAST PROGRESSIVE. Although there is little agreement as to the definition, origins, development or exact meaning of the Aux + V-ing construction (Visser 1970), there is little discrepancy as to its time of appearance nor its eventual primacy in representing actions in progress, either in present or past time. The present participle verb preceded by the auxiliary *be*, e.g. *he is/was hunting*, had already been introduced during the Old English period. Although it increased in frequency during the Middle English period, its incidence was still relatively rare (Traugott 1972; Wyld 1927) as it competed with two other structurally different expanded forms — a) *he is huntende* and b) *he is on (an, a) hunting* (Visser 1970:1993). At the beginning of the fourteenth century the form with the *-ende* inflection began to give way to its rivals, beginning in the south and gradually spreading to the northern regions, except for Scotland. For example, Chaucer and Shakespeare use the *be* + V-ing form very sparingly, although its incidence in Shakespeare's writing is more frequent over time. From 1500 onwards its frequency increases exponentially and by the Modern English period, the V-ing participle has completely supplanted the earlier forms (Traugott 1972: 143). The reasons for the development and marked increase in progressive forms has been attributed to the stylistic features of narrative, i.e. plot-retarding as opposed to plot-advancing effects, focalization, meter or rhythm (Visser 1970:1997). The stylistic attributes of the *-ing* form can be seen in (22a-b) where the listener or hearer is said "to view what is going on with greater concentration as if it were a slow motion passage in a film" (Ibid. p. 1926).

- (22a) Instantly a silence fell, a slight embarrassment came over the company. The newcomers had a sense of many blond faces looking their way. Then, the host *was bowing* to a short, energetic looking man. (D.H. Lawrence)
- (22b) One moment John *was looking* round at the startled faces in the room, the next he *was running* down the landing. (D. Storey)

3.1.3.8. Particles

Referred to as one of the most marked characteristics in the verb phrase in the Modern English period is the development of Verb + particle phrases replacing single word verbs (Strang 1970:36; Traugott 1972:172). These structures have important syntactic implications in that they illustrate yet another type of segmentalization typical of the centuries-long history of the English language towards a more analytic temporal reference system. For example, *to turn down* rather than *to reject*, *to put across* rather than *to secure* etc.

Although Verb + Particle constructions are attested as early as the Old English period, it was not until the Early Modern English period that they became productive in the language, both written and spoken, particularly in America. In fact, this development can be seen as one of the distinguishing characteristics between British and American varieties of English (Traugott 1972:173) as forms such as *build up*, *start up*, *fall for*, *brew up*, *lose out* are considered "Americanisms" by British dictionaries.

Researchers who have studied this phenomenon in detail consider the particles to be the segmentalization of underlying aspectual distinctions, i.e. perfective meaning in constructions such as *drink* vs. *drink up*, *shut* vs. *shut down*; *burn* vs. *burn up*, *burn down* which imply concentration on the end-point of the action and hence its completedness (e.g. (Traugott 1972:173)), ingressive meaning in constructions such as *hurry up*, *lie down*, which imply concentration on the beginning point of the action, or continuative/iterative meaning as in constructions such as *keep on*, *hammer away*. Most

researchers adhere to the view that the particles are perfective aspect markers; however Brinton (1988) suggests that they function systematically as markers of 'telic', or goal-oriented, punctual aktionsart.

3.1.3.9. Aspectualizing auxiliaries

Although the English language does not mark aspectual differences by specific morphological prefixes or suffixes, grammarians have frequently noted the usage of individual mechanisms by which different aspectual distinctions are marked in the language. From the time of Old English, one of the most common means to mark aspect in English is to employ specific lexical verbs in connection with an infinitive or gerund which tend to become grammaticalized as markers of aspect (Brinton 1988). As Brinton (Ibid. p. 95) points out "the choice of aspectualizers in the history of English can be explained by the observable conformity between the spatial meanings of aspect categories and the semantics of the verbs involved". Ingressive aspect tends to be marked by verbs expressing movement into, continuative/iterative aspect is marked by verbs expressing location in and egressive aspect by verbs expressing movement out of. In fact, some of these verbs have varied little over the last few centuries. For example, the verbs used to express ingressive aspect have, not surprisingly, always included the verbs *begin*, *commence*, and *start*. The form with *begin* is possibly the oldest of these and is attested as being quite common in Middle English and is still common today. Although *commence* is said to be rare in the Modern English period, it still occurs in formal, more official language while its close synonym *begin* is preferred in informal, everyday use (Visser 1970:1375). *Start*, on the other hand is considered a recent introduction and is relegated to colloquial or vulgar speech (Ibid. p. 1381).

Durative aspect is often expressed by the verb/particle combination *keep on/kept on* (Curme 1977: 377) but it is also lexicalized in the verb *continue*, *remain*, *persist (in)* which is attested in Middle English and common in the Modern language.

Egressive aspect is found in verbs such as *finish*, *stop*, and *quit*. While *finish* is found occasionally in early Modern English, *stop* is attested from the seventeenth century (Visser 1970). Both forms always occur with a form in *-ing*, e.g. *The old man had finished unloading*, *She never stops talking about you*.

Another form originating sometime in the Middle English period is the form *come* (*came*) + infinitive, as in (23) below, which has increased substantially in the Modern English period. Visser describes the function as one which expresses "what is arrived at or reached in the course of orderly treatment, what takes place or is brought about in the course of events" (Visser 1970:1393)

- (23) Evolution in the later Marx *comes* to play as important a role as revolution. (Visser 1970:1393)

While these lexical items do not exhaust the many forms that are attested in the English language, they represent those that are the most productively-used in our data.

3.1.3.10. Summary

This review of major elements of the verb phrase used for past temporal reference in the history of the English language indicates that a wide array of simple and compound verb structures have at one time or another been part of the Std E grammatical system. The observations made in this section are particularly pertinent to the issues we address in this dissertation, since many of these forms have been claimed to demonstrate creole-like patterning and thus, have been taken as evidence of creole origin. Therefore, the distributions, inter-dependencies and correspondences characteristic of these forms in English are crucial to our investigation. For example, pre-verbal items, such as *did*, and *done* were once legitimate variants of the simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT categories, compound structures with *have* and *had* were used interchangeably with the simple PAST tense, often in contexts where our contemporary system would require one or the other. With respect to the forms *used to* and *would* an important observation can be

made which is specifically relevant to our proposed inquiry and that is that the overt auxiliary was not required once it had surfaced in an utterance. Note also that from very early on in the history of the English language extensive overlap, i.e. the use of more than one form for the same semantic interpretation, among individual tense/aspect categories was the norm. Similarly, post-verbal elements such as particles as well as aspectualizing pre-verbal auxiliaries are all characteristic elements of the English system. We will see below, in fact, that Samaná English *and* the Ex-Slave Recordings retain many, if not all, of the variability that we have reviewed in this section. Moreover, the consistency with which our BE speech materials retain identical lexical particles for punctualizing and durativizing meaning and identical auxiliaries for different aspectual interpretations as those attested from the historical record of English is striking.

3.1.4. Reorganization of the verb classes and reduction of inflections

A prominent characteristic of the English language is the subdivision of its verbs into different classes, strong and weak, based on their inflectional morphology. One of the most striking developments that has occurred in the development of Modern English verbal inflections has been the reorganization of these earlier verb classifications and the massive reduction in their corresponding inflectional types. This led to extensive changes in the inflectional suffixes required on particular verbs, specifically with respect to their preterit and participle forms — the most important formal distinction of verbs in the general realm of past time (Wyld 1927:253). In Modern-day English verbs that do not conform to the 'regular' weak verb pattern — that of suffixing [-t, -d, or -ed] to the V-base form — follow so many divergent patterns of relationship that any classification system is relatively unrevealing. This is a strikingly different picture than what would have obtained at earlier stages of the language when verbs were grouped into classes based on the vowel series represented in their principal forms. Furthermore, each class had a clear internal consistency and inflectional formation rules could predict the entire conjugation of the verb.

As early as 1370, however, a large influx of French verbs into the English language, all conforming to the weak pattern, completely altered the balance between strong and weak verbs (Strang 1970:276). Weak verbs became more numerous than strong verbs, and by their sheer strength in frequency, began attracting more and more of the old strong verbs into their mode of conjugation. These changes coupled with the fact that the strong verb class had ceased acquiring new members meant that weak verbs gained prominence (Mossé 1952:68).

Between 1570 and 1770 massive changes took place in the Old English verb classes. Variable morphological forms became rampant among virtually all verbs, particularly those traditionally referred to as strong. During this time period there were literally dozens of alternatives side by side. For example, "*sate*(for *sit/sat*), *fit* (*fight*), *flang* (*fling*), *stroke*, *strook* (*strike*), *swum* (*swim*), *rung* (*ring*), *drunk* (*drink*), *run* (*run*), *come* (*came*), *writ* (*write*) and participle forms such as *broke* (*break/broken*), *holden* (*held*), *chose* (*choose*), *drove* (*drive*), *drank* (*drink*)" (Strang 1970:148). In fact some weak and strong forms of the same verb competed for many centuries, e.g. *crepe* vs. *crepte* 'to creep'; *rysed* vs. *ros* 'to rise' (Mossé 1952:68).

For some scholars the fact that there were so many inflections, classes and types to consider simply led to "wrong associations in the minds of the speakers" (Wardale 1937:107). While this confusion suggests that the means by which the actual choice of form was made was largely unpredictable, e.g. Williams (1975:260), most historians, attribute changes from one class to another to 'analogical formation' and identify a number of general tendencies. For example, some of the early changes seemed to be instigated by functional requirements motivated by the clearer distinction that obtained from adding a dental suffix to verbs in which the vowels of present and past temporal reference verbs were so near in sound, as in (24) below (Wardale 1937).

(24)		Present	Preterit	Past Participle
OE				
	'to sleep'	slæpe	slep(te) ¹⁴	slæpen
	'to weep'	wepe	weop(te)	wopen
ME				
	'to sleep'	slepe	slepte	slepe(n)
	'to weep'	wepe	wepte	wepe(n)

A second tendency was towards simplification through the elimination of an "unnecessary" variety of forms (Mossé 1952:69; Wardale 1937:107), for example the extension of one vowel for all past forms, as in (25a), or to carry one consonant through the whole conjugation, as in (25b).

(25a)		Preterit	Past Participle
	OE	rad	ridon
	ME	rod	rode(n)
	OE	bat	biton
	ME	bit	biten (Wardale 1937:107)
(25b)		Preterit	Past Participle
	OE	(ie/gui) ¹⁵ ldon	(ea/gu)lden
	ME	yeldon	yolden (Wardale 1937:107)

While most verbs may have regularized to the weak verb pattern because a 'natural association' of past time with the dental suffix [-t] and [-d] developed, some exhibit fluctuation between two different classification types. Some verbs changed classes more than once, even returning, in some cases, to their original class, e.g. *understanded* varied with *understood*, *shined* with *shone*. Others verbs changed from the regular to the strong verb pattern, e.g. *dig*, *digged*, now *dig*, *dug*. In some cases, even when the inflection was lost, it was often retained in written form as can be seen by poetic rhymes of *bouden* 'bound' with *round* (Brunner 1963:73). Thus, we cannot completely rely on written texts

¹⁴ The *t(e)* has been added to the table by us to reflect Wardale's observation that "for *slep* and *wep*, weak preterites *slepte*, *wepte* occur already in OE" (Wardale, 1937:107).

¹⁵ According to Wardale (1937:108) the *g* here is used for a back stop and the *ch* for a front (palatal). These initial consonant varied according to the following vowel and thus had produced *y* and *ch* or *g* and *c* respectively, but in Middle English either one or the other was used for all forms.

to provide an accurate portrayal of the extent to which the verbal endings were actually disappearing in the spoken language as the forms that were used in one register were unlikely to be the same as those used in the other. Furthermore the various dialectal areas of Britain differed in their tendency to reduce the original vowel grades. In the north the preterit form had only one vowel; in the south it had two; and in the Midlands area, geographically in between, there was variation.

Thus, the English system of verbal morphology during 16th and 17th century can be characterized by extensive, frequent and relatively salient variation. This led to a total breakdown of the earlier class-affiliations. The old strong verbs became severely depleted as more and more strong verbs acquired regularized counterparts (Pyles 1964) and both the structured classes and their intricate inflectional paradigms became obsolete. For example, in Old English there were anywhere from 312 to 360 strong verbs. Of the 195 that still survived by the mid 20th century, 129, or 65%, had conjugations which were weak (Fries 1940). The most current of our references claims that there are only about 60 verbs in the strong class, most of which are extremely common and are thought to have been retained specifically because of their familiarity (Strang 1970:147).

In a system made unstable by the reorganization of lexical classes and the regularization of morphology, it seems unlikely that surface level linguistic conditioning would have been an immediate development as the original motivation for the variability was not a product of linguistic elements in the surrounding context. This may explain why diachronic observation of this variability has failed to yield any patterned alternation in many present-day verbs, especially with respect to features of the phonological and/or syntactic environment, and may account for the highly arbitrary patterns among variant forms (Strang 1970:148).

3.1.5. Tense category overlaps

Along with the changes in verbal morphology resulting from the loss of inflection and the increasing segmentalization of the verb phrase, another complicating feature of past tense verbal morphology in the English language during the last four centuries is the ongoing and extensive 'overlap' of its individual tense categories. This phenomenon originated at least as far back Old English where only two tense categories, the simple PAST and the PRESENT (or non-past) covered all temporal/aspectual delineations in the language. As other categories arose, developed, and were solidified within the language, the historical record indicates that remnants of older usage patterns, i.e. the use of one form for many different temporal and aspectual meanings, existed (and continues to exist) in the language. These can be identified by the appearance of one tense/aspect category in which another would also be appropriate.

3.1.5.1. Simple PAST for PRESENT PERFECT

From the Old English period onwards preterit morphology occurs in contexts where PRESENT PERFECT or PAST PERFECT forms would be equally, if not more, appropriate for the context. In fact, Visser (1970) claims that the simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT were virtually interchangeable in all contexts, including those where either one or the other alone would be required in contemporary usage.

In Middle English the simple PAST is used to translate the perfect tense from Latin, as can be seen in (26a), while the PRESENT PERFECT is sometimes used for an action completed in the past, as in (26b). Furthermore, the simple PAST is sometimes used to denote the PAST PERFECT, as in (26c), although this is apparently rare (Brunner 1963:86-7).

- (26a) What to me and to the, womman, myn our *cam* not it (Lat. *nondum venit*; AV is not com) (Wycliffe Bible)
By this gaude have I wonne, yeer by yeer, an hundred mark
sith I *was* pardoner. (Chaucer)
What I haue suffred sith I *was* a wyf. (Chaucer)
- (26b) This world is nat so strong, it is no nay, As it *hath been* of
olde tymes yooore. (Chaucer)
- (26c) When tyme *cam*, men thoughte it for the beste that revel
stynte. (Chaucer)

Such overlap is also the case in contexts which would clearly require the presence of a PRESENT PERFECT in the preceding verb. For example, temporal adverbs within the same sentence, e.g. *I was not angry since I came to France*. Here the temporal conjunction *since* would trigger the PRESENT PERFECT in Modern English, while in earlier periods the simple PAST was perfectly acceptable.

This alternation between the preterit and perfect tenses has, once again, been attributed to considerations of rhyme and metre in poetry as it was in these contexts that the tense forms were most freely variable, although it also occurred in prose (Visser 1970). The discrimination between the two forms gradually developed but it is only after the time of Shakespeare that they are used along the lines of the contemporary prescriptive pattern.

As the opposition between the simple PAST and the PRESENT PERFECT solidified, the usage of the perfect began to be determined by the degree of indefiniteness expressed or implied by the context. In speaking of contemporary English patterns, Visser (1970:2192) goes so far as to outline a number of 'rules' which predict where the PRESENT PERFECT is preferred to the simple PAST. He acknowledges, however, that these are, of course, far from categorical:

- 1) when the sentence has no past-time adjunct or any definite mention of the past-ness of the action, e.g. *I have been in Brasil*.
- 2) when the temporal adjunct is indefinite, i.e. *long ago, in my youth, before this time, once, often, recently, formerly, etc.*
- 3) when the temporal adjunct refers to a period of time that stretches from a point in the past to speech time, i.e. *this month, ever since, for many years etc.* (Visser 1970:2193)

Despite this differentiation, the use of the preterit for the PRESENT PERFECT is still widespread in Modern spoken American English. Modern grammarians claim that this is a sign that the perfect is beginning to be lost. Vanneck (1955:237) notes that it is common in all classes of American society although preterit forms which occur in contexts for the PRESENT PERFECT tend to be replaced with the perfect form in written or formal speech, suggesting that the usage is primarily colloquial. Although his view suggests that this represents a recent innovation, he does suggest that the origins of this phenomenon can be traced to earlier varieties of English apparently tracing it to a similar use of the preterit that is "very common in Ireland" (Ibid. p. 241). Such a hypothesis seems much more plausible than the view that contemporary patterns are the result of synchronic developments in light of the historical record where the PRESENT PERFECT category developed in conjunction with the simple PAST from the Old English period and became increasingly *differentiated*, rather than more similar, over time. In this view, the usage of the simple PAST for PRESENT PERFECT could be viewed as a synchronic reflex of an older pattern, particularly as it is retained in colloquial and/or informal speech.

3.1.5.2. PRESENT PERFECT for simple PAST

The original fluidity between the simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT also made possible the usage of the PRESENT PERFECT form of the verb in contexts that would today require the simple PAST. This can be seen in example (27a-b) below in which the foremost context for the simple PAST in modern usage, i.e. one containing an adverbial indicating past time, appears marked by PERFECT morphology.

- (27a) *I have had so moche to do in tyme past, ... that I ranne in dette gretly; therby. (Berners)*
- (27b) *Runs not this speech like iron through your blood? — I have drunk poison while he utter'd it. (Shakespeare)*

3.1.5.3. Simple PAST for PAST PERFECT

In Old English the PAST PERFECT construction with *had* was quite rare. Instead, these contexts were usually rendered in the simple PAST; however, vacillation between the two forms is attested from this time period onwards (Jespersen 1964; Visser 1970:757). From Middle English, PAST PERFECT structures occur with increasing frequency and preterit morphology continues to be more frequently used in the environment of temporal conjunctions such as *after*, *as soon as*, *until* (Ibid. p. 758). In Modern English the two forms become used with equal frequency but as Visser (1970:759) points out, *without* the distinctive "rules" dictating the appearance of one or the other form as has developed between the PRESENT PERFECT/simple PAST as outlined above. He suggests, instead that the choice is determined by "the rhythm of the sentence". Diver (1963) also suggests that the preterit tends to occur more frequently in the environment of the conjunction *after*, as in (28) below, which he explains is due to the fact that the intrinsic meaning of the conjunctions "render it superfluous once more to point out the time-relations between the two acts" as would be accomplished with the more temporally specified perfect tense.

- (28) After they cloas'd in earnest, they parted very fairely in
 jest. (Visser 1970)

Thus, there is at least some suggestion, however implicit, that temporally disambiguated contexts will be more likely to be marked by the older, and simpler (morphologically) PAST tense category.

3.1.5.4. Simple PAST for PAST PROGRESSIVE

One of the reasons that grammarians have found it difficult to precisely define the meaning of the PAST PROGRESSIVE is that contexts in which it is actually *required* are relatively rare, while contexts which allow either the PAST PROGRESSIVE *or* the simple PAST are many (Hill 1958 quoted in Visser 1970:1923). In fact, in earlier stages of the

English language the preterit was often used where contemporary usage would prefer, or even require, the PAST PROGRESSIVE, as can be seen in example (29a-b) below:

- (29a) ... right anon the worthy Knyght began, -- Whan that he saugh that al the peple *lough* -- 'Namoore of this.' (Chaucer) (Visser 1970:746)
- (29b) Mrs. Bretton and I *sar* alone in the drawing room waiting her coming ... My godmother *read* the evening papaer while she waited. I *sewed* (Ch. Bronte) (Visser 1970:746)

3.1.5.5. Simple PAST for habitual

In Old, Middle and Modern English the simple PAST is also used to express habitual meaning, rivalling both *would* + V-base and *used to* + V-base (Visser 1970:747), as illustrated in example (30a-b) below:

- (30a) Ther was som tyme in a cetie a passand curios barbur, and for euer-ilk man *ȝat* he *shufe* he *tuke* a peny. (Alphab Tales) (Visser 1970:747)
- (30b) He never *mentioned* the word sleep without reclining his head upon his hands; when he *had* occasion to talk of a horse, he always *started up* and *trotted* the room. (Smollett) (Visser 1970:747)

3.1.5.6. Perfect for Simple PAST

Mossé (1952:105) points out that in Middle English the perfect tense is sometimes used as equivalent to the preterit in narratives. For example, (31) below:

- (31a) And quhen the hypngis gounde *has seyn*. Thai men *assale* his mastir swa, He *lap* till ane.
'And when the king's hound has seen (= saw) the men assail his master so, he leapt at one.' (Mossé 1952:105)

3.1.5.7. Summary

This review of the tense overlaps indicates that the past temporal reference system was characterized by a great deal of fluidity among its categories. An important tendency that can be extrapolated from the descriptive framework from which these historical observations have been made is that the relevant feature of the linguistic context which operates on these patterns is the presence of temporal disambiguation. Note that, in general, the overall developmental changes that have taken place within the past temporal reference system in English have been concerned with increasing tense/aspect *specificity*. Coupled with the original fluidity of the simple PAST tense category, this created a situation whereby there was at least some tendency for the new, and more specified, tense categories to be used when there were no other linguistic elements (e.g. temporal conjunctions) which could elucidate the correct interpretation of a given context, while those contexts which were disambiguated in some way could still occur with the less specified simple PAST tense. Important to our investigation here is that *the simple PAST tense, at least in earlier varieties of English, can be used in virtually any tense/aspect context in the general realm of past time*. As we discuss in section 3.3 below, modern English also has a great deal of overlap, although it appears to be more constrained than previously. Given the comparable 'polyvalence' of Creole verb forms, it seems surprising that these facts about English have not been mentioned in the literature on BEV or Creole tense/aspect morphology especially when significant variation in marked and unmarked verbal morphology are involved as well as the interaction of temporal disambiguating features from the surrounding context. We will see below that distributional patterns for morphological forms that can be equated with the simple PAST tense category in Samaná English *and* the Ex-Slave Recordings are consistent with the patterns that we have reviewed in this section.

3.2. Past temporal reference verbal structures in contemporary (white) English Dialects

Although many previous researchers attest to the similarity, in form and in function, of many of these structures to both English-based Creoles and BEV, resistance to this parallelism from those working within the Creolist framework remains high. The foremost reason for this stalemate is, at least, partially due to the means by which the analyses have extracted their data and formulated their hypotheses. For example, even accurate and conscientious reporting of like forms in comparable contexts does not necessarily imply *functional* equivalence. An important part of the contribution of this dissertation is in extracting whatever relevant patterns, co-occurrence restrictions, distributional characteristics etc. typically occur with the verb forms in question in each of the varieties from which they may have originated. This will provide at least several independent measures, from various areas of the grammar, for their identification. The observations we synthesize in the following discussion have direct bearing on the forms, structures and variable morphologies that occur in the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Since approximately 1770 the English language is said to have changed very little compared with the massive restructuring that had gone on before as the verb phrase became relatively regulated (Strang 1970:148). This suggests that the previous variability, observed by grammarians for centuries, has now resolved itself in the contemporary language. In actuality, nothing could be farther from the case. The vigorous variation in past temporal reference verbal structures that continues to exist in dialectal and/or nonstandard, and even popular varieties of English — both black and white — belies this conclusion.

Although research into grammatical features of nonstandard dialects of English, in general, and Britain, in particular, are relatively sparse compared to phonology and lexis (Edwards & Weltens 1985), scholarly work of the last century has identified at least some

tense/aspect form/function correspondences which can properly aid us in tracing the history, development and origins of past temporal reference forms in WEV.

3.2.1. Variation in verbal auxiliaries

Much of the variation in the verb phrase comes from the variable occurrence of individual auxiliaries, or pre-verbal elements. Many of these can be explained as synchronic remnants of temporal forms which occurred in earlier stages of English.

3.2.1.1. Have deletion

Perhaps one of the most widely observed sites of variation in the verb phrase in the literature on English dialects is the omission of *have* in the PRESENT PERFECT. While this phenomenon has been attested as far back as 1140 by the OED, e.g. *I seen*, it continues to be widely used in the United States (e.g. (Atwood 1953; Fries 1940; Krapp 1925; Marckwardt 1958; Mencken 1971; Menner 1926; Vanneck 1955)), Canada (Orkin 1971), Australia (Turner 1966), England (Wakelin 1977), Ireland (Visser 1970) and other territorial varieties of English, (e.g. Tristan da Cunha (Scur 1974)). It is cited as characteristic of lower class, uneducated, substandard or dialectal speech and is said to be found in folk songs, dialectal stories and popular plays. The interpretation of these forms, however, has varied greatly (Scur 1974:21). One hypothesis is that the forms with, and without *have* fulfill the same function. This hypothesis assumes the deletion of *have* (e.g. (Barber 1964; Wright 1905)). A second hypothesis is that *I seen* and *I done* were originally based on the perfect tense with the auxiliary syncopated, i.e. *I(ve) seen*, *I('ve) done*. Once having gained prominence in common or "under-privileged" speech, they "came to be regarded as a real preterits and were extended to all the functions of the past tense" as in *I seen it yesterday* (Menner 1926:238; Vanneck 1955), cf. also Robert A. Hall quoted in Mencken (1971:520): "*I seen him* has exactly the same meaning and is just as useful as *I saw him*".

For some scholars this variation is but the first stage in a process which will lead to the eventual loss of the PRESENT PERFECT tense. This conclusion is said not to be

surprising in light of the fact that the position of the perfect tense in the history of many languages is rather unstable, having been alternatively lost and reintroduced at various times (Scur 1974:22; Vanneck 1955). For example, French, High German and Russian have all lost the distinction between preterit and perfect and the same phenomenon is characteristic of some other Germanic languages — Swedish and some Slavic languages as well (Scur & Svavolya 1975) The disappearance of the PRESENT PERFECT in these cases, however, is not necessarily in favour of the preterit.

Menner (1926), speaking of American colloquial varieties, referred to in the early nineteenth century as the American "vulgate", says that despite the universal condemnation of grammarians and teachers, the auxiliary *have* is under heavy pressure to disappear in all situations. He notes that because of its weak stress it is sometimes written as *of*, as in *She would of drove* and *I would of gave*. This leads to its further reduction as 'a sort of particle attached to the verb' in speech and written form as in *He woulda tole you*, *Who coulda took it* and *He musta been there* (Ibid. 534). In America, forms such as *I seen*; *I done* etc. have been traced to the 1840's during the high tide of Irish immigration. In England, on the other hand they are found to be common in the West Midlands and the north and they also resemble Scottish forms.

These forms are also found in territorial dialects of English. In a study of variant forms of the perfect tense in the English of Tristan da Cunha, a small island in the South Atlantic, Scur (1974) found that *have* deletion was a productive feature in the present-day dialect but its contexts of occurrence were extremely restricted. In the majority of cases *have* was omitted in the perfect of the verbs *see*, *be*, and *do* and sometimes *come* and *get*, as in (32) below.

- (32) I *been* to South Africa.
 We never *seen* a tractor around.
 They *done* away with it.
 We *gor* plenty of them.
 They just *come*.

Perhaps one of the most interesting observations that can be made with respect to verb structures which can be subsumed within the "*have* deletion" site is that in all of the varieties of white English where these forms have been studied, i.e. England, the United States, Canada and Tristan da Cunha, identical lexical verbs are reported to occur with deleted *have*. Moreover, if the attestations of this body of literature can be taken to reflect actual usage patterns, *have* deletion appears to be relegated to an extremely restricted group of verbs, i.e. primarily *be*, *do* and *see*. While none of these studies provide the frequency of structures in which the *have* auxiliary is used productively, without evidence to the contrary we might assume that they follow the typical Std E pattern. If so, then this casts doubt on the supposition that these forms point to the gradual loss of the PRESENT PERFECT tense in general since the deletion of the auxiliary is highly restricted, and quite predictable on lexical grounds.

Furthermore, such similarity across different dialects of English can hardly be coincidental. Although varieties of English in the United States and the Caribbean could arguably have been influenced by Creole, and thus African substratum, territorial varieties such as Tristan da Cunha were not conditioned by immediate contacts with other territorial variants of the English language and its dialects, nor, as Scur claims exposed to any African influence. This suggests that the *have*-deletion forms we have described above may well be the result of preservation of typical features of the language spoken in Britain, the original source of all these territorial variants. As such these forms cannot be treated as new phenomena typical of the individual variant of the English language in which they occur. As Scur (1974:26) suggests, they may be seen as a "revival of the older British usage". As we will show below, the behaviour of these verb forms in the Samaná English and Ex-

Slave Recordings exactly parallels the findings for all these dialects with respect to this feature.

However, characteristics of the two most prevalent forms that result from *have* deletion/omission, i.e. *I been* and *I done*, require that we explore their distribution further. First, it is well attested that many of the forms with *have* deletion, or any PRESENT PERFECT form for that matter, can occur in contexts that require the simple PAST tense, thus, they may represent anomalous preterit morphology rather than an underlying compound tense (i.e. PRESENT PERFECT). Second, as we will see in section 3.4.2.2., pre-verbal *been* and *done* in BEV have also been analyzed as pre-verbal particles independent of any Std E auxiliary and related to an underlying creole grammar. Thus, in the following two sections we consider each of these forms independent of the *have* deletion hypothesis.

3.2.1.2. Done

Although pre-verbal *done* virtually disappeared in Britain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it surfaces in popular southern American dialects (i.e. in the south and south midlands) (Francis 1958) where it is said to be used by old-fashioned, rustic, poorly educated speakers and younger, more modern, better educated speakers, but not by cultured, well-educated speakers. It is also attested in some parts of Newfoundland (Williams 1975:272).

Christian et al. (1988:43) describe this structure as an uninflected (either for tense or agreement) form, i.e. *done*, which occurs before an inflected verb optionally preceded by an inflected auxiliary as in example (33) below.

Annistan, Alabama:

(33a) You buy you a little milk and bread and you've *done spent*
your five dollars! (Feagin 1979:122)

Ozark English:

- (33b) I think they *done took* it.
 Them old half gentle ones *has all done disappeared*.
 (Christian et al. 1988:33)

Appalachian English:

- (33c) She asked us if we turned in the assignment; we said we
done turned it in.
 ... because the one that was in there *had done rotted*.
 (Christian et al. 1988:33)

Grammatical classification of the usage of pre-verbal *done* in contemporary English dialects is difficult to establish since it demonstrates characteristics of a number of different linguistic elements. Researchers studying this form have variably referred to it as a pre-verbal form (Dillard 1972a), an adverb (Feagin 1979; Labov 1972a) and a quasi-modal (Christian et al. 1988; Labov et al. 1968). Its function and usage as a completive or perfective marker with additional intensive meaning, however, remains fairly consistent across the major studies that have examined it (Christian et al. 1988; Feagin 1979; Hackenberg 1972; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram & Christian 1976). Most researchers report that the perfective function of *done* is often equivalent to the auxiliary *have* and can be intensified with the use of *already* as can be seen in example (34) taken from Feagin (1979:136). Here, a series of repetitions by a speaker suggests the equivalence of *done* and *already*:

- (34) I *done seen* em.
 (louder) I *done seen* em!
 (yet louder) I *already seen* em!

Christian et al. (1988) demonstrate, however, that *done* cannot exclusively be equated with *have* or *already*. First, it occurs in contexts which could not have undergone *have* deletion, as in (35a), as well as in contexts in which a grammatically perfective construction cannot be substituted, as in (35b):

- (35a) So they got down there and called back and Connie *was done* gone.
... the difference in the taste of old slop hog and one *done* fed good.
- (35b) They let her up the second day and when she come home the next day she *done had* the fever. That's what you call the childbed fever. (Christian et al. 1988:34-5)

Second, it cannot always be substituted by *already*, as in (36).

- (36) Oh, he liketa had a fit. He said, "My god, you *done killed* that man's horse."
We thought well we can sit back and enjoy our labor of the years gone by since the children *had done* left home.
Where was I? You *done made* me forget!
I better quit now before I've *done talked* my head off.

Christian et al. (1988) conclude that the apparent similarity of *done* to *already* "is due to the latter's reference to past time when it interacts with a past form of a verb rather than any real correspondence between their inherent meanings."

Following the proposal of Scott (1973) and based on their own distributional analysis of the co-occurrence features of *done* with certain types of verb phrases (continuative and habitual) and adverbials, Christian et al. (1988) conclude that *done* is essentially a completive aspect marker although it can also carry a quality of emphasis with it as well.

Thus, despite the differences in the precise semantic interpretation of *done*, generally it can be considered "completive/emphatic". This is also consistent with its use in Black English, in New York (Labov et al. 1968), e.g. (37a) and in Alabama as in example (37b-c) in which a black woman is trying to communicate with a partially deaf white woman, a non-*done* speaker. Interestingly enough, Feagin found that the usage of *done* was identical in both her black and white Southern English data.

- (37a) I *done told* you already.
She *done already cut* it up. (Labov et al. 1968:265)
- (37b) We *done turned* it {the mattress}.
(louder) We *already done turned* it!

- (37c) He just got through lickin' it {a plate}.
 (louder) He *done already* licked it.
 (yet louder) He *have done* licked it! (Feagin 1979:143)

Pre-verbal *done* is one of the grammatical forms which are claimed to have Creole origins. Dillard (1972a) divides *done* into two separate categories, one with an auxiliary preceding, e.g. *He's done come*, and one with no auxiliary, e.g. *He Ø done come*, attributing this difference to the distinct sources of the respective forms — AUX + *done* being a white form and Ø + *done* the black form, presumably based on the fact that in Creole varieties, *done* never has a preceding auxiliary. However, Feagin (1979) found that this distinction was irrelevant for her data, as both types occurred with equal frequency and there was no evidence for distinguishing between them either syntactically or semantically.

Feagin (1979) also found that *be* could occur as an auxiliary preceding *done*, which she attributes to "relexification" of *have*, as in example (38).

- (38) Lord, I'm *done died*!
 Some of the unions *is done gone* too far.
 It was so quiet I though everybody *was done gone* to bed.
 (Feagin 1979:127)

Thus, we find that in contemporary American white dialects pre-verbal *done* with or without an auxiliary occurs to mark completed and sometimes emphatic states of affairs often, but not always, within the same semantic range as the Std E PRESENT PERFECT.

3.2.1.3. Did

As we have seen from the historical record, the verbal paradigm used to contain a redundant (affirmative) periphrastic *do* in both the present and the past tense as a standard feature of the language until the end of the eighteenth century. Grammarians mention it as a regular part of the conjugation: *I love* or *I do love*; *I loved* or *I did love*. By the mid 1700's, however, its use began to be discouraged and was hailed as a "vicious mode of speech" by Samuel Johnson (1755:8) (quoted in (Visser 1970)). By 1788 it was considered archaic; however, it has prevailed in various local dialects of Britain. A study based on oral recorded interviews with speakers of East Somerset by Ihalainen (1977)

reveals that periphrastic *do* in affirmative sentences remains a productive feature of the present-day dialect (see also (Weltens 1983)) and has developed its own unique distributional patterning.

Ihalainen found that the past temporal form of periphrastic *do* was interchangeable with *used to* and designated the past habitual in transitive and intransitive sentences. The basic distinction that is relevant to the description of periphrastic *do* in present-day East Somerset is that between generic and specific reference. The former is defined as a self-contained action in the past, with specific time reference and aspect as in (39a) below, while generic refers to repeated or habitual activity, as in (39b). When the context was specific, periphrastic *do* did not occur at all. Instead, Ihalainen found that it, as well as *would/d'*, were all used to mark generic aspect.

- (39a) A: What did Bill do between two and three o'clock Monday afternoon?
B: He *worked* in the garden. (Ihalainen 1976:612)
- (39b) Bill *worked* in the garden every Monday afternoon.
(Ihalainen 1976:612)

While Ihalainen found that there was some tendency to adhere to one form in a discourse unit (answer to a question or story), it was not exceptional that one form alternated with the others in a single discourse as illustrated in (40) below. In fact, Ihalainen reports that *used to* and *would* "are interchangeable with periphrastic *do* most of the time" (Ihalainen 1976:617).

- (40) A few shilling *would keep* us for a week. People *used to*- a man that *used to* earn about thirty bob a week, he *did keep* his family in smoke and have a drink out of that very well.
(Ihalainen 1976:617)

Another important observation that can be made with respect to this analysis is that bare V-base forms that occur proximate to periphrastic *do*, *used to*, or *would*, as in (41a-b) below, are interpreted as instances of the nonrepetition or omission of the auxiliary. This, of course, is consistent with Visser's (1970:1710, 1414) historical report in section 3.1.3.4

and 3.1.3.5. above. In (41a) for example, *take* is treated as underlying *did take*. Furthermore, in (41b), as Ihalainen notes, the verb *come* in East Somerset is both the present and past tense form, therefore, it is impossible to tell whether the word *come* is the simple PAST tense form of *come* or whether it is the Historical Present, or, we would add, whether it has an underlying auxiliary, i.e. *used to/would* or *did*.

- (41a) It was like this in them days, years ago, you see. A lot of the villagers *did rent* this land, this peat land, *did rent* a plot, you see, half an acre, you see, for ten years, perhaps *take* a lease on this land for ten years, you see, for to excavate it, you see. Well, all was their fire stuff *did cost* them then, you see, in the home was their labour, you see. (Ihalainen 1976:618)
- (41b) Then after tea they *used to go* off milkin' and I *used to go* down the field again. They *come* back from milkin' and then we *did go* on ti' ten o'clock at night - overtime - and then after that we *did go* and have a good - another good supper - lettuce and everything cut up - then we'd *have* a damn good sing-song. (Ihalainen 1976:617)

What is important about these observations is that they demonstrate that the form *did* + Verb is an integral feature of the past temporal reference system of at least one contemporary dialect of English, in which it functions as a marker of habituality along with the other Std E markers *would* and *used to*. Given the widespread attestation of an identical verbal structure in earlier varieties of English we might assume that this forms, in East Somerset at least, is a remnant of this form that has become relegated to a specific and more restricted function.

3.2.1.4. Been

The form *been* + V without a preceding auxiliary has been attested in some contemporary white dialects of English such as Alabama (Feagin 1979) and in places as far removed from creole influence as Newfoundland, Canada (Noseworthy 1972). In both cases it is attributed a "perfective" meaning. In Newfoundland, e.g. (42a-d), Noseworthy

suggests that it indicates that the state of affairs took place "farther back in the past than any action denoted by ... *have* + past participle" (Ibid. p. 21-22). In Alabama, as in (43a-c), the meaning corresponds to 'begun in the past long ago and continued up to the present', or simply 'once, long ago', as in (43d-f). Thus, the two dialects appear to be quite different with respect to their usage of *been*. In Newfoundland the form seems to be used in a manner reminiscent of the creole form, in which *been* is followed by a past participle. In Alabama, Feagin concludes that these forms tend to "point in the direction of ... Black English BIN"; however, the examples indicate that *been* is primarily used in contexts that are consistent with Std E usage, i.e. that would admit either the PRESENT PERFECT or simple PAST, although (43f) seems to be an exception in that it wouldn't admit either. Due to the small number of tokens, she does not speculate further (Ibid. p. 255).

- (42a) I *ain't been* done it.
- (42b) I *been* drove lots of nails.
- (42c) I *been* cooked some meals.
- (42d) I *been* cut more wood than you. (Noseworthy 1972:22)

- (43a) Well, I'd *been* knowin' him all his life.
- (43b) I *been* knowin' your grandaddy for forty years.
- (43c) I *been* knowin' John Sparkman ever since he was in the Senate.
- (43d) That was the last time I *been*.
- (43e) I was gon tell you a while ago 'bout I *been* up there one time to Sunday School, my aunt wanted to carry me and my brother ...
- (43f) Well, I chewed tobacco some, and then I started smokin' — started smokin' cigarettes. Course I— I *been* quit about 15 years since I smoked. (Feagin 1979:255-6)

3.2.1.5. Auxiliary *be* vs. *have*

In certain British and American varieties *be* is used as a tense auxiliary in the PRESENT PERFECT instead of *have* (Curme 1977:361). Edwards (1985:112) mentions Scotland, Leicestershire, and Devon and with verbs of motion, Ireland. This alternation is also mentioned for certain American dialects by Curme as well, as in (44), although this is a literary source depicting a Black English speaker, and by Feagin (1979), (cf. example

(38) above). Neither of these authors mention, however, that this auxiliary was once in competition with the form *have* in the PRESENT PERFECT category in English (cf. section 3.1.3.1. above (Brunner 1963; Traugott 1972; Visser 1970)).

- (44) *Is you seed any sign er (of) my gran'son dis mawnin?* (Curme 1977:361)

Thus, we find that the evidence from dialectal varieties of English indicates that many of the pre-verbal or auxiliary-like elements, which we will see in ensuing sections to be found in Creole and/or BEV, are also contained in white English, both historical and contemporary.

3.2.2. . Variation in verbal inflections

Different marking characteristics of the morphology used to represent past temporal reference of the same semantic interpretation are the most obvious and widespread variations in contemporary verb usage, i.e. *I had gonell had went/I went/I gone*. Just as there used to be lists of verbs categorized according to their class from the Old to Middle English period, there are now lists of exceptions, anomalies and irregular (or nonstandard) forms of the verb phrase in many dialects of Modern English. The most salient environment for this variability is in the past participles of the strong verb class where surface morphologies that have the preterit form frequently occur, i.e. *I had saw; I had went* etc. Here, as some researchers claim, it seems that the vowel of the simple PAST tense inflection has invaded the participle forms (Alexander 1926:309). It is a well-documented feature of many varieties of contemporary dialectal English wherever it is spoken: the United States (Abbott 1957; Christian et al. 1988; McDavid & McDavid 1986), Canada (Noseworthy 1972) and elsewhere undoubtedly.

In the United States researchers have noted the confusion of the preterit and past participle in both educated and uneducated language from the beginning of seventeenth century (e.g. (Abbott 1957; Alexander 1926; Fries 1940; Marckwardt 1958; McDavid & McDavid 1986; Mencken 1971) etc.) Some scholars believe that it is the result of

admonitions from teachers to eradicate forms such as *I seen; I done*. The hypothesis suggests that speakers, reacting to these corrective measures, tended to avoid the "abominable" participle form in favour of, what they thought was, an "elegant" one, i.e. the preterit, and substituted it across the board (e.g. (Mencken 1971:519 ; Menner 1926; Vanneck 1955)).

This etymological confusion is more likely the result of historical shifts in the English verb classes, however, since the same phenomenon was not new even in the seventeenth century. Of the major tendencies exhibited by verbs in the Middle English period, many continue to be variable at the beginning of the seventeenth century and are often still relevant today (Neilsen 1985). Moreover, the fact that variation still exists, provides ample evidence for the fact that the older historical changes are still in flux and yet unresolved. On one hand many of the original tendencies have not yet gone to completion, on the other, an opposing tendency has evolved towards preservation of many of the old preterit and participle forms in dialectal and/or popular speech (Mencken 1971:529).

In fact, there is actually surprising consistency over time in the individual verbs which are characteristically variable with respect to their past temporal reference inflections. Although the citations of verbs admitting irregular inflection is often different for individual studies of these forms, many are consistent across the literature. For example, one of the most pronounced tendencies of late Old English and early Middle English, was that a great many verbs which were originally strong adopted weak preterit and participle forms. Today, this can still be observed. For example the occurrence of the verbs *know* and *grow* in the past tense either as *knew*, *grew* or *knowed*, *growed* is widely attested and current in many English dialects (Atwood 1953; Mencken 1971:529; Wakelin 1977:122). It is also fairly common for the verb *see* to vary between *saw*, *seed* and *seen* in the past tense (Christian et al. 1988; Francis 1971; Hackenberg 1972). Also the verb *steal* is variably *stole* or *stealed*. Both these forms are again, widespread (Wakelin 1977:122). In this category are also the verbs *catch* - *caught/catched*, *creep* - *crept/creeped*, *draw* -

drew/drawed, and *give - gave/give*. Other verbs which became weak in Middle English retain their old strong forms in dialectal varieties, which perhaps are slower in adopting the newer forms, e.g. *climb, knead, knit, scrape, show*. In addition, some strong verbs have different forms, i.e. a different change of root-vowel, in some dialects, e.g. *burst, hit, ride, see*. Such developments are particularly relevant to the issues described in this dissertation, particularly when we find that the very same lexical verbs which have exhibited irregular inflections in the historical record and in dialectal varieties of English are found in our data (cf. section 5.3.2. below).

A number of modern studies have attempted to examine this variability in terms of generalization, either of the present, e.g. *come/come/come*, *give/give/give*, preterit, e.g. *go/went/went*, or past participle form, e.g. *begin/begun/begun* across all principal forms of the verb. For example, Macafee (quoted in Edwards & Weltens 1985:110) claims that these generalizing tendencies are innovating processes in modern-day Scots.

In many cases such contemporary patterns in North America and Britain can be traced to earlier historical antecedents. In Alexander's (1926) analysis of American writings from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, he found that a large number of the "abnormal" forms heard in the popular speech of the time could be traced back to early American English. He was also able to establish that nonstandard verbal morphologies existed across social classes as they were found in both educated and uneducated writings although he emphasizes that both standard and nonstandard forms occurred and thus the divergent forms must "be viewed against a background of more normal usage" (Ibid. p. 308). Later analyses of the American verbal inflections (Mencken 1971; Menner 1926) found similar results.

More recently, studies of dialectal varieties of English (Cheshire 1982; Christian et al. 1988; Hughes & Trudgill 1979) have found that variable past tense inflections are a productive part of present-day speech. In Cheshire's (1982) study of working class teenagers in Reading, England she found the same type of variation in verbal inflections

that we have outlined above. For all nonstandard verb forms used, variation between nonstandard and standard English inflections occurred. The verb *do*, was unique in that it occurred categorically as *done* in the preterit in the speech of all of her speakers, as in (45). Regularization to the standard weak verb paradigm was the most prominent pattern occurring in the verbs, *give*, *hold*, *draw*, *swing*, *run*, *blow*, *fight* and *wake*, as in (46) below. Other strong verbs regularized their (standard) preterit forms to the past participle, as in (48). The verbs *give* and *see* occur in past tense with forms that are identical to the verb stem, as in (47). Again, as we will outline below, the same patterns and lexical characteristics are found in both the Samaná and Ex-Slave corpora.

- (45) She *done* it, didn't she, Tracy?
 (46) It was just the floor what *blowed* up.
 The baby was teething and I couldn't get no sleep, it *woked*
 everyone up.
 How much money have you hold, held, *holded* in your
 hand? (Cheshire 1982:47)
 (47) Yeah, we peeped in the tent and we *see* him fingering her.
 My mum *give* him a towel.
 (48) No, I ain't, I've been and *forgor* it again.
 ... have *ran* out there and spat in her face.

However, only the verbs *see*, *come* and *do* occurred with sufficient frequency to calculate their forms quantitatively. In perhaps one of the only quantitative studies on verbal inflection, Cheshire (1982:49) claims to have found no linguistic constraints governing their variation. The major linguistic pattern in the past tense system that could be extracted for her data was greater approximation to the regular weak verb conjugation than in Std E.

Although Hughes and Trudgill's (1979) book on English accents and dialects emphasizes phonological variation, it provides the actual transcripts of a number of English regional varieties where nonstandard verbal morphology is readily apparent. Examination of these data reveals that the V-base forms of verbs such as *give* and *come* are used for the preterit function in most dialects cited, as in (49a). Past participles sometimes occur as preterits with *seen* as the past tense of *see*, (49b), and *done* as the past tense of *did*, as in

(49c). Regularization of preterit morphology to the past participle is also attested in forms such as *had went*, (49d). It is interesting to note that of the 11 examples of the verb *come* in all these transcripts, the majority of them occur as the V-base form (n=10), e.g. *come*. Furthermore, many occur in the environment of a temporal conjunction (n=5) or particle (n=8).

- (49a) We sold the house at Crawcrook and I went to Coventry and when I *come* back I stopped with Florrie ... (Hughes & Trudgill 1979:68)
- (49b) You never *seen* them, ycu know. (Hughes & Trudgill 1979:68)
- (49c) I *done* another couple of years there, then they closed up. (Hughes & Trudgill 1979:79)
- (49d) There was Harry. His car or something *had went* wrong and he was ... (Hughes & Trudgill 1979:80)

Such observations, although minimal, provide interesting corroboration for the results obtained below (see section 6.3.1.5.1. and 6.3.1.5.3.) where the same patterning is found. In general, however, the widespread attestation of regularizing tendencies suggests that lexical type and verb class are the most relevant factors operating on the variable occurrence of past temporal reference morphologies. This conclusion, however, is at best tentative since virtually no analyses have addressed the potential for linguistic conditioning for this phenomenon. The only study, to our knowledge which has provided evidence for the systematicity of these forms is Christian et al. (1988) and it is to the results of this study that we turn for a view of the contemporary WEV patterning of variable verbal inflection.

In Christian et al.'s (1988) study of Appalachian and Ozark English in the United States they found frequent occurrences of irregular verbal morphology that ranged widely among informants. As with previous studies of American dialects, however, it was not the case that any verb was nonstandard categorically. Thus variation between standard and nonstandard morphology in verbs that were used nonstandardly was the norm. They identify five basic categories of nonstandard usage of irregular verb forms: 1) regularization

of preterit and/or participle forms, as in (50a), 2) extension of preterit or past participle for both functions, as in (50b), 3) base form as preterit, as in (50c), 4) "ambiguous"¹⁶ forms, as in (50d), and finally 5) different strong forms, as in (50e).

- (50a) David *threwed* him in the creek and jumped in after him.
I've *heard* tell of some.
Seem like everybody *knowed* where I was from.
She was already *growed* up. (Christian et al. 1988:91)
- (50b) One of the lights *had went* out.
This writing spider *had wrote* a date.
I *had went* down there off the boat.
He may *have took* the horse and wagon.

She didn't know who it was, who *done* it.
If you *seen* a woman's knee, you had done seen something.
The same fire that *done* your cooking ...
He *seen* something off this bluff.
- (50c) Best I can remember, they *give* us paregoric then.
She *eat* the baby bear food and it was real good.
Jobs *begin* to open up, they *begin* to leave out.
Some of those cattle my dad *give* a hundred and fifty dollars
for sold for five dollars a head.
- (50d) I *run* into this barbed wire fence.
I *come* back and took care of him.
- (50e) He *brung* it up there.
He *drug* him out of there.

In addition, they mention another set of forms which, instead of the standard voiced past ending /d/, have a nonstandard devoiced variant, /t/ as in (51).

- (51) Every time I *boilt* water, I *burnt* it.
I got so sick to my stomach when I *smelt* them green beans.

As Christian et al. point out, however, these forms are not necessarily nonstandard as British dialects of English typically contain a larger inventory of verbs having devoiced past

¹⁶ Ambiguous verbs are those which are indeterminate between their past temporal reference form and their present temporal reference form (Christian et al. 1988).

endings, e.g. *learnt*, *dwelt*, than American dialects (Quirk 1970). If so, these forms may represent vestigial features retained from earlier varieties of British English from which Appalachian and Ozark English derived (Christian et al. 1988:109 fn 1). These observations are also important to the issues described herein as the same variable usage also occurs in the Samaná corpus.

They also mention briefly the marking characteristics of the verb *sit* which has a frequent past variant, *set*. Although this usage could be subsumed under their "different strong form" category, they do not include it due to its possible relationship with a separate and additionally occurring verb *set* (Christian et al. 1988). This form is a frequently occurring variant of *sit* in the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Christian et al. provide an analysis which strongly supports the existence of an implicational relationship among the verb categories (Christian et al. 1988:99), as in (52) below. In these implicational arrays "if nonstandard forms of one type are realized, then nonstandard forms of all categories to the right of it should also be found" (Ibid. p. 98). Although the relationships are slightly different between Appalachian and Ozark English, the categories most likely to be used are ambiguous verbs (e.g. *come*, *run*) and the preterit for past participle pattern as in, *had went*, *had broke*, while the least likely category is strong verbs with irregular (strong) morphology (e.g. *brung*, *drug*).

(52)	Amb	Regularized	Bare root	Participle	Preterit
	Strong	Form	Form	for	for
				Preterit	Participle

This implicational array also corresponds with the frequency of these verbal forms in their data. For example, those verbs which occur in the categories to the right tend to "have a higher overall incidence of nonstandardness and great numbers of speakers who used the nonstandard forms" (Ibid. p. 104). While there is relatively little nonstandard usage in any of these categories, they report that the verb *come*, the most frequent verb in the "ambiguous" category, appeared in its V-base form 77% of the time and 28 out of 33

speakers who used the verb *come* at all, used the nonstandard V-base form. Additionally, the most frequently occurring member of the regularized form category was the verb *know*, where the form *knowed* occurred 28% of the time and was used by 9 of the 21 speakers who used the verb. In general, verbs whose prescriptive verbal paradigm requires two different forms in their preterit and participle function, e.g. *go/went/gone*, are subject to alternate (nonstandard) forms while those with only a single form, e.g. *find/found*, are not. Furthermore, age and sex differentiation was found between older, male speakers who used more nonstandard forms and younger, female speakers who used more standard forms (Ibid. p. 105). Based on these facts Christian^{et al.} [and Wolfram] conclude that the variation in standard and nonstandard verbal forms used in Appalachian and Ozark English exhibit systematic patterning. In our examination of past temporal reference verbal morphology in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings we utilize these results to perform a comparative analysis of the distribution of standard and nonstandard verbal forms between the three data bases. Parallel patterning across these varieties provide a significant case for their relatedness at least in terms of this area of the past temporal reference system.

3.2.3. Summary

In general, this section has reviewed evidence and attestation of past temporal reference verbal structures from the few available studies of contemporary dialectal varieties of (white) English. These findings verify that competing morphological forms for the preterit and past participles of the past temporal reference verb persist in the modern language. Unfortunately, very few conditioning factors, in particular linguistic ones, have ever been mentioned in the literature nor, in the rare cases that such factors have been considered, have they ever been found, and thus it is difficult to differentiate between verbal inflectional patterns that are inherent to the English language and those which could possibly be due to hypercorrection, incomplete acquisition or even an alternate system. Thus, their existence cannot by itself be indicative of the underlying grammar.

Nevertheless, frequency, lexical similarity and distributional patterning throughout the range of verbal morphology in the past temporal reference system exploited within a comparative analytic approach can provide a great deal of evidence which might illuminate our own data. It is to this type of analysis that we turn in section 5.0.

3.3. Past temporal reference verbal structures in Present-Day Std E

The tense/aspect system of contemporary English has been studied extensively in many areas of linguistics and from many different perspectives. The literature in this general subject area abounds with traditional, structural, transformational, modal-theoretic and semantic accounts in which the explanation and categorization of individual tense/aspect categories has been widely debated. In this section, however, we outline, following the traditional descriptive account, the main morphological types and categories in the general realm of past time and their prescribed usage in the Std E grammar. Although there are some non-temporal uses for many of these tense/aspect forms, we concentrate here only on those readings which involve the temporal relationship and/or aspectual nature of the verb phrase. Furthermore, although there are a great number of different morphological types of past temporal reference structures that can be distinguished in English, we focus here on the major categorical divisions.

This approach allows us to provide a basic template for the range of the individual tense/aspect categories of the Std E past temporal reference system, the contrasts and similarities between them and thus, their relationship to each other. The co-existence of a variety of tense/aspect categories within one system necessarily allows for a certain degree of "overlap" with regard to usage patterns within the general realm of past time that we consider here. On the other hand, specific tense/aspect meanings encoded within particular morphological forms extend certain restrictions as well. The isolation and understanding of these characteristics of the overall system are particularly important to the questions

addressed in this dissertation as they will allow a precise delimitation of the individual features relevant to the comparisons at issue here. That is, those features of the tense/aspect system which distinguish English grammatical patterns and those described, outlined and/or attested in sociolinguistic analyses of BEV and Creoles.

3.3.1. Simple Past Tense

The most basic English tense category for past temporal reference is the simple PAST tense, or the PRETERIT. For regular, weak verbs the simple PAST tense is easily recognized by the addition of a suffixal inflection to the base form of the verb, either [ɪd], [t] or [d], depending on the final phonetic environment (Jespersen 1964:232). While there are a number of exceptions, the vast majority of regular verbs follow this pattern. In strong verbs, however, various different morphological alternations occur, and there is no comprehensive system (at least in modern times) which governs their form.

The simple PAST tense is used for definite, completed situations in past time. This definition specifies the two most relevant characteristics of the category: 1) that the present moment is completely excluded and 2) that "the speaker has a definite time in mind" (e.g. (Leech 1971; Quirk et al. 1985)). In Std E, it is not necessary that the specific time of the situation be indicated. However, because the simple PAST designates definite past time, some element of definite meaning "may be recoverable from knowledge of 1) the immediate or local situation, 2) the larger situation of 'general knowledge', 3) what has been said earlier in the same sentence or text, or 4) what comes later on in the same sentence or text" (Quirk et al. 1985). For example, by a temporal expression, i.e. adverbials such as *yesterday*, *in 1914*, etc. or by context (Frank 1972:73; Huddleston 1984:144)). One of the most important features of this tense in Std E, particularly to the issues addressed in this dissertation, is that its general definition subsumes a wide range of semantic interpretations which in many other languages require specific tense/aspect forms and/or individual differentiation. It encompasses all aspectual meanings — punctual, habitual, durative and

stative — as well as the entire range of potential past temporal reference points, whether immediate, recent, distant or remote in time and covers a wide range of temporal relationship interpretations. Thus, within this particular tense category, where no additional non-verbal temporal specification appears, there is no clear-cut contrast between punctual vs. non-punctual verb usages nor any special demarcation of temporal distance, as can be seen in example (53a-d) where the simple PAST can be used throughout.

- (53a) The professor taught school (yesterday).
- (53b) The professor taught school (every day last year).
- (53c) Prof. Nelson taught at Yale (for 30 years).
- (53d) She loved to teach school at Yale.

This makes it the least 'marked' of any other past temporal reference verbal structure and thus the most frequent. As we will outline below, in many contexts the simple PAST tense can be used interchangeably for virtually any other past temporal reference verbal structure that exists in English.

This demonstrates the primary use of the simple PAST tense which is "to indicate that the time of the situation is in the past" (Huddleston 1984:144). This restriction is made clear from the implications that obtain from specific individual readings of simple PAST tense usage, all of which subsume this primary use. For example, when the simple PAST describes habitual or repeated actions or events in the past, it also suggests that some change in these actions or events has taken place subsequent to the event time, as can be seen in example (53b). Similarly, a reading which describes a durative event that applied in the past, as in (53c-d), suggests that it no longer applies at the present time.

While the simple PAST tense usually indicates that the time of the situation is past relative to the time of speech, this is not an absolute rule, and as some researchers emphasize, the simple PAST tense is actually an inherently relative concept (Huddleston 1984:144) indicating that the time of the situation is past relative to *some other time*. Again, this is particularly relevant to the issues addressed in this dissertation as one of the major premises of the Creolist analysis of tense/aspect differences in English and Creole

grammars is that the Std E tense system is exclusively absolute, as opposed to the Creole system which is relative. Furthermore, this suggests that contextual features must play some part in the surface representation of tense in Std E.

The grammatical form of the simple PAST consists of one part, which we refer to here as a *single main verb* structure. All other verbal structures within the general realm of past time considered here are verb phrases containing one or more auxiliaries. In structures with two or more words, we refer to the first part of the verb phrase as the auxiliary, or auxiliaries, while we refer to the verb which carries the semantic content of the *main verb*. The main verb has also been labelled the lexical, notional, principal or meaningful verb (Frank 1972:50 fn 3). Taking the single main verb form as the basic morphological structure in the Std E tense/aspect system, the remaining categories can best be understood in terms of the lexical and morphological characteristics of their auxiliary(ies) and their main verbs as well as in terms of their exact semantic deviations from and similarities to the simple PAST.

3.3.2. Present perfect

The PRESENT PERFECT is formed by the present tense form of the verb *have* (either in its full or contracted form) in conjunction with the past participle, i.e. have/has/s + V-ed2, e.g. *I have walked/He has seen*. In contrast to many other languages which have comparable tenses, modern English prescribes a strict differentiation between the simple PAST tense and the PRESENT PERFECT. While the simple PAST tense is restricted to time wholly and entirely in the past, the PRESENT PERFECT is unique in its function to describe an alliance between a past and present time (Jespersen 1964:243). It presents "the present state as the outcome of past events, and may therefore be called a retrospective variety of the present" (Jespersen 1964:269). Further, it is often described as expressing "how the speaker views himself relative to the event(s) he is talking about" (Celce-Murcia 1983). Some researchers identify this difference in terms of how each category's distribution is restricted according to time. According to this parameter, the PRESENT

PERFECT is an 'inclusive past' while the simple PAST is an 'exclusive past' (Huddleston 1984). A further contrast between the simple PAST tense and PRESENT PERFECT is that the former describes a *definite* past time, while the PRESENT PERFECT describes an *indefinite* time (Frank 1972:78). In general, vague implications of past time are not expressed by the simple PAST tense but by means of the past habitual marker *used to*. Thus, the PRESENT PERFECT, in contrast to the simple PAST, describes indefinite situations in the past which have some relationship to the present.

Included in virtually every descriptive account of the PRESENT PERFECT is a list of contexts in which it occurs. The main semantic characteristics which have been identified can be listed as follows: 1) CONTINUATIVE: a situation, either state or habit, that began in the past and that continues into the present, 2) CURRENCY: a past situation with current relevance, 3) RECENCY: a very recently completed action, in which the very recency of the event provides the connection with the present, 4) RESULTATIVE: an action that occurred in the past and that is complete at the moment of speech but which is considered as the cause of present circumstances and thus, currently relevant to them, 5) INDEFINITENESS: a past action where the actual time of the occurrence is unimportant.

Syntactically, the PRESENT PERFECT is said to be used with verbs in clauses of time (Celce-Murcia 1983) as can be seen in example (54a-f) below:

- (54a) I have been a teacher *since 1972*. (Celce-Murcia 1983:64)
He has lived in Canberra *all his life*. (Huddleston 1984:160)
- (54b) Mort has *just* finished his homework. (Celce-Murcia 1983:64)
Max has *just* bought a new car. (Huddleston 1984:160)
- (54c) I have *already* seen that movie. (Celce-Murcia 1983:64)
I have broken my leg, *so* I can't go with them. (Huddleston 1984:160)
- (54d) The value of the Johnsons' house has doubled *in the last 4 years*.
(Celce-Murcia 1983:64)
- (54e) Have you read *Middlemarch*? (Huddleston 1984:161)
- (54f) She won't be satisfied *until* she has finished another chapter.
(Celce-Murcia 1983:64)

Like the simple PAST, the situation described by the PRESENT PERFECT encompasses a number of potential aspectual readings — punctual, durative, iterative and stative. The difference between the two in terms of temporal orientation, and thus temporal distance, as well as with respect to definite and indefinite time, however, is quite distinct. Thus, the choice of PRESENT PERFECT as opposed to the simple PAST may be differentiated by the restrictions on specific temporal expressions that can combine with each of the two categories as well as by characteristics pertaining to the definiteness of the circumstances described (Huddleston 1984; Jespersen 1964; Leech 1971).

Sentences which contain time indicators that point to a specific past time, i.e. *yesterday, at that time, in 1901, last week* require the simple PAST tense, whereas those which indicate that the time is not yet completed, i.e. *today, at present, lately, not yet* 'normally' use the PRESENT PERFECT. (e.g. (Huddleston 1984:158-9; Jespersen 1964:243; Quirk et al. 1985) etc.). In fact, certain conjunctions, i.e. *since, for*, actually require the use of the PRESENT PERFECT, e.g. *He has been finished since last March*. A characteristic feature of the PRESENT PERFECT, referred to by Palmer (1988) as a "formal fact", is that the adverb *just* often occurs with it, as can be seen in (55a-c) below:

- (55a) I've *just* seen him.
- (55b) He's *just* gone.
- (55c) I've *just* been waving goodbye to him. (Palmer 1988:52)

Here the use of *just* indicates "a brief period of time preceding, but up to the present moment" and as such is a special lexicalization of recency (Palmer 1988:52).

Members of another group of time indicators which do not make explicit reference to past time, i.e. *at four o'clock, in the morning, on Tuesday, then, soon, next, after breakfast* etc., are also likely to occur with the simple PAST tense. When they do occur with the PRESENT PERFECT they are restricted to indefinite or iterative meaning, as in *He has always smoked in bed in the morning* (Leech 1987:45). Other time indicators such as *this morning, today, always, never, recently*, can occur with either tense category as can

be seen in (56a-b) below. However, it must be kept in mind that the simple PAST tense can only be used with these forms if the time indicated by the temporal expression is already in the past, while the PRESENT PERFECT can be used only if the time indicated by the temporal expression is still continuing. As stated by Jespersen (1964:244) "*this morning*, when said in the morning itself, requires the Perfect ... but when said later it takes the Preterit". These restrictions emphasize the degree to which the contextual environment determines the choice of category.

- (56a) He has overslept *this morning*.
- (56b) He overslept *this morning*.

Leech (1987) describes the 'definite'/'indefinite' contrast between simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT as being exactly parallel to the contrast in meaning between the definite article *the* and the indefinite article *a* or *an*. The definite counterpart is used under two conditions: 1) the item has already been mentioned or is recoverable from context, 2) it has a unique and known referent discernable from context, and 3) in the sequence of discourse, indefinite referents precede definite ones. According to this description, simple PAST tense would be predicted to follow the PRESENT PERFECT under the assumption that new topics would be introduced in an indefinite way and then progress to definite reference to denote events happening simultaneously or in sequence, once the frame of reference has been established (Leech 1987:42) as in (57a-b) below:

- (57a) Joan *has received* a proposal of marriage; it *took* us completely by surprise.
- (57b) There *have been* times when I *wished* you were here.

As an extension of this particular aspect of use of the PRESENT PERFECT, Leech (1987:43) points out that temporal clauses introduced by *when*, *while*, *since* etc. typically contain simple PAST tense verbs "because the time specified in such clauses is normally assumed to be already given", as illustrated in (58a-b) below:

- (58a) You made a mistake when you bought that dog.
- (58b) She hasn't spoken to us since we quarrelled about the will.

Although the meanings of the simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT can be distinguished on many counts, in informal speech, most past-to-present time expressions can be used either with the simple PAST or with the PRESENT PERFECT (Frank, 1972:81; Leech, 1987:43). Leech, for example, notes the interchangeability in examples in (59a-b) below.

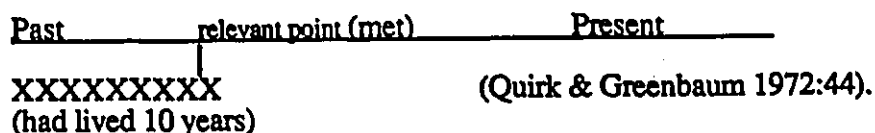
- (59a) Now, where did I put my glasses?
 (59b) Now, where have I put my glasses?

The choice between the two categories has been described in terms of speaker viewpoint and the varying temporal focus which can be accorded the utterance, either attention to the event time in the past (59a) or to the present result of the described action (59b) (Leech 1987, Frank, 1972). Such differences can also be ascribed to differences in dialect; however, as it is commonly known that American and British varieties of English have different usage patterns for the PRESENT PERFECT (e.g. Leech 1987; (Huddleston 1984). These differences are attested in "recent-indefinite-past" contexts described above. In America where the PRESENT PERFECT is used less frequently overall, the simple PAST is used in these environments, whereas in British varieties, the PRESENT PERFECT would be used, i.e. *Did you sell your bicycle yet?* vs. *Have you sold your bicycle yet?* In general, however, the two forms are likely variable on a stylistic and spoken/written linguistic level.

3.3.3. Past perfect

The PAST PERFECT is formed by the past tense form of the verb *have* (either in its full or contracted form) in conjunction with the past participle, i.e. *had/d + V-ed2*, e.g. *I had walked/He had seen*. If we exclude considerations of recency and currency, the meaning and function of the PAST PERFECT can be compared to the PRESENT PERFECT in that the points of alliance are both in the past, one occurring before the other. In the PAST PERFECT instead of the current relevance of the category extending to the

present moment, it extends from one earlier point in the past to another that is later. These parallel functions can be outlined as follows: 1) CONTINUATIVE: a situation, either state or habit, that began at a earlier point in the past and that continues up to another point in the past. Thus, the sentence: (*I say now {present} that) When I met him {relevant point in the past} John had lived in Paris for ten years* can be represented schematically as:



2) INDEFINITENESS: a past action before another past time where the actual time of the occurrence is unimportant, e.g. *Had they been to America before?* and 3) RESULTATIVE: an action that occurred at an earlier point in the past and that is complete at a latter point in the past which is considered as the cause of circumstances obtaining at that point in the past.

It is comparable to the simple PAST in that it demands a definite point of reference in past time which has already been established (Leech, 1987:47). Std E does not require that this reference time be overtly expressed; however it must, at least, be understood from the context. Thus, the unique characteristic of the PAST PERFECT category is that it provides the means by which two successive happenings in the past can be connected grammatically. This can be seen in example (60a-d) below:

- (60a) I *had seen* him before he saw me.
- (60b) I saw him before he *had seen* me.
- (60c) He saw me after I *had seen* him.
- (60d) He did not see me till I *had seen* him. (Jespersen 1964:246)

As can be seen in the example, the PAST PERFECT is associated with specific time indicators, i.e. the temporal conjunctions *before*, *after*, *till*, which specify the order of events. Whereas the simple PAST tense, without any additional temporal indication, can only indicate successive events, e.g. *I went to the store and bought the book*, the PAST PERFECT permits both iconically-ordered, *I had gone to the store before I bought the*

book, and non-iconically ordered events in the past, e.g. *I went to the store after I had bought the book*, to be differentiated with respect to order. Thus, it is a tense/aspect category which disambiguates specific temporal relationships. This is especially important in contexts in which precise ordering is important to the interpretation and/or understanding of a given series of events. Note, however, that the very presence of disambiguating temporal expressions such as those in the examples above, allows the occurrence of the simple PAST instead of the more explicit PAST PERFECT without any loss of meaning. Thus, although a sentence/utterance which describes a situation in which "one happening is further in the past than another event already mentioned" (Leech 1987:49) has the potential to be represented by the PAST PERFECT, this is not categorical. The same environment can be represented just as effectively with the simple PAST. The mere fact that this is particularly the case in temporal clauses which serve to make explicit the temporal relationship of the events and that this is precisely the environment for the PAST PERFECT indicates the interchangeability of the two forms in at least some circumstances.

One environment where PAST PERFECT tends to occur more than the simple PAST, however, is in narratives where it indicates a time that precedes a particular point in the narrative sequence (Frank, 1972). Here the explicit time indication of the category clarifies the precise execution of a series of events which are important to narrative's interpretation and possibly effectiveness, as can be seen in example (61):

- (61) The burglar alarm went off and a crowd began to gather.
 Soon the police arrived at the scene of the robbery. But they
 were too late. The thieves *had* already *gone*. (Frank,
 1972:83)

Such delimitation of the exact location and function of this category within the organization and structure of the discourse as a whole provides a practical test case for our ensuing analysis. If this is one locale where the PAST PERFECT category has been claimed to be concentrated in Std E, and this is precisely where these forms occur in our

BE speech data, then we take this as contributing evidence for parallel usage and thus the same underlying function.

It should be kept in mind that the Std E interpretation of the PAST PERFECT entails only that a situation preceded a previously mentioned past situation. This means that it functions relative to another reference time that is retrievable from context, i.e. it is a relative tense. Like the simple PAST, however, there is no differentiation based on aspect or overall temporal remoteness.

3.3.4. Past progressive

The PAST PROGRESSIVE is formed by the past tense of the verb *to be* in conjunction with the present participle of the verb, i.e. *was/were* + V-ing, e.g. *I was going to the store/I was walking to the store*. The PAST PROGRESSIVE has three basic meanings: 1) duration, 2) continuance, and 3) temporariness (Leech 1988; Quirk et al. 1985). These qualities permit the designation of a situation that is in progress while at the same time implying that it has duration, is not yet complete and is not so unrestricted as to refer to universal time. For example, the difference between *I was raising my arm* vs. *I raised my arm*, is one in which sudden as opposed to gradual movement is differentiated. The difference between *The man drowned* vs. *The man was drowning*, emphasizes that the situation has not yet arrived at an end point in the latter example. Finally, the contrast between: *My watch worked perfectly* vs. *My watch was working perfectly* points to the temporariness of the latter compared to the former. In the case of an 'event' verb the time-span is stretched when utilized with the PAST PROGRESSIVE while with a 'state' verb the time-span is compressed. This is said to be a difference in psychological as opposed to real time. However, this allows for the speaker's point of view to determine the choice between the simple or progressive form.

As a description of progressing situations in the past, the PAST PROGRESSIVE form emphasizes the duration of a past event for the purposes pointing the focus of

attention on some median point *within* the process (Frank, 1972:73), as in example (62a-b). This is especially useful in narrative discourse where dramatic effect can be achieved through a temporary suspension of iconically ordered action clauses.

- (62a) What were you doing all day yesterday?
 (62b) When I arrived at the inn, the guests were already sitting
 down to dinner. (Frank, 1972:73)

Thus, while sequential simple PAST tense forms usually designate *time-sequence*, the occurrence of a PROGRESSIVE form in conjunction with a simple PAST form designates *time-inclusion*, as can be seen in example (63b). This can be contrasted in (63a-b) below where in (63a), the temporal relationship is one of subsequence, while in (63b) the temporal relationship is one of coincidence, i.e. the arrival took place *during* the coffee-making (Leech 1988:21).

- (63a) When we arrived she made some fresh coffee.
 (63b) When we arrived she was making some fresh coffee.

The unique characteristic of the PAST PROGRESSIVE, to the exclusion of all other Std E past temporal reference tense/aspect categories, is that it can designate, when used in conjunction with the simple PAST tense, the interruption of one situation by another. This is particularly true in narratives, where "it is a convenient device to define a time span, or temporal frame, within which another event (indicated by the simple PAST) can be seen as taking place" (Quirk & Greenbaum 1972:45). In this case, the situation in progress is required to be in the main clause or a temporal clause as can be seen in example (64a-b). On the other hand, if no event or point of time is specified by a co-occurring simple PAST form, the "framing effect" does not occur (Leech, 1988:22).

In the case of two past situations which are simultaneously in progress the PAST PROGRESSIVE occurs interchangeably with the simple PAST. In examples such as (64c) below, the PAST PROGRESSIVE or simple PAST may occur in either, both, or neither clause.

- (64a) When I was crossing the street, I saw an accident.
 (64b) While I was writing, the phone rang.
 (Quirk & Greenbaum 1972:45)
- (64c) He was watching television while his wife was reading.
 He was watching television while his wife read.
 He watched television while his wife was reading.
 He watched television while his wife read.

The PAST PROGRESSIVE can also indicate habitual activity in the past, although the habit is understood to be temporary in duration, i.e. *At that time, we were bathing every day*, as well as the repetition of events of limited duration, i.e. *Whenever I visit him he is mowing his lawn*. Here the individual event is seen as habitual rather than the habit as a whole.

In effect, the PAST PROGRESSIVE is the most explicit morphological designation of aspect in Std E. Despite this fact it is held to be quite infrequent compared with the nonprogressive forms. Quirk et al. (1985) report that less than 5% of verb phrases are progressive, they appear more frequently in informal discourse and they are more frequent in American as opposed to British English.

3.3.5. Past habitual

Std E has two different morphological forms which specifically and only signal habitual situations in the past: the periphrastic modal *used to* + V-base and the modal *would* + V-base. While the simple PAST can also signal habitual activity, it does not do so without some temporal and/or contextual specification for this specific reading of the situation and, as we have emphasized above, it can be used for a wide range of other tense/aspect contrasts as well. The forms *used to* and *would*, however, do not require a suitable adverb to imply this semantic interpretation, as can be seen from the examples in (65a-b) below:

- (65a) He *wrote* with a special pen. vs. He *always wrote* with a special pen.

- (65b) He *used to* write with a special pen.
 He *would* write with a special pen.

Used to is said to be the more common of the two constructions, perhaps because of its wider range of applicability. In contrast to the simple PAST which describes specific past situations, *used to* is said to designate "vague implications of the past" (Jespersen 1964:245), either habitual, iterative, durative or stative. These differences can be observed in the contrasts in example (66a-e) below. The construction with *would* is restricted to either habitual or iterative events and cannot be used with stative or durative interpretations. Unlike *used to*, however, *would* often requires some association with a time indicator, as the examples in (66c) and (66d) demonstrate, although example (66e) suggests that it need not be in the same clause.

- (66a) I used to live at Chelsea (no time indicated).
 I used to walk to school.
 (66b) In 1914, I lived at Chelsea. I lived there about 10 years.
 In 1914, I walked to school.
 (66c) *I would live in Chelsea.
 ?I would walk to school.
 (66d) *In 1914, I would live in Chelsea.
 In 1914, I would walk to school.
 (66e) In 1914, I used to walk to school. I would whistle on the
 way.

Most grammarians maintain that although interchangeable in many situations, the two forms actually differ in subtle ways. To our knowledge, however, no one has ever attempted to empirically validate the characterization or extent of this difference.

3.3.6. Summary

In general, this section has reviewed the characteristics of the major categories of the Std E temporal reference system. Due to their prescriptive orientation, these descriptions completely ignore the competing morphological forms for the preterit, i.e. inflected and non-inflected verbs, and the past participle, i.e. morphological alternates, which could potentially exist for past temporal reference verb forms in the modern language. Certainly variationist work, particularly on [-t, -d] deletion, has unanimously indicated the productivity of morphological reduction in *all* varieties of modern English.

However, the value of this information comes from the fact that these sources describe the exact functional characteristics and usage 'rules' of the major tense/aspect categories of Std E. For example, they outline, in great detail, the extent to which surface tense forms are restricted intrasententially, either in terms of their location in discourse, i.e. according to narrative section, inter-sententially, i.e. according to syntactic structure, and/or in relation to other features of the linguistic environment, i.e. temporal conjunctions, adverbs etc. Furthermore, an important contribution to the issues described in this dissertation, is the notion of "tense overlap" which can be utilized to decipher how individual tense/aspect categories are related to and can alternate with each other. Moreover, the inter-relationship between various combination of these can also provide corroborating evidence for the validity of a given functional interpretation. For example, the parallelism of co-occurrence patterns of adverbials and particles with unmarked and marked single main verbs (cf. section 5.7 below) provides support for our contention that the two forms represent the same tense/aspect category. It is these patterns, which point to the underlying principles or organization in the system, to which we make reference in our comparative approach.

3.4. Past temporal reference verbal structures in BEV

We now turn to a review of the past temporal reference verbal structures in BEV. The most distinctive features of these, i.e. those that appear to be separate from English grammar, are claimed to be found within the tense/mood/aspect system. This area of the grammar is thought to have a crucially different underlying organization within the two varieties with which BEV is most often compared — 1) Standard and/or dialectal varieties of English and 2) English-based creoles.

This is why most of the research which addresses either the conflicting "creolist" vs. "anglicist" hypotheses for the origins and development of BEV or the divergence vs. convergence hypotheses for its current direction of change focuses primarily on cross-linguistic examinations of the verbal system. Most of this research has examined each

separate tense/aspect form individually rather than how they are distributed vis-à-vis other tense/aspect forms and/or how they are organized within the underlying temporal reference system.

However, although many similarities have been found between black and white vernaculars, there have always been attestations of idiosyncratic tense/aspect categories which are different. Thus, throughout the history of controversies addressing this issue we find an implicit dichotomy, between statements about the BEV grammar asserting that the underlying system can be subsumed within the grammar of English (cf. Labov 1982:192; Fasold 1981) while at the same time fully acknowledging that (at least some) categories within the temporal system are quite distinct. What are the implications of this discrepancy to the creole-origins/standard-origins hypothesis and how can it be explained? If the two statements are compatible, what historical and/or linguistic facts explain the present-day differentiations?

The crux of the issue involves two important considerations: 1) the underlying temporal structure of BEV and English *or* Creole grammars, but also 2) the time frame within which the developmental stage of each black and white variety can be understood, since, as is relatively uncontested, language change proceeds differentially in different scenarios. While the latter issue does not directly relate to the verbal system, it is crucial to the interpretation of its individual morphologies since each of the forms appearing in our data can best be defined, not only with respect to their function, but also with respect to the time period within which it was productively used in the grammar and how. Furthermore, the rate at which any given form arose, was used productively or declined in usage in a given variety will be directly correlated with many other features of the extra-linguistic environment. For example, the appearance of auxiliary *be* in verb structures resembling the PRESENT PERFECT in an English-based variety might be taken to be an anomalous structure unless it is also known that in a previous stage in the history of the dialect these contexts were characterized by variability between auxiliary *be* and *have*. Furthermore, in

varieties which are isolated in any way, it might be assumed that older forms will be maintained in patterns of distribution approximating what is described in the literature for those earlier stages in the language. Thus, it is important to assess our findings from a purely linguistic analysis of the underlying temporal structure with a view to the historical scenario which has produced the observable tense/aspect phenomena. In other words, are the verbal structures which differentiate BEV from WEV the product of distinctive grammatical differences or are they a product of the different situational circumstances which have in turn lead to differential linguistic change between the two? Thus, a crucial underlying issue this dissertation seeks to address is what evidence can be adduced to distinguish between these two possibilities?

Languages differ with respect to the strategies they select to achieve temporal and/or aspectual relationships. Two distinct possibilities are "absolute" and "relative" tense. Within the sociolinguistic literature on this subject, the underlying differentiation between "English-like" and "Creole-like" grammars has been defined in terms of their respective absolute and relative tense systems (Dillard 1972a:41f; Mufwene to appear: 14; Stewart 1968:243). The difference between these two types is thought to be the most fundamental distinguishing factor of their grammars and is said to be reflected in their underlying temporal organization.

From the perspective of at least some of the Creolist literature, Std E is considered an absolute tense system. Absolute tense refers to "a tense which includes as part of its meaning the present moment as deictic centre" (Comrie 1985:36). A tense of this type measures time from a single fixed point of reference. For example, in the category PAST tense in Std E time is measured from the point occupied by the speaker (now) and anything before this point is always [+PAST] (Bickerton 1979:311). The Creole tense system, however, is considered to be a relative tense system. Relative tense refers to "a tense which does not include as part of its meaning the present moment as deictic centre" (Comrie 1985:36). It measures time without reference to 'now' or to the speaker. Instead the states

and actions that are subjects of the discourse "can themselves serve as reference points and their position in time relative to one another, rather than relative to a single fixed point, can determine the way in which they will be marked for tense" (Bickerton 1979:311). In other words, relative and absolute tenses are essentially different in the means by which they select their surface tense morphology (Chung & Timberlake 1985:210).

The difference between "absolute" and "relative" tense as it is described in the Creolist literature posits a clear distinction between the Creole relative tense *system* and the English absolute one. In actuality, the comparison is an overgeneralization. Theoretical work on tense has long shown (e.g. (Reichenbach 1947)) that the Std-E tense system must be described in terms of *both* relative and absolute tenses. Thus, the exclusive characterization of the English temporal reference system as "absolute" is untenable. For example, in the situation at hand, Creole grammar is said to have relative anterior tense. English, on the other hand has absolute PAST and PRESENT tense, but also relative PRESENT and PAST PERFECT tenses.

As illustrated in (67a-e) below, alternating marked and unmarked verbs are frequent in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings, the varieties of BE upon which this dissertation is based. Restricting ourselves here to past temporal reference elements of the tense/aspect system we observe that a wide spectrum of verbal markers, either tense and/or aspect, and intra-sentential marking patterns can occur. The resultant morphology is considered nonstandard when compared with Std E and demonstrates extensive variability.

(67a) Marked + unmarked:

My mother **did** study,
she say[Ø]. (002/642)

When I had four years,
my mother move[N]¹⁷ to town

She'll go down to town
and she stay to my mother's
(002/1130-31)

(67b) Unmarked + unmarked:

Soon the government go up
they take all them ammunition,
they dig hole,
they bury them ... (001/453-454)

I say, "Cap", where you going?"
He tell me, "but you know, we going
Grande Estero."

I say, "you know, you going ..."
He tell me, "you gon' tell me this ..."
(001/753-755)

(67c) Marked + marked:

She had three boys,
but one die{d}
when it was two years of age
(002/489)

She used to come here
and we used to have a good time.
(001/621)

(67d) Unmarked + marked:

She come and she bought. (002/561)

That what happenØ Guzman.
Guzman was a man..
He was a 'ganadero'. (001/886-7)

He get a stove and a thing of sulphur
and he went down there. (001/540)

(67e) Marked (standard) + marked (nonstandard):

And they was sailors.
They had plenty of 'em here
done been sailors. (005/501)

At least two major competing analyses have been proposed for the surface morphological form and syntactic patterning of this variation in the past temporal reference system of BEV: 1) the deletion (Std E grammar) hypothesis and 2) the insertion (Creole grammar) hypothesis.

3.4.1. The deletion hypothesis

The earliest quantitative research on BEV (e.g. (Fasold 1972; Labov 1972a; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969)) was unanimous in the claim that its tense/aspect system,

¹⁷ For the purposes of this study all neutralized contexts such as these were considered unmarked for those analyses where they were included (cf. section 6.2. only).

although different from English, could be subsumed within the same underlying system. Labov (1968:7) states that BEV "has the same basic system of PRESENT and PAST as Standard English". There is also "no difference in the NNE¹⁸ use of the PROGRESSIVE and that of Standard English" (Labov et al. 1968:337). Additionally, "speakers use the PAST PERFECT readily, with appropriate semantic force" (Labov et al. 1968:254). In the PASSIVE as well, Labov et al. (1968:337) report "no important differences in this syntactic process between NNE and SE". The only Std E tense that did not seem to be part of the underlying system was the PRESENT PERFECT which was thought to be "quite marginal" (Labov et al. 1968:254).

Despite the fact that all these tense categories were considered to be parallel in BEV and Std E grammars, only the (simple) PAST tense has been the subject of detailed *quantitative* analysis. Furthermore, these studies have concentrated specifically on morphological *marking* and do not consider the appropriateness of the tense for the time referred to. Widespread occurrence of unmarked single main verb forms in BEV were considered to be the result of a general tendency in the evolution of Indo-European languages to lose information at the ends of words as well as the inherent articulatory difficulty in certain types of final consonant clusters (Labov et al. 1968:123). The occurrence of unmarked present and past participles on the other hand, is considered an extension of a general tendency to reduce auxiliaries to contracted forms. Here, it was thought that BEV allowed additional reduction to take place, leading to the complete removal of the auxiliary. Under this type of analysis the unmarked verbs, either with preterit or participle morphology are the result of surface-level reduction rules rather than deep-structure differences.

¹⁸ The abbreviation NNE stands for Nonstandard Negro English, an earlier name employed for the variety we refer to here as BEV.

3.4.1.1. Suffix deletion

Thus, in one of the most widely studied areas of the temporal reference system, simple PAST tense expression, investigators have shown, through comparison with varieties of (white) English (and in some cases English-based creoles), that the underlying system of BEV and Std E are similar in featuring the same PAST tense category. They showed that in cases in which the *-ed* may be affixed to a regular verb, as in sentences such as (68a-c) below, the past tense marker *-ed* is underlyingly present, but may be variably deleted through surface processes of phonologically-induced 'simplification'.

- (68a) John work here *yesterday*.
- (68b) Mary play hookey *last week*.
- (68c) Henry lift 200 lbs *this morning*. (Mufwene to appear:16)

This hypothesis is based on the finding that the final consonants in verbs with a base ending in a consonant, as in *work*, those with with a syllable-final *[-d]*, or with a bases ending in *[-t]* or *[-d]* are subject to reduction by regular rules that are conditioned by a number of different features of the linguistic environment.

3.4.1.1.1. Phonological conditioning

The major factor conditioning past tense marking has been found to be the nature of the segment following the *-t*, *-d*: All studies concur that a following consonant is more favourable to deletion than a following vowel. Table (1) compares the effect of following phonological environment on the realization of final consonants in regular verbs in three varieties of BEV.

Table (1). Phonological conditioning of consonant cluster simplification in regular verbs

Group studied:	Percent Simplified			
	___/[-vocalic]		___/[+vocalic]	
	%	N	%	N
Std E Educated white adults Neu (1980)	35.7	814	15.8	495
NEW YORK CITY Working class adults "single style" Labov et al. (1968)	47.0	115	18.0	133
DETROIT Lower working class ¹⁹ Wolfram (1969)	76.0	?	33.9	?
WASHINGTON, D.C. Fasold (1972)	76.2	143	28.7	202

(adapted from (Tagliamonte & Poplack 1988))

3.4.1.1.2. Grammatical conditioning

Another important constraint on consonant realization is exercised by the grammatical category of the word in which *-t*, *-d* occurs. Deletion is affected by the "functional load" carried by the segments. Clusters are simplified and consonants reduced most frequently in monomorphemic words (e.g. *mist*) where they convey no semantic information, less frequently in irregular [+inflected] verbs (e.g. *kept*, *told*) in which *-t*, *d* is not the sole marker of past tense, and least of all in regular verbs, (e.g. *liked*) where *-t*, *d* is the only unambiguous tense marker. This effect is depicted in Table (2) where there is a dramatic decrease in consonant realization when *-t*, *d* represents the only morphological

¹⁹ Both Wolfram and Fasold provide amalgamated data for three age groups; Fasold's data also amalgamate four social classes.

indicator of past tense (i.e. in regular verbs). This is exactly what would be expected if simple PAST tense were an underlying category in BEV.

Table (2). Grammatical conditioning of consonant cluster simplification

Group studied:	Mono-morphemic (<i>first</i>)		Irregular [+infl] (<i>kept</i>)		Regular Verb (<i>walked/died</i>)	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Std E Educated white adults Neu (1980)	32.4%	1072	-----		9.3%	237
NEW YORK CITY Working class adults "single style" Labov et al. (1968:128)	74.6	386	(41.4	111) ²⁰	31.4	248
DETROIT Lower working class Wolfram (1969)	72.1		-----		33.9	
WASHINGTON Fasold (1972:74)	-----		80.0		44.2	

(adapted from (Tagliamonte & Poplack 1988))

3.4.1.2. Auxiliary deletion

Further evidence for the deletion hypothesis came from contexts where Std E can reduce the PRESENT PERFECT auxiliary *have* to 've or 's as in (69a). In BEV sentences such as those in (69b) occur. This has led some researchers to suggest that a further reduction process occurs in BEV whereby the underlying auxiliary of the PRESENT PERFECT is actually deleted leaving a bare past participle (Labov 1972b).

- (69a) I've been here *for hours*. (Fasold & Wolfram 1975:65)
He's gone home *already*.

²⁰ These are Labov's data for a subsample of eleven individuals not identified as to age or class.

- (69b) I Ø been here *for hours*. (Fasold & Wolfram 1975:65)
 He Ø gone home *already*.

The deletion hypothesis, both for suffixes and for auxiliaries, has met with much criticism. First of all, in some dialects of contemporary BEV at least, these "rules" have been claimed to operate so frequently that the posited underlying morphemes rarely surface. This is especially true in the case of the PRESENT PERFECT auxiliary *have* + past participle, to the extent that some researchers have claimed that it "is not part of Negro dialect" (Fasold & Wolfram 1975:65) and that there is "no underlying *have*" (Loflin 1970). Unfortunately, most of these claims have never been quantitatively verified so it is not clear what the actual distribution of these forms would be in contexts *where they would have been expected to occur*. As we have pointed out previously, the PRESENT PERFECT is in Std E is relatively rare compared to other tense/aspect categories, particularly the simple PAST tense. Furthermore, even in cases where it has the *potential* to occur, the simple PAST tense is more likely to appear. There is actually only a restricted set of environments where it is *required*. An important contribution of this dissertation will be to examine the exact distributional facts which characterize the contexts in which these forms occur.

Additional evidence adduced for the lack of the PRESENT PERFECT category in BEV comes from the fact that verbs other than the Std E auxiliary *have* appear with the past participle as in (70) and (71). This is attributed to the fact that the PRESENT PERFECT is not a functional category within the BEV tense/aspect system.

- (70) I was been in Detroit
 (71) I didn't drink wine *in a long time*. (Labov et al. 1968:254)

Nevertheless, as other researchers pointed out, there are a sufficient number of occurrences of this form in other environments (i.e. the negative) to suggest that it must have some status in the dialect. Labov et al. (1968:341) conclude that "there is no doubt that *have* and the PRESENT PERFECT is weak, but weakness is quite different from absence". If "strength" of a tense/aspect category is equated with frequency, this point is actually quite

relevant since the status of the PRESENT PERFECT in Std E itself is not particularly strong.

A second problem that has been raised with respect to the auxiliary deletion hypothesis is in verbal structures with the form *been*. As an individual lexical item, *been* is only one of many past participles which are morphologically unique in English and thus distinguishable from preterit forms. However, some structures, e.g. (72a-b), in which it occurs cannot be explained by deletion of an underlying *have* and thus it cannot always be interpreted as a Std E past participle in a PRESENT or PAST PERFECT construction (Labov 1972b:53).

- | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| (72a) | He <i>been</i> know your name. |
| (72b) | He <i>been</i> own one of those. |

In these contexts, the claim has been made that *been* means that the situation has gone on for a long time and implies that it is on-going. Labov (1972b:53) glosses it "as a 'remote PRESENT PERFECT' because it combines the functions of *used to* and *have ... ed*".

Thus, because this structure is quite infrequent, appears with auxiliary *be*, and not all of the data can be accounted for by the operation of deletion rules, its grammatical status as an underlying category of BEV remains in question.

3.4.1.3. Summary

Although the deletion hypothesis can account for variation in verbal marking patterns in some areas of the tense/aspect system and can be interpreted as a direct extension or modification of Std E processes, some contexts of usage and distributional characteristics of the hypothesized forms are claimed to be incompatible with the expectations of the Std E temporal reference system. For example, Wolfram (1969:217) points out differences in the way that phonological and grammatical variables were stratified such that phonological differences between social groups tended to be quantitative whereas the grammatical differences tended to be qualitative. The same type of result is found in Fasold's (1972) study of tense marking of simple PAST tense, third singular -s,

and distributive *be*. He found that no unitary linguistic process (e.g. deletion) could explain all three of these phenomena. While phonological processes of consonant cluster simplification could account for the absence of *-ed*, the absence of *-s* was found to be a grammatical difference and distributive *be* a unique feature of BEV grammar.

3.4.1.4. Irregular morphology on strong verbs

3.4.1.4.1. Preterit

The category of simple PAST tense is formed in most verbs by the suffixation of *-ed*; however, quite a number of more common verbs, typically referred to as 'strong' verbs, are irregular in their morphological encoding of the simple PAST. Strong verbs can be divided into a number of different categories based on the type of process with which PAST tense is indicated: 1) vowel change, e.g. *give/gave, fall/fell*, 2) devoicing, e.g. *send/sent, build/built*, 3) final consonant change, e.g. *make/made, has/had*, 4) both vowel and final consonant or consonant cluster change, e.g. *catch/caught, buy/bought*, 5) no change, e.g. *beat/beat, put/put*, and finally two verbs which have suppletive forms for the past tense *go/went* and *am/is/are/was/were*. Most of the strong verbs can be associated with the seven strong classes of verbs in earlier varieties of English.

While researchers report that strong verbs generally distinguish PRESENT and PAST, in the overwhelming majority of cases in BEV (Fasold 1972), the persistent occurrence of nonstandard morphology on these verbs has not gone without notice. A number of different types of irregularities are reported for BEV in the literature (Fasold 1972; Wolfram & Fasold 1974). Many occur as a consequence of partial or full regularization of the verb by the addition of the *-ed* suffix as in example (73a-b) below. Fasold (1972:39) points out, however, that these cannot be used as evidence that PAST tense is not distinct in the dialect, since the tense distinction has been made, albeit in a non-standard way.

- (73a) Then he *ranned* off.
 (73b) I *seed* this picture. (Fasold 1972:39)

Other irregular PAST tense morphological forms are those in which the present tense form of the verb is used for past as well as present temporal reference, as in example (74a-b) below. This feature is attested for BEV in New York City (Labov et al. 1968), Washington (Fasold 1972) and Detroit (Wolfram 1969).

- (74a) He *hold* his hand out and made him fell.
 (74b) I looked in the box and it was a bicycle and I *know* it was mine.
 (Fasold 1972:39)

Fasold (1972:155 fn 3) notes that common verbs such as *know*, *come* and *give* in his data were used without the appropriate vowel change to mark PAST tense while other common irregular verbs like *have*, *get*, *make*, *go* and *do* were used in the PAST tense in almost every interview and always in their standard forms. Again, Fasold (1972:39) notes that even though unmarked verbs are used occasionally, for the speakers that do use them, the standard and unmarked past forms of such verbs were in "some type of variable distribution". Although, to our knowledge, this variation has not yet been analyzed quantitatively in any BE variety, Labov (1968:257) suggests that "careful study of these may show system where none appears at the moment". His conclusion, however, is that the variation in irregular forms "resists patterning" (Ibid. p. 257). Despite the occasional occurrence of strong past forms *and* strong present forms of the same verb, even within the same speaker, Fasold (1972:40) concludes that the overall rarity of the unmarked strong past forms indicates that there is no lack of the simple PAST tense category.

3.4.1.4.2. Participle

From the earliest quantitative studies, researchers have been skeptical about whether there are past participles in the BEV grammar (Fasold 1972; Labov et al. 1968). In Std E, most of these are formed with the *-ed* suffix making them morphologically identical with the regular simple PAST tense form. In the strong verb class, however, there are a number

of verbs whose preterit and past participle forms are formally distinct (e.g. *came* vs. *has come*; *ate* vs. *has eaten* etc.). Fasold & Wolfram (1972:66) point out that there may not be any such distinction in BEV. This supposition is based on the fact that 1) the Std E past participle form is sometimes generalized to serve both functions as in example (75a), or 2) the simple PAST form is used in both kinds of constructions, as in (75b), or 3) there is variability in which form is used, as in (75c). They suggest that instead of a past participle in BEV, there is a "general past form" (Ibid. p. 66) that is used for both the simple PAST and the PRESENT and PAST PERFECT tenses. If this is so, however, it could not be equated with a Creole-like anterior tense system, since presumably the same *general* past form would be used in *all* past temporal reference contexts, whereas in a Creole an anterior tense form would only be expected to surface in contexts in which a relative distinction was being made between one temporal reference period and another.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| (75a) | He taken it. vs. He has taken it. |
| (75b) | He came vs. He have came. |
| (75c) | He done it; He have done it; He did it; He have did it. |

3.4.2. The insertion hypothesis

The insertion hypothesis provides a completely different view of verb morphology and patterning. Many researchers, beginning with Bailey (1965b) have concluded that the underlying temporal reference system of BEV is to a great extent creole-like (Bailey 1965b; Dillard 1968; 1972a; 1975b; Fickett 1972; Mufwene 1983; Rickford 1977; 1965; Stewart 1967; 1968). This has led researchers in the Creolist camp to claim that it is misguided to describe the temporal system of either Creole languages or BEV using the Std E tense system as a model since applying Indo-European preconceptions about the nature of tense (i.e. absolute tense) confounds the crucially different structure and organization of their grammatical systems (Bickerton 1973; 1975; 1979; Brewer 1986c; Mufwene 1983; to appear). Under this analysis the variation in morphological forms (i.e. the presence of temporal marking in some contexts and the lack of it in others and/or nonstandard pre-verbal

forms) is explained by an underlying relative tense system of the type that are said to typify creole languages.

3.4.2.1. Anterior tense

The category ANTERIOR is the most basic and fundamental tense distinction within Creole grammars, (Bickerton 1975:149-151). However, in decreolizing languages which have been studied in detail, in particular Guyanese mesolect, the shift from creole anterior markers indicating the creole ANTERIOR tense category to English PAST markers indicating the creole ANTERIOR tense category is said to figure among the earliest superstrate-influenced changes (Bickerton 1981:85). This presents a situation in which certain morphological markers have a lexical *form* equivalent to a category in one language, e.g. the Std E PAST tense morphemes, but a *function* equivalent to a category from another language, e.g. the Creole ANTERIOR tense.

Bickerton (1981) suggests that a stage in which ANTERIOR tense was part of the underlying grammatical system of a given variety may be reconstructed on the basis of synchronic evidence. He notes that the process of decreolization may be distinguished from natural internal evolution: the former is characterized by changes in surface form prior to change in grammatical function, while the latter preserves early forms, imbuing them with new functions. If the synchronic state of a language is due to decreolization, and if the original creole had the prototypical ANTERIOR tense category, then according to the above scenario, a new marker would have been adopted in addition to it, with both originally covering the same meaning, i.e. ANTERIOR tense. The new form would then gradually take over the grammatical function of PAST tense, as the older, ANTERIOR tense category disappears or becomes restricted in use. In the ideal case, we should be able to locate synchronically both a PAST tense morpheme and remnants of the original ANTERIOR tense morpheme, with the essential difference being that the former would not fulfill its grammatical function in its native origin grammar but rather the grammatical function of the category it has been borrowed to replace, i.e. ANTERIOR tense.

This is precisely what Bickerton (1975; 1981) has attempted to examine in Guyanese and other decreolizing varieties. His findings indicate that the distribution of English PAST tense morphology (i.e. *-ed* and suppletion) is consistent, not with the characteristic distribution pattern for the category PAST tense in Std E, but with what is expected in the underlying creole ANTERIOR tense category. This is evident in the constraint posited by Bickerton that predicts the insertion of PAST tense morphology on verbs that are punctual, i.e. which represent single-point actions in past time, and the resistance to PAST tense morphology on verbs which are non-punctual, i.e. those which represent a series of actions which were repeated on frequent occasions in the past (p. 160). This can be seen in example (76) below. Bickerton claims that the "only plausible reason" for the lack of morphology on the verbs indicated in bold face is that "their referents are not single point-actions, but a series of actions which were repeated on frequent occasions in the past — in other words, which are inherently [-punctual].

- (76) Anita, you remember when we — it *was* a long time ago. We used to- when somebody *used to be crying* in our house we *used to do* just like this. We *used to do* our fingers — all like that — do like this to 'em — we *used to say*, ching, ching ching ching ching ching ching ching. We *doing* all that old stuff ... and sometimes we *make* them laughy. They — we *make* somebody laugh when we *be doing* that you know. Who ever it *be crying*, we *make* them laugh so hard — that they — they — that — that they *be steadily* — they *be steadily crying* and *laughing* back. And then we *say* — and then we *used to say* — when they *do* that — we *used to say* : 'Crying when you laughing!' (Bickerton 1975:160)

The fact that this constraint is believed to be fundamental to Creoles in general, and by extension to BEV, is obvious from Bickerton's suggestion (1975:160) that his findings present "a strong case" for the re-examination of Black English (both northern urban ... and southern-rural ...) to see whether factors similar to those in Guyanese creole are present. Bickerton's basic hypothesis in this regard is that the phonological patterns of deletion revealed in the work of Labov (1972a; 1968) Wolfram (1969) and Fasold (1972) are actually masking patterns of insertion which take precedence over phonological ones.

Strong past verbs which do not contain an environment for phonological reduction are said to provide an illustrative case for this claim since their surface form is unambiguously marked or unmarked (e.g. *came* vs. *come*). In Guyanese creole, as in example (76), the strong verbs exhibit their V-base (present tense) form. Bickerton uses this fact to support his hypothesis that the category PAST tense is not operational in Guyanese Creole. In BEV, on the other hand, Fasold (1972:38-40) and Labov et al. (1968:138) have claimed that past tense marking in strong past forms is "near universal" and have used this as evidence for arguing that the English category PAST tense is part of the BEV grammar. The simple fact of marked or unmarked strong past forms, however, not only ignores the more subtle patterns that may exist to explain the alternating marked or unmarked forms, but also the historical precedence and patterning of these surface morphologies in other varieties of English.

3.4.2.2. Aspectual distinctions

Perhaps the most overtly distinct feature of BEV grammar are its auxiliaries, which are said to mark particular aspectual interpretations. Both earlier research and more recent studies on the BEV aspectual system suggest that it is this area of the grammar that either portrays the most evidence of derivation from an earlier Creole and/or is the site of on-going change in the dialect.

While the reported inventory of aspectual and/or mood markers in BEV seems to be increasing in recent years, (e.g. *steady* (Baugh 1984), *come* (Spears 1982) *be done* (Baugh 1983) etc.) a core group of pre-verbal markers for PAST temporal reference in general have been attested in the majority of the reported work. Although researchers vary slightly on their explanation and interpretation of these forms, they are consistent in maintaining that the contrasts that are available in the BEV temporal system are more elaborated than those that are possible in Std E. Fasold & Wolfram (1975) explain that where Std E marks two aspectual contrasts of the perfective type BEV marks four: in addition to the

PROGRESSIVE and the perfective tense (or aspect) constructions with *have* and *had*, BEV is said to have a completive construction, *done* and a remote time construction, *been*. In some analyses (e.g. (Fickett 1972)) three different pre-verbal forms are posited to mark past temporal reference, each of which represent "degrees of past": *did* representing immediate past, *done* representing recent past and *been* representing remote past.

3.4.2.2.1. Done

Labov et al. (1968) report that the pre-verbal particle *done*, as in example (77a-d) below, is a quasi-modal used widely among whites in the southern United States. In BEV, however, it occurs with moderate frequency and they suggest that it may be disappearing in the northern ghetto areas (Ibid. p. 265). Fasold & Wolfram (1975:66) refer to this form as "completive aspect" which is formed from the verb *done* followed by a past form of the verb, as in (78a-b) below, although they say that it is unique in BEV.

- (77a) We *done* got this far; le's run! (14 Oscar Bros, #584)
- (77b) I *done* told you on that. (13 Jets, #606)
- (77c) You don't have it 'cause you *done* used it in your younger age. (15, Lame, #624)
- (77d) But you *done* tol' em, you don't realize, you d-- you have told 'em that. (39, N.Y.C., #804)
(Labov et al. 1968)
- (78a) I *done* tried hard all I know how.
- (78b) I *done* forgot what you call it.
(Fasold & Wolfram 1975:66)

From these examples Labov et al. (1968) conclude that the meaning of *done* "is plainly *already*" (Ibid. p. 265) as it is frequently reinforced with *already* as in example (79a-b). They suggest that it is a "perfective particle" and can be replaced by *have*.

- (79a) I *done* told you already. (13 Jets, #606)
- (79b) She *done* already cut it up. (13 Chicago, #470)

This interpretation does not account for all of the uses of *done*, however, since in "many other cases" *done* seems to be used intensively (Ibid. p. 265), as in (80) below:

- (80) After you knock the guy down, he *done got* the works you know he gon' try to sneak you. (13 Jets, #606)

3.4.2.2.2. Been

The marker '*been/bin/BIN*' has been called a 'remote time construction' which is formed from the verb *been* followed by a past form of the verb, as in (81a-b) below.

- (81a) I *been had* it there for about three or four years.
 (81b) You won't get your dues that you *been paid*. (Fasold & Wolfram 1975:66)

Fasold & Wolfram (1975) define this form as one which indicates that "the speaker conceives of the action as having taken place in the distant past" (Ibid. p. 66) and indicates the remoteness of an action from the current interests of the speaker (Wolfram & Fasold 1974:152). It is also described as having the function of indicating "something that began a long time ago and is still relevant". This interpretation of pre-verbal *been* is also consistent with the Creolist's claims with regard to the *bin/ben* form (Dillard 1972a; Stewart 1965).

Nuances of meaning illustrate the distinct semantic interpretation of this form. Wolfram (1974) points out a sentence such as (81b) is likely to be misunderstood by a speaker of Std E as involving a passive construction, but in BEV the meaning is active (i.e. dues were not paid to you, you paid them to someone else). Furthermore total completion of the action described can also be emphasized with emphatic stress placed on *been*.

In Rickford's (1975) detailed analysis of the significance of stress to the function of *been* he found that only stressed BIN can signal remote function by itself. When unstressed *bin* is used with this function it occurs frequently with temporal adverbs or 'specifiers', as in example (82a-b) below, which he claims signal that function rather than the marker itself. Such indicators, however, are not predicted to occur with stressed BIN. The distinction between these two forms can be seen in example (82b).

- (82a) I *bin* playing cars since I was four (BF 38, Pa)
 (82b) I BIN know you, you know. I *bin* knowing you *for years*.
 (BM 59, Pa)
 (Rickford 1975:168)

Rickford emphasizes the distinction between these two forms of 'been'. While the stressed form is distinct from Std E, cases of unstressed *bin* can often be described as 'PRESENT PERFECT'

The completive and remote time indicators can also be combined, as in (83a-b) below to indicate [+completive, +remote] actions in the past. Wolfram (1974) reports that such sentences are rare because "situations requiring such fine aspect distinctions seldom arise".

- (83a) I *been done* went there.
 (83b) I *done been* went there. (Wolfram & Fasold 1974)

Even alone, however, most researchers attest to the fact that both *done* and *been* are quite rare in BEV in the northern cities of the U.S. In fact Rickford (1977) suggests that unstressed *bin* 'been', *don* 'done' and the use of the verb stem by itself to signal PAST are all declining in frequency in BEV.

3.4.2.2.3. Had/Did

While researchers have previously claimed to be unsure whether the auxiliary *have* is part of the BEV grammar, the auxiliary *had* has been found to be far more frequent and thus more likely to be a productive part of the grammar. Although Labov et al. (1968) have reported that BEV speakers use the PAST PERFECT tense much like it is used in Std E, Fasold & Wolfram (1975) have reported that BEV speakers use more *had* than Std E speakers, especially in story-telling. Although they suggest that the reason for this is phonological, i.e. phonetic processes of reduction operate less frequently on the final consonant of *had*, as opposed to the final consonants of *have/has*, Rickford (1977) posits another explanation. He suggests, similar to the scenario described by Bickerton (1975) that *had* enters the BEV system in the process of decreolization as a borrowed morpheme for the ANTERIOR tense category replacing unstressed *bin*, which in Creole is claimed to mark the earlier of two actions simultaneously under discussion (Ibid. p. 208).

The pre-verbal form *did*, in contrast to *had*, is less frequently attested in BEV, (cf. (Fickett 1972)), although it is found in Gullah, (Rickford 1977), and in other Creole varieties where it is claimed to have the same function as *had* (Bickerton 1975:127-32; Holm 1980).

3.4.3. Summary

This review of past temporal reference verbal structures in BEV has shown that despite decades of study of its tense/aspect marking there is still no consensus among researchers with regard to what linguistic function(s) each form has, nor what organizational principle(s) underlie the surface variation in form. Put simply, variationists believe that much of the variability in marked and unmarked verbal structures in BEV can be accounted for in terms of low-level phonological rules of contraction and deletion, in particular for the surface bare unmarked verbs (e.g. *walk*∅). Creolists, on the other hand, were opposed to this idea from the very beginning of the debate (Bailey 1965a) and have continued to maintain that this patterning is produced by (creole-based) insertion rules instead. The issue, in fact, is whether this variation can be seen as the result of the operation of processes typical of English grammar or as the result of foreign patterns derived from another system.

3.5. Past temporal reference verbal structures in "Early" BEV

3.5.1. The WPA Ex-Slave Narratives

The most complete examination of past temporal reference verbal structures in "early" BEV²¹ is found in Schneider's (1981; 1983a; 1983b; 1989) work on the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives. His research provides a comprehensive discussion and analysis of many important morphological and syntactic constructions which include the past temporal reference verbal structures discussed above — past tense marking of regular verbs, past

²¹ Schneider's name for the variety of BE contained in the WPA Ex-Slave narratives is 'Earlier Black English', abbreviated EBE in his work.

tense and past participle forms of irregular verbs, the perfective auxiliary and present participles. For each variable, Schneider presents the results of his analyses of the Ex-Slave Narratives and an interpretation based on a comparison with possible related varieties (i.e. present-day Black English, white American dialects, historical and present-day British dialects, Gullah, English-based creoles and West African languages) and the likelihood of these varieties being the sources for the respective forms. His approach, however, is primarily distributional, and aside from examination of the phonological conditioning on simple PAST tense weak verbs there is little consideration of other potential linguistic conditioning.

3.5.1.1. Past tense

Schneider (1989) found that single past temporal reference verbs (which he defines as those that were "clearly used in a past context") were marked in three different ways, either with the past tense inflection (*-ed* or suppletion), zero, or *-s*. Although some of the *-s* marked verbs could be explained as HISTORICAL PRESENT, he concludes that their occurrence in non-narrative past temporal environments as well, indicates that for some of his informants the rule of past marking is not obligatory but optional.

Phonological conditioning on regular verbs "fully correspond" (Schneider 1989:89) to those reported in studies of synchronic BEV (Fasold 1972; Labov 1972a; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969). Although Schneider cites these results, see Table (4) below, as being "not nearly as pronounced as has been found in any research on contemporary BEV", note that there is basically no difference at all between [+vocalic] and [-vocalic] environments (i.e. 68.7 vs. 65.3; 24.8 vs. 26.6; 6.5 vs. 8.1). These results are, in fact, quite different from the findings summarized in Table (3) above for contemporary BEV where the differences between these two phonological environments are far greater.

Table (4). Phonological conditioning of verbal morphology in regular verbs (Schneider 1989:84)

Ex-Slave Narratives	___/[-vocalic]		Morpheme Presence ___/[+vocalic]		___/pause	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
-ed	68.7	588	65.3	1091	74.8	113
Ø	24.8	212	26.6	444	19.2	29
-s	6.5	56	8.1	136	6.0	9

On the other hand, Schneider describes the situation concerning strong verbs in the Ex-Slave Narratives to be somewhat different from the early quantitative studies. While Fasold (1972), Labov (1972a; 1968) and Wolfram (1969), had found that strong verbs with past temporal reference were rarely unmarked in BEV, Schneider found that about 20% occurred with the V-base form. In addition, many strong verbs had irregular morphological forms, e.g. *know ~ knowed*, *hang ~ hunged*, *fight ~ fit* etc. As Schneider points out, all of these types are "far from being peculiar to Earlier Black English or black speech" since they are found throughout the historical record of the English language. Furthermore, in almost all cases, the incidence of irregular forms and very often also their relative frequency directly correspond to the results of dialectological and sociolinguistic research projects on lower-class white speech, especially in the South (Schneider 1989:114). Schneider concludes that irregular verb forms in single main verbs found in the Ex-Slave Narratives are directly related to forms of white nonstandard dialects and ultimately descend from older and dialectal British English usage.

3.5.1.2. Present perfect

Unlike the questionable status of the PRESENT PERFECT construction reported in synchronic BEV, Schneider reports that in the Ex-Slave Narratives it "fully corresponds to the one in Standard English" (Schneider 1989:114) with all three types distinguished by grammarians—continuative, resultative and perfect of experience—present in the data. The most common of these, the continuative perfect, expressing "the on-going progressive of an action or existence of a state from the past to the present" (Ibid. p. 115) is illustrated in (84a-g) below.

- (84a) Slavery wuz a good thing, but folks *has improved* a lot since den. (NC 12:375)
- (84b) I *has been* a strong, hard working man most all my life. (SC 1:65)
- (84c) Dat's de way I've always tried to be, ... lak my white people. (Ala 8: 271)
- (84d) I's a Nigger what *has been* prosperous. (Miss 9: 83)
- (84e) *Hab had* good health all mah life. *Hab tuk* very liddle medicine en de wust sickness I eber had wuz small-pox. (Tenn 4: 24)
- (84f) An' I always *has been* proud of my name. (Ark 2: 118)
- (84g) Dis nigger am thankful for what de Lawd *have blessed* me wid. (Tex 2: 162)
(Schneider 1989)

The difference between usage of the PRESENT PERFECT for a period under reference stretching up to the present and the simple PAST tense for a concluded past event seems clearly distinguished in these data as can be seen in example (84e) where "*hab had* good health" and "*hab tuk* very little medicine" represent on-going processes while "the wurst sickness I eber *had*" represents something that happened in the past which is now over. Other usages of the PRESENT PERFECT, however, extend beyond Std E restrictions. He illustrates this with a number of examples culled from the data. In the perfect of experience, for example, in which "an action or an event occurred at an indefinite point within a temporal frame of reference that extends up to the present moment" Earlier Black English allows verbs of sense perception, i.e. *hear*, *see*. While the standard system allows the PRESENT PERFECT in such contexts in clauses of negation and with adverbs

of frequency, Schneider claims that it is not acceptable in conjunction with adverbials denoting a specific time or with past tense verbs since the moment of perception or reception of knowledge is long ago and concluded. Schneider illustrates this usage in example (85a-b) below, however these sentences seem quite acceptable and it is not clear how they are anomalous within a Std E interpretation.

- (85a) Is dey hents? Ah 've *hearn* tell uv em but nevah *have seen* no hents. (Ark 8: 150)
- (85b) My mother worked in the field and I've *heard* her say that sometime she didn't see her chillun from Sunday to Sunday. (Ark 5: 385)

A further extension of the perfect of experience usage of the PRESENT PERFECT is found in contexts such as those illustrated in (86a-c) where it is used for actions in an extended period of time in the past. Again, Schneider (Ibid. 116) interprets this as an extension of the rules of usage governing the perfect of experience in English.

- (86a) De white folks clothes an' all o' de slaves clothes wuz all made on the plantation ... I've *worked* many a day in de house where dey made cloth at. (Ga 6: 290)
- (86b) *Hab gon'* ter lots ob camp-meetin's. (Tenn 4:25)
- (86c) *Hab housed* terbacker till 9 o'clock at nite. (Tenn 4: 24)

Thus, Schneider claims that while it is clear the PRESENT PERFECT is used productively and with functions paralleling Std E usage, certain contextual environments where only the simple PAST tense would be appropriate in Std E apparently have more flexibility than prescriptive usage entails. Again, all the examples in (86) above appear to be acceptable with the simple PAST tense as well and it is not clear what distinction Schneider is making in this case.

Schneider's data, however, provide only a tabulation of the number and contextual characteristics of verb structures of the type *have/ve/has* + past participle in the Ex-Slave Narratives leaving unresolved the frequency of these forms in contexts where they might have been expected in Std E and their relationship to other past temporal reference tense/aspect categories, i.e. the PAST PROGRESSIVE and the simple PAST. Moreover,

there is no exploration of what, if any, contextual factors might affect the surface realization of this category over any others. Usage patterns of pre-verbal *have/ve/*'s with verbs of perception, which are all inherently *stative* verbs, as opposed to nonstative verbs would have been able to address Creolists' claims for the primacy of aspectual factors conditioning the occurrence of overt verbal morphology. The dearth of such explorations leave important questions unanswered. It is in areas such as these that a distributional analysis encompassing both Creole and English grammatical patterns can contribute to a more thorough understanding of the exact nature of these tense/aspect morphologies.

3.5.1.3. Past perfect

Schneider's (1989) examination of the PAST PERFECT category in the Ex-Slave Narratives is based on a tabulation of all forms surfacing as *had/d* + past participle. He claims that "usage conditions" of these forms are also identical to those in Std E grammar. He argues that the structure indicates that one action preceded another past action and corresponds to both the Std E simple PRESENT and the PRESENT PERFECT moved one step into the past. He lists the examples in (87a-e) below:

- (87a) Den after dey *had left* us plantation, dey would go to some other place. (SC f: 20)
- (87b) One night my ma *had been nussin'* one of dem white babies, and atter it dozed off ... (Ga 8: 99)
- (87c) I never *had worked* in de fiel' before. (Miss 4: 54)
- (87d) ... buy my young folks begged 'Massa' not to sell me, cause we'd all *played* togedder. (Mo 3: 42)
- (87e) One yeah de cotton worms was so bad an ah *hadn't* nevah *seen* none. (Ark 5: 380)

No claim is made for the extension of this form to environments where it would be inappropriate or ungrammatical in Std E grammar, nor is distributional information provided as to its frequency of usage in environments where the Std E simple PAST tense could also occur. Moreover, all the environments in (87) represent actions from the distant, as opposed to near, past, and again it is unclear from the information given,

whether such factors have any effect on the surface realization of this morphology. While the contexts illustrated are not suggestive of a Creole relative tense patterning, without the complete range of contexts it is unknown to what extent these forms occur in any specific grammatical or discursive configuration.

3.5.1.4. Progressive

Schneider summarizes the use of the verbal V-ing form occurring in Earlier Black English as also being "identical with its use in Std E" (Schneider 1989:143). His corpus did not contain any instances of deviant rule applications. Progressive forms were not used where they were not expected, nor vice versa (Schneider 1989:143), although deletion of the auxiliary preceding V-ing does occur. This variation is attributed to surface level phonological processes, however, and is not thought to affect the function of the construction. Thus, as in the quantitative studies of contemporary BEV, the progressive is considered virtually identical with its Std E counterpart. It shows no evidence of combination with the aspectual marker *steady* studied by Baugh (1984) nor is there any attestation of progressive meaning marked with pre-verbal *de/da* as is found in Creoles (Cassidy 1986). Again, this conclusion is based on frequency and a semantic interpretation of the context rather than on co-occurrence patterns, distributional tense overlap or other corroborating evidence. Furthermore, there is no analysis of the conditioning factors which operate in the contexts which allow deletion of the auxiliary. While bare present participles have indeed been attributed to the removal of the *be* auxiliary, no quantitative study has yet systematically examined its occurrence. Without such an analysis there is no way to determine whether these forms are patterned in ways which are predicted for unmarked relative tense forms, as the Creolists maintain, or as part of some superficial process operating to remove a weakened part of the verb phrase.

3.5.1.5. Been

In the case of *been*, Schneider makes a fundamental distinction between constructions of the form (have) been + V-ed2/V-ing on one hand, approximating the Std E PRESENT PERFECT, as in example (88a-b) and Ø been + V/V-ed2 (active) on the other, a construction that is basically non-English, as in example (89).

- (88a) ... an' we *been livin'* round here ever since. (Mo 3: 42)
 (88b) ... de man axed Slick, 'What dat water good for? Hab it been tested?' Slick say, 'Oh, yessah, dat water *been scanalysed* ...'
 (89) Old Massa, he *been stay* in de swamp till her hear dem yankees *been leave* dere ... Uncle Solomon en Sipp en Level, dey *been eat* much of boss' rations dey wanted cause dey *been know* de Yankees was comin back ... I tell you, honey, some of de colored people sho *been speak* praise to dem Yankees. (SC 4: 20-21)

Schneider explains the structures of the former type as "surface formal variants of standard structures". For example, the structure in (88a) is interpreted as a progressive form of the Std E PRESENT PERFECT, while (88b) is interpreted as a passive sentence in the PRESENT PERFECT, both with auxiliary *have* deleted. Forms such as these occur in a number of different interviews. The latter type differ from these in that *been* is followed by an infinitive, the structure is active, and it refers to a past state or action, characteristics which, in combination, make it quite unlike a Std E structure. However, these are found only in three interviews, and in two of these only once. This points to the extreme rarity and localization of this form. Nevertheless, its presence and distinctness vis-à-vis the former structure is indicative of a relevant contrast in at least some dialects of Earlier Black English.

3.5.1.6. Done

In contrast to the preinfinitival tense marker *been*, which Schneider found to be quite marginal, he claims that the *done* construction constitutes a "core element" of the auxiliary in the grammars of both black and white vernaculars. This form is used as a

constituent of the perfective auxiliary denoting perfective aspect "with the included concept of resultativeness also including actions that were completed immediately before the temporal point of reference without a causal or resultative connection, apart from the mere temporal sequence." (Schneider 1989:121). This form usually occurs followed by a V-ed2, i.e. *done walked*, however, the V-base form, i.e. *done walk*, also occurs. Schneider attributes this, in the case of regular weak verbs, to a past participle with a phonologically deleted suffix as he finds no semantic or functional distinction between the two variants.

The construction is found with both present and past temporal reference points. When reference is made to present time Schneider considers the construction to be a substitute for Std-E PRESENT PERFECT constructions with *have*, as can be seen in example (90a-b); however, the structure is more commonly used with reference to past time, as in example (91a-b) where it appears to substitute for Std E PAST PERFECT.

- (90a) Miss, I *done told* you all I knows. (Ga 3: 352)
- (90b) Next day us moved right here an' I *done been* here ever since. (Ga 11: 9)
- (91a) Yassah, dat ole cannon in de co'te house yahd at Livingston was drug outten de Tombigbee ribber whar de yankees *done sunk* it time of de wah. (Ala 4: 140)
- (91b) Us didn't have no horse an' plow; Yankees *done carried* off al de horses an' mules an' burnt up ever'thing lak plows. (Miss 6: 62)

Furthermore, *done* can be marked by an additional auxiliary, either *be* or *have*, which are represented either as *is/has* (92a-b) or *was/had* (93a-b) depending on the temporal reference time, as in examples (92) and (93) below.

- (92a) All my brothers, sisters, mother and father *is done gone*. (SC 11: 16)
- (92b) Our two boys and three gals *is done grewed up*. (Ga : 102)
- (93a) Us got married in de new kitchen an' it wuz plum full, 'cause ma *had done axed* 76 folkses to de weddin'. ... My Missus, Lula Weir, *had done baked* a great big pretty cake for me. (Ga 11: 9)

- (93b) De cap'ns went an' live at Marse Greer's house. Marse Greer *had done sunk* all de silver in de duck pond. (SC 6:63)

Schneider suggests that where Std E expresses all actions previous to a past point of reference, regardless of varying aspectual interpretations, with *had* + V-ed2, Earlier Black English can distinguish between an unrelated temporal sequence of two actions, i.e. the Std E PAST PERFECT, e.g. *had* + V-ed2, from a perfective relationship between two past actions, i.e. *had* + *done* + V-ed2. Schneider points out that this is clearly visible in example (94a-b) where "*had done* + past participle designates actions on-going to the temporal point of reference, whereas the actions expressed by *had* + past participle are concluded and over by that moment" (Schneider 1989:124). However, it must be kept in mind that these two functions are both subsumed within the Std E PAST PERFECT category (cf. section 3.3.3). Therefore, it is not clear that this form with *done* is formally distinct from the PAST PERFECT category of Std E. Despite this fact Schneider maintains that an opposition between these two interpretations is found in North and South Carolina, Georgia and Mississippi and thus that the form with *done* is itself regionally restricted to these geographic regions. However, it is not made explicit whether the same function (i.e. on-going actions to the temporal point of reference) are covered by *had* + past participle forms in other regions and speakers nor how the form with *done* compares to the use of either *had* or *had*.

- (94a) Befo' dey got home, word *had done got* round dat our folks *had surrendered*. (SC 11:14)
- (94b) White fokses and Niggers all went to the same camp meetin's and dey brung plenty 'long to eat-- big old loafs of light bread what *had been baked* in de skilleets. De night before dey sot it in de ovens to rise and by mawnin' it *had done riz* most to de top of de deep old pans. (Ga 2:206)

3.5.1.7. Summary

Overall, Schneider's results indicate that Earlier Black English was characterized by a considerable degree of internal structural variation. Creolization, in whatever form it

occurred, was limited geographically and restricted to a few independent processes such as *been* + Verb and *done* + Verb. He concludes that Earlier Black English was not a creole variety at all. Instead, its consistent parallelism to dialectal varieties of English in terms not only of the qualitative forms used and their respective frequencies, but also of their apparent semantic function argues convincingly for the origin of Earlier Black English in the varieties of British English that were spoken in colonial times.

Considered together, his findings also emphasize the heterogeneity of the Earlier Black English grammar and illustrate the fact that the variable processes observed in this variety were quite different in nature from each other. The fact that a variety features a variable with a counterpart in another dialect does not entail that it will have another that will show the same similarities to the comparison dialect, not that any one process will be stable over time, given the additional effects of sociocultural influences. However as we have outlined earlier, researchers have frequently pointed out that applying Std E categories and interpretations to Black English confounds the crucially different structure and organization of grammatical systems which might be essentially different (Brewer 1986a; Mufwene 1983; to appear). For example, Brewer (1986a) criticizes the lack of a syntactic-semantic functional analysis of verbal *-s* in Schneider's approach. She, like Bickerton (1975), argues that it (and other) linguistic items may be camouflaged forms that apparently resemble Std E but actually function in a Creole-like manner, i.e. relatively. This difference would be especially visible in verbal structures that are used to make reference to past time in terms of their alternating patterns of morphological marking. Examination of the complex interplay of conditioning effects of the linguistic environment coupled with comparative analyses of the same form in other related varieties would provide the corroborating evidence which would make the linkage between Earlier Black English and/or dialectal English and/or English-based Creoles more substantial. Without such information, the results are suggestive, but not entirely conclusive especially when the differences that

obtain involve specific lexical forms which, at least to some extent are variants of prescriptive Std E structures.

These considerations are related to another important issue that Schneider does not address — that of the difference between relative and absolute tense marking. As we have emphasized, some researchers maintain this is the essential distinguishing factor between English and Creole-like varieties (e.g. (Brewer 1986a; Mufwene 1983; Mufwene to appear)). In this dissertation we attempt to address these unanswered questions with an analysis which focuses on the variable patterning of marked and unmarked verbal constructions in the wider contexts in which they occur. For example, earlier work, (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989) distinguished past tense marking in narrative and non-narrative discourse. This approach effectively established the existence of a narrative HISTORICAL PRESENT in BE and was able to ascribe the large number of unmarked verbs in narrative contexts to a Std E paradigm rather than the optionally-marked tense system of a Creole. However, in light of Schneider's own observations of non-English-like verbal forms and patterns, e.g. preinfinitival *been*, certain variants of pre-verbal *done* etc., there is at least some suggestion of a creole-like system in Earlier Black English. Thus, in the examination we implement here we adopt a contextually-based analysis of the distribution of tense/aspect verbal forms in specific discourse environments, focussing on how and where they occur *in relation to one another* in the discourse. This is particularly significant with respect to the Creole hypothesis since a relative tense system is expected to base its surface tense/aspect morphology on this feature. It is also significant to the Std E grammar, however, since specific tense/aspect categories have been claimed to be specialized to particular temporal relationships. In this dissertation we examine the characteristic patterns that can be expected in either grammar in order to arrive at a more conclusive understanding of the underlying temporal reference system.

3.6. Past temporal reference verbal structures in Creoles

In order to ascertain whether a given variety has an underlying Creole-like grammar, it is first necessary to understand what is expected from a Creole temporal reference system. While most research into the tense/aspect system of Creoles has also focussed on individual forms in isolation a number of researchers have written extensively on the general framework within which a Creole-type temporal reference system can be understood (Bickerton 1975; 1979; 1981; Mufwene 1983; 1984; 1988; to appear). The following discussion is based on these works, in particular Mufwene (1984) who proposes a unified theory of time reference in Jamaican and Guyanese Creole and Mufwene (1983) in which this system is applied to BEV.

As a point of departure, we begin with the working assumptions laid out in Mufwene (1984:201) for determining and classifying tense and aspect markers in creole:

Any main verb (i.e. that denoting the action or state being described and located in time) is time-inflected in terms of 1) 'tense', which marks the chronological relation of the described state of affairs to the speech event time (ST) and/or a reference time (RT, i.e., time of an event which has previously been situated in relation to ST); and 2) 'aspect', which 'quantifies' the internal temporal structure of this state of affairs.

Given this interpretation, tense and aspect are always assumed to be present; however, it is important to note that in a Creole grammar, unlike most Std E verbal structures²², neither of these need to be overt (Mufwene 1984:201). Either tense and/or aspect can also be marked covertly with the unmarked form. Covert tense marking can be recognized at the surface by the fact that no tense morpheme or no aspect morpheme appears to be affixed to the verb, i.e. *I walk* (Mufwene 1984:202). While some of these verbal forms may have a

²² Despite the fact that prescriptive Std E usage requires overt tense morphology, it is important to keep in mind that there are a variety of specific syntactic structures in Std E which do admit the elision of overt tense marking, e.g. conjoined sentences, simple past tense morphology and many other environments where the reduction of inflection, particularly within certain discursively circumscribed contexts, is quite prevalent, e.g. narrative discourse etc.

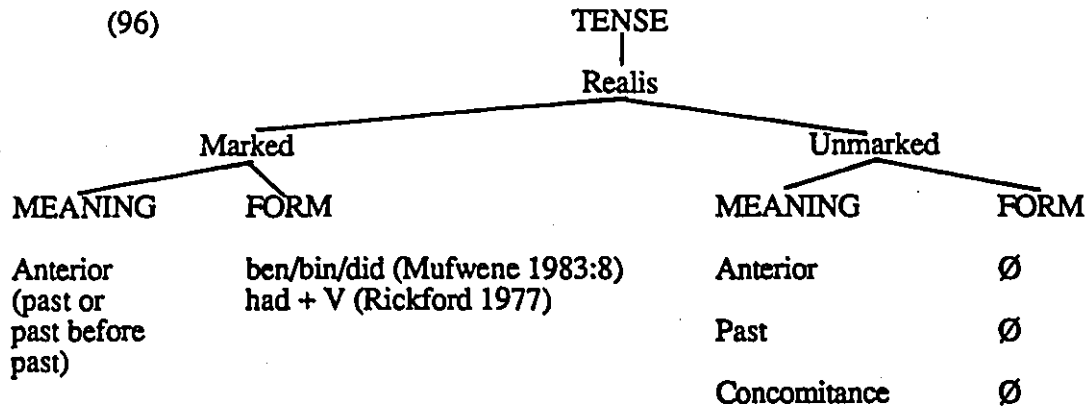
clear time reference elsewhere in the immediate linguistic environment such as a time adverb (e.g. *today*, *yesterday*) as in (95a-b) which can serve to disambiguate the reference time, in Creole grammars the presence of such non-verbal temporal indicators is not a necessary requirement for the appearance of the covert form. In either case a Ø mark is posited which is itself a meaningful temporal inflection.

- (95a) Jaaj Ø (deGC)²³ a skuul tide.
 'George is at school today. (Mufwene 1984:202)
- (95b) Jien Ø kom bak a mi yaad yeside.
 'Jane cam back to my house yesterday.' (Mufwene
 1984:202)

3.6.1. Tense Markers

In a purely Creole system, tense will be marked overtly by *bin/ben/did* or covertly by the unmarked form, i.e. Ø, as in (96) below (Mufwene 1984:222). Interdependent factors such as context and/or aspect determine which temporal reference frame, present, past or past-before-past, is represented by the marked or unmarked form.

²³ Mufwene (1984) uses the subscripts JC and GC to define the relevant variants of Jamaican Creole and Guyanese Creole respectively.



What is crucial with respect to the issues being discussed here, is the claim that in a Creole grammar, the tense category is *relative* and formally opposite to the *absolute* tense found in Standard and/or dialectal English. Bickerton (1975; 1979) formulates the category ANTERIOR which encapsulates the systematicity with which this category marks temporal distinctions and which is now regarded as fundamental to creole tense/aspect systems throughout the world. In its basic formulation, this category's function is to specify "the earlier of two states or actions ... simultaneously under discussion" with the overt anterior marker (Bickerton 1979:311) — if 'earlier' than a present temporal reference context, then it would be equatable to the Std E simple PAST, if 'earlier' than a past temporal reference context, then it would be equatable to the Std E PAST PERFECT. According to Bickerton, at the basilectal level of a Creole, the lexical form *bin* (Std E *been*) is the morpheme that carries this function. Mufwene (1984:205) considers *bin* and its alternate, *ben* to be a "true morphological inflection" whose sole function, as likely, a sentential time adverb (with pre-verbal occurrence), is to indicate ANTERIOR/PAST reference.

In the decreolization process, beginning at the mesolectal level, English morphology begins to infiltrate the Creole grammar and a number of English-like verbal forms, pre-verbal *had* and *did* and/or the Std E simple PAST tense morphology (i.e. *-ed* and suppletion) are added to this system. This is illustrated below in (97) where *had* and

did are said to mark events that occurred prior to the first event and in (98) where *had* marks the earliest event in the sequence.

- (97) She go back
to see what had happen to this seed
she did plant
"She *went* back to see what *had happened*
to this seed she *had planted*" (Rickford 1977: 208)
- (98) He had carry some bush medicine
fuh Joo-Joo bathe he feet.
And Joo-Joo tell um
to tell me how he use it.
'He had carried some for Joo-Joo to bathe his feet with.
And Joo-Joo told him to tell me how he used it.
(Rickford 1977:208)

According to Mufwene (1984:220) only the context (pragmatic or from the linguistic text) determines whether, e.g. a *ben/bin*-inflected verb refers to past (i.e. in relation to speech time) or to past-before-past (i.e. anterior to another reference event located in the past). This means, for example that both Std E PAST-BEFORE-PAST *and* simple PAST meaning can be encapsulated by one form. Rickford (1977:208) suggests that the auxiliary *had* might have entered the BEV system in the same way. The fact that it is used so frequently by Black English speakers would be because, it fills this underlying creole syntactic/semantic slot. In other words, because it can be used for both Std E simple PAST and Std E PAST PERFECT coupled with the general fact that simple PAST meaning is in widespread usage, it has a wider function and thus more frequent occurrence in comparison to Std E, where the same functions are divided between two distinct morphological types (-*ed*/suppletion vs. *had* + V) and where a past state of affairs in relation to speech time *cannot* be represented by *had* + V.

An important distinguishing characteristic of the Creole system is said to be the fact that while the overt tense marker can only refer to ANTERIOR (either PAST or PAST-BEFORE-PAST time), the covert tense marker, $\emptyset$, can refer either to ANTERIOR or CONCOMITANT time. Mufwene (1984) emphasizes this characteristic of the covert inflection as indicating its inherent "polyvalence". Essentially, this means that one form has

a multitude of semantic temporal/aspectual interpretations. Thus, in order to temporally interpret the covert form, the linguistic and/or pragmatic context and/or the adverbial specification in the sentence or within the previously-occurring and temporally-related sentence must be taken into account. Although both overt and covert tense markings in Creole are dependent on the linguistic and pragmatic context, Mufwene (1984:fn 10) points out this is even more so of the covert tense marker because of this polyvalence, presumably because it could not be unambiguously determined otherwise.

3.6.1.1. Aspect Markers

Although the lexical items that function as Creole aspect markers are less clear cut than for tense, a number of different aspectual markers are attested (cf. (Mufwene 1984)). Those that are relevant for PAST time are listed in (99) below. These markers, like the tense markers, can be indicated by the covert inflection, Ø under the same linguistic and discursive conditions.

(99) PERFECT	TERMINATIVE	don, gaan, kom
	INGRESSIVE	taat ('start'), bigin ('begin')
CONTINUATIVE	HABIT	usta
		kipaam ('keep on')/depan/gwaan
	UNMARKED DURATIVE	de/a

Bickerton states that the HABITUAL/ITERATIVE aspect develops into a straightforward past vs. non-past time distinction in which "yuus-tu or other forms" are gradually introduced to cover [+ITERATIVE, +PAST] reference (Bickerton 1975:69).

3.6.1.2. Creole unmarked verbs

The "most complex and most difficult kind of tense/aspect inflection" (Mufwene 1984:217) in Creole is that involving a combination of covert tense and aspect together.

These forms surface as verbs without any morphology at all. They have been variably referred to in the literature as the "absolutely unmarked form" (Mufwene 1984), "stem form" (Bickerton 1975) and "bare verb stem" (Christie 1976). These verbs are considered the most "versatile", the most functionally unmarked²⁴, and the most dependent on context.

Thus, within a Creole system three types of morphological marking combinations are possible:

- (1) marked tense in combination with marked aspect, e.g. *had + done + V*
- (2) marked tense only, e.g. with *had, bin, done* or suppletion/inflection
- (3) marked aspect only, e.g. *usta, bigin* etc.
- (4) Ø-marked aspect in combination with Ø-marked tense, e.g. *walkØ*

This section has illustrated the different types of marked and unmarked tense/aspect forms that occur in a Creole system. The following section explores the characteristic distribution patterns that can be expected from these forms.

3.6.2. Characteristic distribution patterns

Most researchers agree that the dominant characteristics of a Creole relative tense system are: 1) a contrast between stative/nonstative verbs and 2) a reliance on context for temporal interpretation (Bickerton 1975; Mufwene 1983; Seuren 1980). In Bickerton's (1975) analysis, these two parameters "help to determine which particular time-delimitational interpretation should normally be assigned to the covertly-inflected verbs (provided that speech time is the reference time)" (Mufwene 1984:218). As we will explore below the restriction to speech time, i.e. present temporal reference, creates a situation in which, by definition, verbal morphology is in fact influenced by the temporal reference of the verb forms. This sensitivity to one particular temporal reference time calls into question one of the most basic formulations of relative (ANTERIOR) tense which is that verbal morphology is contextually determined and not dependent on absolute notions such as

²⁴ The use of the term "marked" here does not refer to morphology, but to the general functional attributes of the form. Items which are less "marked" are those which are frequent and cover a wide range of applications in comparison with related forms.

"speech time". Furthermore, since even absolute tense forms function, at least to some extent, relatively (cf. (Huddleston 1984)) then it is unclear, on one hand, how the Creole system described by Bickerton is entirely relative, or, on the other hand, how the English system is entirely absolute. The question then becomes whether it is actually possible to distinguish between the two based on this particular parameter. Fortunately, there do exist a number of characteristic distribution patterns which appear to typify one system or the other.

3.6.2.1. The stativity parameter

The classic interpretation of surface verbal morphology in Creoles in general is that it depends crucially on the STATIVE/NONSTATIVE distinction (Bickerton 1975; 1979). In English-based creoles, the inherent stativity of a verb in conjunction with its associated mark is said to determine the completedness of the state or action. For example, covertly inflected, i.e. V-base, nonstative verbs, (e.g. *jump, tell, come*) denote simple PAST while covertly inflected stative verbs (e.g. *know, like, have*) denote non-past. When tense marking is overt, i.e. *bin* + V, it is also influenced by this stative/nonstative dichotomy. As illustrated in (100), if *bin* refers to 'the time preceding the time indicated by the zero stem form' (Bickerton 1975), then for statives it "generally"²⁵ indicates simple Past (i.e. when there is no other temporal specification to the contrary) while for nonstatives it must indicate Past-before-past.

²⁵ Bickerton (1979:313) quotes Agheyisi (1971:133-4) who says that "*bin* is interpreted as remote past, if the verbal is active rather than stative, but ambiguously as simple or remote past if the verbal is stative". This means that stative verbs marked with *bin* can have either interpretation, depending on the context. These exceptions to the general stativity parameter point to the non-generalizability of these notions to the system being described.

(100)	Past before Past	Past	Present
Nonstative Verb:	mi <i>bin go</i> 'I had gone' mi <i>bin tek</i> 'I had taken'	mi <i>go</i> 'I went' mi <i>tek</i> 'I took'	mi <i>a go</i> 'I am going' ²⁶ mi <i>a tek</i> 'I am taking'
Stative Verb:	mi <i>bin no</i> 'I had known' mi <i>bin gat</i> 'I had gotten'	mi <i>bin no</i> 'I knew' mi <i>bin gat</i> 'I had'	mi <i>no</i> 'I know' mi <i>gat</i> 'I have'

Basilectal Verb-phrase (Bickerton 1975:47)

Stative			Nonstative
Ø	[-Anterior]	[+Punctual] [-Punctual]	Ø a
bin	[+Anterior]	[+Punctual] [-Punctual]	bin bina

Although the meaning of *bin* + V would appear to correspond to the English PAST PERFECT creolists emphasize that it is "by no means identical" because it "cannot always be translated by the English pluperfect". Instead, it can be interpreted either as simple PAST or PAST-BEFORE-PAST depending on the stativity of the verb (i.e. *mi bin no* 'I knew'/'I had known' vs. *mi bin go* 'I had gone') and/or depending on the temporal interpretation of the verbs with which it co-occurs (Bickerton 1979:310). For example, a [+past] (nonstative) action verb in its V-base form at surface, denoting some past time, is not necessarily [+anterior]. This depends on the temporal interpretation of the point of reference, which can be another action or actions rather than the speech time. A [+past] action can then [-anterior] if, in a series of events, it was the last to occur or the last of its kind to occur, or the second of two in which the speaker is interested, as in (101a). On the other hand it can also be [+anterior] if it is regarded as both related and prior to a state of affairs at presently in existence, e.g. (101b-c).

(101a) I went[+anterior] to the store and then I came[-anterior] home.

²⁶ The preverbal particle *de/a* is indicated here for purely illustrative purposes in order to distinguish the morphology that would be expected of present temporal reference nonstative verbs. While the PRESENT temporal reference morphology of STATIVE and NONSTATIVE verbs is distinct, this contrast will not be discussed here as this the study is limited to PAST temporal reference verbs.

- (101b) I stayed up[+anterior] all night so now I am[+present] tired.
 (101c) I have gone[+anterior] to the store so now we have[+present] milk.

In this sense, [+anterior] is a relative tense category rather than an absolute tense category. It does not relate to the moment of speech as the category [+past] does, but rather to the inherent stativity of the verb in question and the temporal ordering interpretation of it in relationship to its preceding reference point.

In summary, covertly marked verbs that are stative are interpreted as [-anterior] while covertly marked verbs that are nonstative are interpreted as [+past] if they are also [+punctual] (i.e. if they are not inflected in the durative). The influence of the stativity parameter, however, can be diminished in certain linguistic and discourse contexts.

3.6.2.2. The influence of linguistic context on surface morphological form

In general, surface morphological marking on verbs is highly influenced by the surrounding environment, in particular the morphological marking and relative temporal interpretation on other verbs in the associated discourse, but also the presence of other temporal indicators in the vicinity, such as adverbials. In fact, if a verb co-occurs with a frequency or past-time adverbial, the adverbial is said to take precedence (Mufwene 1983:8; 1984:219) and time-delimitation is restricted to whatever is compatible with that adverb. For example, the unmarked temporal inflection can, if it is accompanied by a time adverbial that is [+anterior], denote [+anterior] with stative verbs, as in (102a-b) below. Compare this with the interpretations in (103a-b), (104a-b) and (105a-b) below. In (103a), when the stem form of the nonstative verb 'run' occurs in isolation, its interpretation is either simple PAST or PRESENT PERFECT whereas when it occurs with a frequency adverbial in (104a) its interpretation is PRESENT and when it occurs with a past temporal adverb in (105a) its interpretation is simple PAST. A similar distribution is found for the STATIVE verbs, i.e. (103b), (104b) and (105b).

- (102a) Tam *nuo* fram laas yie se yu *tel* pan im
'Tom knew last year that you had told about him.'
'Tom has known since last year that you told about him.'
- (102b) Jaaj *flai go* a Miami laas yie an *kom* bak tuu.
'George flew to Miami last year and has come back too.'
(Mufwene 1984:219)
- (103a) John *run* 'round the track
'John ran/has run around the track.'
- (103b) Sharon sick. {verb = copula}
'Sharon is/was sick.'
- (104a) John *run* every morning.
'John runs every morning.'
- (104b) Sharon sick every day. {verb + copula}
'Sharon is sick every day.'
- (105a) John *run* yesterday.
'John ran yesterday'
- (105b) Sharon sick yesterday.
'Sharon was sick yesterday.'
(Mufwene 1983:8)

Thus, as Mufwene (1984:219) points out, the operationality of Bickerton's stativity parameter appears to be limited to "only those cases where the unmarked verb form/covert inflection co-occurs with no other time adverbial and is exclusively dependent on the pragmatic context for its interpretation."

The same reliance on context holds in verbs that are marked for aspect but unmarked for tense. Here the aspect markers, like the tense marker, can be expressed with the unmarked inflections after the frame of reference has been established in the discourse or if the context is otherwise unambiguous. In the case of preceding morphological markers, the forms *we drinkin'* and *he thinkin'*, in (106a-d) below, in conjunction with and in reference to the past time reference of the temporally related verbs, can be interpreted as PAST tense; however, when the frame of reference is PRESENT, they are interpreted as PRESENT tense.

the reference point is speech time will be marked in some way, i.e. suffixal inflection, suppletion, *bin* + V, *had* + V, *did* + V.

To reiterate, the basic assumption of Mufwene's (1984) framework for time reference is that every verb has an underlying tense and aspect marker and that both of these can be realized on the surface as Ø. When both the temporal and aspectual interpretation of a given form are represented by null morphology, then their value can only be determined by recourse to the stativity parameter and elements within the linguistic and pragmatic environment which can serve to re-assign whatever interpretation might have been given to the surface morphology in isolation where their semantic value would have been formulated by the basic parameters of the system. In discourse, however, virtually no verbs occur in isolation since by its very nature discourse builds on preceding context. While disambiguating elements from the surrounding environment such as adverbials, temporal conjunctions etc. are very rare in naturally occurring discourse (approximately 10% of the total), disambiguation from context, either linguistic or pragmatic is the norm (Mufwene 1984). The problem, however, is that the definition or characteristics of such contextual indicators have never been circumscribed, nor is there an explanation of the means by which such features serve to indicate tense. Moreover, if, as we have observed, natural discourse is characteristically lacking in overt *linguistic* indicators of time, i.e. adverbs, conjunctions etc., then we might expect to find many overt creole inflections (i.e. *bin/ben*, *had*, or *did*) but there is no indication in the Creole literature of how often these occur nor in what contexts.

3.6.2.3. Polyvalence of unmarked verbs

Mufwene (1984:218) claims that the unmarked verb is the only "time-delimitational form" that can have a number of different interpretations. While Bickerton (1975:46) indicates that the unmarked form can be interpreted as PAST or PAST-BEFORE-PAST, Mufwene (1984) points out that it is even more versatile than that. He emphasizes,

following Christie (1976) the multiple-usages of the covertly inflected verbs saying that these forms are NOT exactly [+past], but perfective. This is because the covert tense-aspect inflection can be interpreted in more ways than "single, non-extended action", i.e. [+punctual]. He claims it is also used in the following polyvalent environments representing the capacity of the unmarked verb to refer to various different semantic interpretations:

- 1) dramatic use, like the Std E simple present tense
- 2) proverbs
- 3) HABITUATIVE (particularly when it co-occurs with an iterative adverbial) (either with STATIVES or PUNCTUALS)
- 4) it can represent +ANTERIOR (i.e. with stative verbs as well, provided they co-occur with time adverbials denoting +ANTERIOR)

Thus, the covert tense marker and the covert aspect marker, i.e. Ø, can have more than one interpretation depending on the context and its frequency of use, i.e. different aspectual, discursive and temporal ordering functions. In the case that the overt tense and/or aspect marker occurs, only one interpretation obtains, for example the anterior marking of Creole *ben*. (Mufwene 1984:203). In the case of covert marking, however, it is only with consideration of the pragmatic context and/or the complementarity of time adverbial specification in the overall sentence that the appropriate interpretation can be understood (Ibid. p. 216).

Note, however, that such 'polyvalence' is virtually identical to the wide-range of interpretations available for the Std E simple PAST tense category. Std E uses the simple PRESENT tense for proverbs, but all other functions that Mufwene describes, can be represented by the same form in Std E — the single unmarked main verb! Although Std E simple PAST is normally represented by suffixal or suppletive inflection, this is not always the case. These inflections are often subject to removal by phonological reduction processes, while the latter, especially certain verbs, often appear in their V-base form rendering the surface morphology unmarked in either case. Attention to such mor-

phosyntactic correspondences is crucial to the comparative analysis we perform in section 5.0. below.

3.6.2.4. The discourse context

A further complication of these patterns comes from the effects of the discourse context. A number of researchers have noticed that the characteristic distribution pattern for marked and unmarked tense forms predicted by Bickerton (1975) for an underlying Creole anterior system can also be given a HISTORICAL PRESENT interpretation. Corne (1977) and Bollée (1977) provide descriptions of Seychelles Creole narrative discourse which demonstrate that after the initial use (or uses) of the marker *ti*, "much of the remainder of the story may be told with verb forms unmarked for Past (i.e. a sort of 'historical present')". Furthermore, Mufwene (1984:216) characterizes a Creole text by the occurrence of:

"a[n overtly] marked realis form which soon disappears as the text progresses and as soon as the time reference can be considered well-established. The marked tense, which initially minimizes reference to the context ... is then replaced by the unmarked covert realis form, and the story continues in this tense form except when ANTERIORITY and SUBSEQUENCE time relationships obviously call for changes of tense forms in relation to reference time

Givón (1979) attributes this same type of patterning to a discourse/pragmatic function in which the unmarked verb is also thought to represent a type of HISTORICAL PRESENT.

Observing that Bickerton's quintessential constraint — that past-marking should be most frequent with punctual verbs is irrelevant in some of his Guyanese texts and that phonological factors do not seem to function either, Rickford (1987b) also explores the viability of what he refers to as "a HISTORICAL PRESENT interpretation" for these forms. His hypothesis entails that the unmarked verbs may actually be functioning along parallel lines to the Std E category. Thus, he examines the distribution of marked and

unmarked verbs within narrative discourse according to what section of the narrative they were in. His findings indicate that within narrative discourse generally past punctuals are in fact marked *less* often than past nonpunctuals indicating that to some degree there is a "deliberate coding of past actions as 'historical presents' for dramatic narrative effect" (p. 167). He suggests that the HISTORICAL PRESENT, marked by either "verb + Ø" or "verb + -s", stands in discourse/pragmatic contrast with "verb + -ed" and *any other marked past* (regardless of whether it is "anterior" or not, and thus of whether it requires "had" or "had verb + -en" or not) (p. 189).

Furthermore, Rickford (1987b) illustrates that the basic Creole stativity distinction also does not hold across all types of discourse. In narratives, nonstatives are only marked with anterior in the case of out-of-sequence anterior events. As a result he revises the basic stative/nonstative parameter to provide for optional marking with *bin* within narrative discourse. He posits optional marking when events are sequential ones in a narrative and obligatory marking for narrative anterior events which are out of sequence of the normal iconic order of narrative complicating action clauses. This optional occurrence of *bin* when events are sequential ones in a narrative is said to reflect the linguistic processes of redundancy in natural languages (Mühlhäusler 1980:23).

Thus, Rickford concludes that the HISTORICAL PRESENT analysis and the anterior analysis depend on "strikingly similar" dimensions (p. 188). Nevertheless, he suggests that the exact nature of the formal oppositions between marked and unmarked verbs within both the Std E and Creole systems needs further clarification (p. 189) and that a HISTORICAL PRESENT analysis exactly parallel to Std E remains questionable in light of the fact that third-person present "-s" is extremely limited in the Guyanese Creole. Furthermore, he points out that the Creole anterior distinction applies across all kinds of

discourse while a HISTORICAL PRESENT analysis is restricted to the distribution of marked and unmarked verbs in narrative discourse only (p. 189)²⁸.

An analysis which can appropriately take into account the context of occurrence, distribution and characteristic pattern of such a discourse-related phenomenon, however, must necessarily rely on the frameworks for narrative analysis developed by Labov (1967), Labov (1972a), Hopper (1979). They and other researchers (Fleischman 1985; Schifffrin 1981; Silva-Corvalán 1983; Wolfson 1979) have shown that the means by which the form and function of grammatical variation can be examined systematically is directly related to their location within the discourse structure. For example, within narrative discourse particular sections have characteristic tense/aspect morphologies. In *orientation* clauses, which situate the listener with regard to the general circumstances (e.g. time and place) of the events being recounted, as well as the identities of the characters involved, and *evaluation* clauses, which communicate to the listener the narrator's feelings about these events (i.e. provide the "point" (Polanyi 1979) of the narrative), a variety of past reference verb forms typically occur, including overtly marked simple PASTS. *Complicating action* clauses, however, which recount what happened in a series of clauses that are temporally ordered according to the sequence in which the events actually occurred, are quite distinct from the former two sections. This is the locale of the HISTORICAL PRESENT which surfaces either as unmarked or marked with a PRESENT tense inflection. The HISTORICAL PRESENT is confined almost uniquely to this section where it alternates with the simple PAST tense to fulfill characteristic discourse functions.

Given this knowledge, Rickford's opposition between unmarked verbs and verbs marked with *-s* as opposed to *-ed* inflected verbs and all other marked pasts is at least

²⁸ While no grammarian, to our knowledge has explicitly stated that the HISTORICAL PRESENT is absolutely restricted to a specific sub-section of a structured narrative, i.e. narrative complicating action clauses, the requirement for the HISTORICAL PRESENT that is most often utilized is one in which the narrator recounts a series of sequential events in the past, as if reliving them iconically at the time of speech.

somewhat incompatible with Std E HISTORICAL PRESENT patterning. While the distribution he describes is similar to Std E, the absolute contrast between verbs with no mark or -s vs. any other past tense morphology is not entirely accurate. In Std E, verbs with no mark or -s inflection alternate with overtly marked *-ed* or suppletive inflections, all within in the same discourse environment, i.e. narrative complicating action clauses, and it is all of them that contrast with verbs of various other past temporal reference morphologies, i.e. past HABITUALS, PAST PERFECT, PAST PROGRESSIVE, in non-complicating action sections of the narrative. His revision of the basic Creole stativity distinction includes optional marking in sequential temporal relationships and obligatory marking in anterior temporal relationships. Although the Std E PAST PERFECT and simple PAST are often interchangeable, non-complicating action narrative environments particularly favour the explicit time indication embodied in the PAST PERFECT in order to make explicit the intended temporal ordering relationships of this narrative explanatory section, i.e. orientation clauses (cf. section 3.3.3 above Frank 1972). While both the simple PAST and PAST PERFECT could potentially appear in these environments, either one would likely surface as a marked form in Std E. This fact coupled with the possibility of HISTORICAL PRESENT and simple PAST forms in the complicating action make Rickford's revision of the Creole stativity distinction appear identical to the patterns expected in Std E. Thus, one of the most basic problems with any analyses which have attempted to examine the distribution of verbal morphology in narrative discourse is the lack of demarcation between explicitly Creole and explicitly English morphosyntactic patterns and contexts.

3.7. Summary

We have systematically reviewed all the relevant past temporal reference verbal structures in varieties which can be considered relevant to our BE speech data, (i.e.

English-based creoles, BEV, early BE as well as English in many of its forms), how they have been characterized by various researchers and what their form and function(s) have been hypothesized to be. We have found that dialectal varieties of contemporary English retain verbal morphology from earlier stages in the history of the English language that are quite comparable in form to those that have been cited as Creole in origin in BEV. This suggests that the mere presence of such verbal forms, auxiliaries and category overlaps in BEV cannot be conclusive evidence of an underlying Creole grammar, nor for that matter an underlying Std E or dialectal English grammar.

This review has also emphasized the lack of accord amongst scholars with respect to the function accorded past temporal reference morphologies in BEV. There is a dramatic contrast between scholars who view them as being traceable to earlier stages of English (e.g. (D'Eloia 1973; Herndobler & Sledd 1976; 1983a; Schneider 1989; Traugott 1972)) with their surface morphological forms due to the operation of surface deletion rules (e.g. (Fasold 1969; Labov 1972b; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969)) and/or other linguistic conditioning factors, and those who view them as being essentially distinct in meaning, distribution and function from English and originating in pidgin or creole grammars (e.g. (Bailey 1965b; Dillard 1972a; Dillard 1975b; Mufwene 1983; Stewart 1967; Stewart 1968)).

Recall that in (67a-e) above, we find that from a cursory inspection of the patterns of marked and unmarked verbs in Samaná English, neither the deletion nor the relative tense hypothesis can account for all of the unmarked verbs in these data since there is such a wide range of forms which cannot be subsumed within the variable context of either. Of course, it is reasonable to expect that a unitary phenomenon could not possibly account for the wide range of different morphological forms and patterns that make up the past temporal reference verbal structures studied here. While certain verb forms have the potential for consonant cluster simplification by the mere fact of their phonological configuration, i.e. weak verbs, others are completely excluded on similar grounds, i.e.

strong verbs. While quantitative analyses have been conducted on the former variable, i.e. suffix deletion, other patterns of marked and unmarked verb structures have never been quantitatively studied. Thus, while the literature on this subject abounds with claims as to the proscribed forms which would exhibit a Creole grammar, the reality of the situation described here entails that their actual frequency or distribution is unknown.

To summarize, the major issue is whether 1) pre-verbal *had, done, been* and *did* (and possibly *have*), 2) verbs which are marked for aspect but not for tense (i.e. he *workin'*) as well as 3) frequent unmarked main verbs (i.e. He *walkØ* to the store yesterday) in BEV are being used with an English-based Creole semantic function or whether they reflect Std E and/or dialectal white English functions. That is, are these, essentially English lexical items, "being manipulated to conform to an underlying non-English semantic system" (Bickerton 1979:313) or do they indeed correspond to the English one?

These variable marking patterns are representative of a series of morphological types which may follow either a Creole or English-like system (or both), an absolute or relative tense system (or both), and whose individual functions remain at issue. The inherent variability, i.e. the existence of alternate forms by which past-temporal reference is marked, and the fact that the choice process and the underlying temporal organizational system on which it is based has not been elucidated by the available research, calls for a study that can contribute evidence with which to address this important question.

The analysis proposed here will provide evidence which will be able to contribute to effectively choosing between them. We can assume that the form-function relationships for these morphological patterns will be conditioned within either English or Creole grammars, but with respect to *different* factors. The fact, however, that variation may or may not be conditioned by influences that are purported to originate in the Creole grammar (e.g. verbal aspect, temporal relationship, adverbs etc.) can only be taken to infer that the underlying system is Creole-like if we can also establish that such influences do *not* condition

variability in English-like grammars. While some factors, i.e. the differentiation between stative and nonstative verbs in Creole, can be assumed to be distinct within the two systems, others such as the disambiguating effects of non-temporal features of the context and/or discursive factors could potentially have an effect on surface morphology in either language. Furthermore, some of the salient characteristics of morphological patterning in the Creolist framework are not functionally distinct from those of English. In order to identify such morphosyntactic patterning as reflective of one system over the other we provide comparative analytic examinations of surface morphology and various other interactive systems of the grammar, particularly attested correspondences which are unique to any one system. We hypothesize that verbal forms which have the same morphological mark regardless of the factors cited in the Creolist literature, (i.e. stativity, relative tense marking) or which demonstrate morphological marking patterns in accordance with linguistic conditioning thought to be in operation in WEV, in earlier stages of the English language, or known generally in prescriptive grammars, will provide evidence for the fact that the underlying system is English in origin. If the system is Creole in origin, however, we hypothesize that verbal forms will be arrayed in accordance with features of a Creole system and the patterns we uncover with respect to features in the linguistic environment will be incompatible with generalizations from the literature on English varieties.

In the chapter that follows we turn to the data — the actual utterances of the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings. We utilize the observations, descriptions, results and conjectures of this previous research to provide the basic guidelines for our procedure. With this information, we identify and categorize the past temporal reference verbal structures as well as all of the characteristics with which they have been associated in order to circumscribe the most viable means by which their function might be evaluated.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1. The corpora

4.1.1. The Samaná English Corpus

The Samaná English Corpus was collected in 1981 and 1982 by Shana Poplack and David Sankoff (Poplack & Sankoff 1987). It comprises approximately thirty hours of sociolinguistic interviews with 21 people — 13 women and 8 men who range in age from 58-103. The interviews were conducted in and around the town of Samaná in the Dominican Republic by way of social networks originating from the local community church. Using a "friend of a friend" approach, (Milroy 1980) the interviewers were taken from household to household talking to people about the "old times".

The individuals represented in the corpus all speak English natively and are among the oldest residents of the community. All of them were both born and raised in Samaná, as were the majority of their parents; however, their grandparents were former American slaves who settled in the Dominican Republic in 1824. The speakers in our sample say they came from "yonder", i.e. the United States, and this explains, in part, why they refer to themselves, and any other community members with similar ancestry, as "Americans".

The insularity of this community is borne out by the fact that many of these people have never left Samaná. While some of them have visited the United States or Santo Domingo in late adulthood, their childhood and early adult years, for the most part, were localized to the general area. Because our informants were chosen on the basis of their native-like command of English as well as their advanced age, control for generation differentiation as an extra-linguistic factor was not possible. The informants included in the sample represent, as far as can be ascertained, the *last* generation of native speakers of English. The same is true of socioeconomic class which is generally consistent across all

our informants. In effect, there are literally no class distinctions in this community comparable to middle or upper class. Thus, any intra-community variation in terms of socioeconomic features was not expected. On the other hand intra-community variation can be observed between informants who had any schooling at all and/or were associated with the church and those that are not (Poplack & Sankoff 1987; Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989). Five individuals claimed to have had no education at all, as illustrated in example (109a-c), while three do not even discuss schooling.

- (109a) Interviewer: Did you ever have a chance to go to school?
No, I didn't had no chance to go to school. Yeah, I had no schooling, no. (001/214)
- (109b) Interviewer: And did- did you uh- people go to school when you were younger?
No sir, no sir, I didn't go. (020/124)
- (109c) Look, I never got to go to school one day (021/129)

Despite the fact that over half of the speakers claimed to have received some schooling, the type, or extent, to which this can be considered standard is questionable. Through information gleaned from our speakers, we know that the many of their 'teachers' were in fact their aunts, cousins or community members who had received some 'schooling' before them. For example, the one speaker who claimed to have had the "6th reader" also claimed to be a teacher, although at best, only three of our informants claimed to have a specific year or "book" to their credit. The majority, (7/10), gave no specific information as to the year, length of time, type or any further elaboration of any questions asked about their educational background, as can be seen from their responses in example (110a-c) below. Furthermore, frequent interruption of the regular academic year due to a series of revolutions during the time when our informants were of school age suggests that their actually attendance of these classes was at best sporadic. We might safely assume that this indicates a limited exposure to a generalized education program overall, particularly one which had a highly standardizing effect.

- (110a) My mother sent me to school (009/176)

- (110b) Yeah, I did go to school. (015/147)
 (110c) I did go, but I didn't get too much. (19/320)

The occupations of the male speakers during their working years (they were all retired at the time of the interviews, with the exception of one) included a sailor, shoemaker, preacher, farmer etc. In addition, the majority also claimed to "have some property" where they "raised crops", food and/or coffee for their own consumption. The female speakers for the most part had not worked professionally outside the home after their marriage. Two had been nannies in their twenties, one claimed to have been a school teacher, and another was a local baker.

Although the interviewers were not in-group community members they were able to establish a significant degree of rapport with the informants by participation in church activities, inclusion of family members in the interviews, taking family pictures, helping out with errands and exchanging letters in the time period between the first series of interviews and the second. Further assistance came from the help of one in-group member, as well as his daughter, who accompanied the interviewers on many occasions and who actively participated in subsequent interviews. The success of this method and approach can be measured by their access to the homes and hospitality of the Samaná people. Their general acceptance into the community is illustrated many times by the familiar tone of the interviews as well as their introduction as friends to neighbours and relatives that happened to drop by during the course of an interview, as can be seen in (111) below.

- (111) My brother, come see some friends we has here. Come in.
 (018/400-1)

The friendliness of the Samaná speakers towards the interviewers can be seen in (112), in a jovial interchange that takes place after a woman's husband arrives home to find his wife being interviewed.

- (112) Husband: The only thing what I could say, we's at your service. ... Not with money ... (laughter)
 Wife: And suppose they were looking for money?
 Husband: We don't have that.
 Wife: Suppose they had wanted money. You said we was at their service and you have no money. (laughter)
 Husband: Well uh- I'm at your service, maybe in other things. Uh, for instance I know well, I know maybe they (inc) they's not going to do it, but maybe they're in here a hour in the night ... they want to sleep in a rough bed, they can. And if maybe they're home, you can buy something [to] give 'em to eat likewise (laughter). (018/1076-86)

The interviews range in length from 1 hour to 3 1/2 hours, with some informants being interviewed more than once. Topics were pursued that were of specific and special interest to community members — the exodus of their ancestors, the old time religion, the English language, the revolution etc. The resulting corpus contains a wealth of reminiscences, herb lore, songs, recipes etc. and includes many stories of the old times and narratives of personal experience that are typical of informal speech. Table (5) lists the age and sex of each speaker, whether they had any education or not, and if they were affiliated with a church in the community.

Table (5): Sample information: Samaná English Corpus

Name	Speaker #	Sex	Age	Schooling	Church
OH	001	M	78	no	no
DA	002	F	79	yes	yes
ES	003	F	83	yes	yes
EC	004	M	88	?	?
AD	005	F	58	?	?
MS	006	M	80	yes	yes
VS	007	F	75	yes	?
PG	008	F	90	no	yes
MP	009	F	73	yes	yes
TP	010	M	72	?	yes
SJ	011	M	79	no	yes
SJ	012	F	79	?	?
MK	013	F	103	?	?
LG	014	F	82	yes	?
MM	015	F	72	yes	?
SN	016	M	79	yes	Y
MD	017	F	79	yes	Y
TJ	018	F	79	yes	Y
EH	019	M	71	yes	Y
MR	020	M	86	no	?
CR	021	F	90	no	?

4.1.1.1. Corpus construction

Since the initial collection of the Samaná materials, the author has been engaged in corpus construction, computer manipulation and on-going data extraction and analysis of these data. Each of the interviews was meticulously transcribed into computerized format and subjected to several thorough corrections following a customized version of the transcription protocol outlined in (Poplack 1989). The recorded speech was rendered as faithfully and consistently as possible in order to facilitate the automatic databasing phase of

the project. The major concern here was to create a workable balance between reducing the number of variable renditions of the same lexical item and retaining pertinent phonological and morphological distinctions. For example, maintaining a strict distinction between *because*, *'cause*, and *beca'*, all productive phonological variants in Samaná English, multiplies entries in the data base with little profit while the difference between *walk* and *walked* is a meaningful morphological distinction. Such differentiation is important to the extraction and analysis of potential linguistic variants of a variable, in this case the potential deletion or insertion of the simple PAST tense suffixal inflection. Because of the general focus on morphology and syntax in this research, the overall strategy was to represent variants resulting from the operation of phonological reduction processes in standard orthography regardless of the actual pronunciation of the form, i.e. *'because'* only. Where variant pronunciation affected an entire morpheme, however, it is represented as produced. Thus, a deleted plural marker would be represented as e.g. *hat[Ø]*,²⁹ a realized marker as *hats*; a deleted suffixal inflection would be represented as *walk*, a realized marker as *walked*. All other alternates which cannot be analyzed as resulting from the operation of phonological processes, whether standard or nonstandard, were represented according to the way they were realized (cf. (Poplack 1989)). All Spanish interventions (e.g. codeswitches or borrowings) were transcribed according to standard Spanish orthography.

The final version of the corrected data base was subjected to a number of different programs which tabulate word frequencies, types and contexts. To date, the corpus consists of tapes, transcripts, wordlists, indexes and an individual concordance of each person as well as an amalgamated concordance of the three informants with the most data using the Oxford Concordance Program (Hockey & Marriott 1980). The concordance format ensures maximal accessibility of morphological and syntactic forms and accelerates data extraction. Moreover the indexing and information management system allows the

²⁹ Symbols enclosed in square brackets, as illustrated here, indicate the phonetic realization of the final phonological segment of the word.

analyst to maintain a close working association with the original utterances from which the variables being studied have been culled. Each context is easily retrievable for textual and/or auditory verification.

4.1.2. The Ex-Slave Recordings

The corpus we refer to in this dissertation as the "Ex-Slave Recordings" is a collection of eleven interviews with American ex-slaves collected in the mid 1930's by folklorists whose interests were primarily in the old songs that the slaves used to sing. The recordings were discovered by Jeutonne Brewer in the Rare Book Room and the Archive of Folk Song of the Library of Congress. These were originally recorded on acetate and aluminium discs but these have since been transcribed into written transcripts and re-recorded by modern audio equipment (Bailey et al. to appear). Data for the analysis utilized in this dissertation were extracted from high-quality reel-to-reel copies from which much of the original distortion has been electronically removed rather than from the cassette tapes or transcripts. In spite of this, much of the discourse had to be excluded due to its incomprehensibility.

The individuals represented in this corpus are all presumably monolingual speakers of BE. All of them but one, who immigrated from Liberia, were born and raised in the United States. Because of the nature of this corpus, it was not possible to control for linguistic reliability, regional differentiation, or other features relevant to data accountability as so little data were available. Also because some interviews were very short, (i.e. less than fifteen minutes), and others relatively long, (i.e. over an hour), the idiolects of certain individuals make a disproportionate contribution to the overall results. Despite these unavoidable limitations, we can assume that the socioeconomic class of these speakers, as American ex-slaves, was generally uniform, as was their education. Although these speakers were not consistently asked questions pertaining to this information, answers to

those that were inadvertently asked are generally consistent with these assumptions, as can be seen in (113) below..

- (113) Int: How much school did you get to?
 BL: I never went to school a day in my life, not a hour. (001/107)

All of them had worked from early childhood onwards, both as field and house slaves, except for one who had spent a lengthy career as a "cowboy".

The individuals who conducted these interviews were not in-group community members although at least some familiarity with the speakers is apparent from the discourse as evident from the interviewer's use of familial honorifics, as can be seen in example (114) below, and references to on-going and/or previous association, as can be seen in example (115).

- (114) You're not getting tired are you Uncle F.? (008/259)
 Aunt H., what, how have times changed since you uh, came to Austin? (009/418)
 What was that you said, uh, Uncle B.? (001/003)
- (115) FH: Someday, when you come over here an' I'm not hoarse, you get me to come up here an' I- I'll sing- I'll try to sing it for you.
 Int: I'm gonna do that. (008/279-81)

The major topics of the interviews focussed on the personal experience of being a slave, stories from slavery times, particularly with respect to the treatment of slaves by their white masters, the civil war and emancipation. While there are relatively few structured narratives of personal experience, there are many descriptive accounts of the antebellum period interspersed with personal and generic reminiscences, folk wisdom and songs. The corpus is a poignant and often haunting reminder of the past through the eyes of those who actually lived under conditions of human slavery. Table (6) lists the birth date, sex and place of origin of each informant.

Table (6): Sample information: Ex-Slave Recordings

Name	Speaker#	Sex	Birth Date	Place of Origin
Wallace Quarterman	002	M	1844	Georgia
Charlie Smith	00X	M	1844	Liberia
Fountain Hughs	008	M	1848	Virginia
Billy McCrea	005	M	?	Texas
Joe McDonald	006	M	?	Alabama
Bob Ledbetter	001	M	1861	Louisiana
Isom Mosely	00Z	M	1856	Alabama
Alice Gaston	003	F	1853	Alabama
Celia Black	00Y	F	1859	Texas
Harriet Smith	009	F	1851	Texas
Laura Smalley	00W	F	?	Texas

4.2. Procedure

As we have outlined above, this study is concerned with the underlying temporal structure and organization of Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. In order to narrow the scope of this broad subject area, we have restricted our inquiry to the past temporal reference system only.

We have reviewed in section 3.0 the tense and/or aspect markers that occur within the general realm of past time in English-based creoles, BEV and Standard and dialectal varieties of English and explained why this area of the temporal system provides a crucial point of comparison among these varieties. In the analyses presented in ensuing section 5.0 and 6.0 we propose to examine every potential tense/aspect form which refers to past time in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. In so doing, we arrive at a complete inventory of verbal structures that occur therein. Our aim in the methodology that follows is

to provide a meaningful and systematic means by which to assess their distribution through an exhaustive breakdown of all the potentially relevant features of the linguistic context. This procedure, along with the results of the subsequent statistical analysis, will allow us to arrive at a plausible assessment of their function(s) and ultimately a comprehensive characterization of the underlying system of the Samaná and Ex-Slave grammars.

Our inclusion of every verbal structure that makes reference to the past addresses some of the problems of previous research which focussed on individual morphological forms. Limiting an analysis to only one surface form excludes other morphologies that may participate as variants of the same function. For example, in Std E the simple PAST tense, which is considered absolute, may also be used in a context for the PAST PERFECT which is considered relative (Comrie 1985). Thus, absolute and relative tense types cannot be distinguished a priori simply on the basis of their form³⁰. Inclusion of all verbal forms ensures that both potential absolute and relative tense markers will be considered. This means, however, that only the behaviour of a given tense/aspect form — its frequency, distribution, and environmental conditioning within the discourse — can serve to illuminate its referential characteristics and more importantly the underlying system which governs that behaviour.

One of the major difficulties in dealing with syntactic variables is that the form/function relationships they represent are not nearly as well-defined, nor as straightforward as phonological variables. This has posed a major problem to researchers in their attempts to extend variation studies to syntactic phenomena, especially within the area of tense and aspect (Blanche-Benveniste 1977; Labov 1978; Lavandera 1978; Romaine 1981; G. Sankoff & Thibault 1981; G. Sankoff 1973). Perhaps the most pertinent outcome

³⁰ As we will explore in more detail below the very characterization of 'anterior' tense in Creole (Bickerton 1975) corresponds almost *exactly* to the Std E perfect tense categories (present or past) which are also held to be 'relative' tense categories. This striking parallelism, however, has not (to my knowledge) been noted anywhere in the literature on this topic.

of these debates is the improvement in methodological approach and the model for data accountability, (cf. (G. Sankoff & Thibault 1981; Sankoff & Thibault 1980)), that subsequent studies of syntactic variation have followed to meticulously circumscribe the relevant context of the variable being examined (Myhill 1988; Poplack in press; Poplack & Tagliamonte 1989)

Following the guidelines outlined therein we define the focus of our investigation as 'morphological type of past temporal reference'. This is only an overall definition, however, and as this study proceeds, the data will be subdivided in a number of different ways in order to explore several distinct tense/aspect variables within the general realm of past time. With respect to the problems outlined above, we provide an extensive explanatory overview of our methodology for data selection, exclusion and categorization. Furthermore, we consider as our data set, the entire Samaná and Ex-Slave materials and extract from each of the tape-recorded interviews of the corpora *every* verbal construction used by the individual speakers which referred to past time.

4.2.1. Terminology

With respect to the terminology used in this analysis, temporal categories are sometimes labelled using Std E grammatical terms; however, this merely reflects their use as a descriptive tool to label and subcategorize the morphological forms that appear in the data and to clearly identify them for the reader. We follow Quirk and Greenbaum (1972:26-7), who define five forms of the verb in Std E. These will be utilized in the analyses that follow in order to distinguish surface verb forms based on morphology rather than assumed tense and/or aspect category: 1) the base form, abbreviated V-base³¹ here, is the

³¹ In Standard English the base form is defined as "the form which has no inflection. It is sometimes finite and sometimes infinite" (Quirk et al. 1985:67). In Creole grammars the "stem form" (Bickerton 1975) or "bare verb stem" (Christie 1976) is actually a verb inflected with a Ø-mark and has a specific function.

form used in Std E in all the PRESENT tense paradigm except 3rd person singular, the imperative, the subjunctive and the bare infinitive and the form used in Creoles for unmarked tense, unmarked aspect, 2) the -s form, V-s, which is used in Std E for 3rd person singular in the present tense and which is not necessarily an operational category in Creoles, 3) preterit morphology, either suffixal -ed or suppletion, abbreviated V-ed₁, which is used in Std E for the simple PAST tense and which in decreolizing Creoles is said to gradually supplant ANTERIOR tense, 4) the present participle, abbreviated V-ing, which is used in Std E for the PRESENT and PAST PROGRESSIVE and in -ing participle clauses and which is said to represent Creole aspectual marking and 5) the past participle, V-ed₂ which is used in Std-E for the PRESENT and PAST PERFECT, the PASSIVE and in -ed participle clauses and in Creoles as either an overt ANTERIOR tense marker and/or as a marker of aspect, either remote, e.g. *been*, or completive, e.g. *done*. Usage of these terms, however, does not suggest an *a priori* equating of that category with the Std E semantic functions described, rather, they distinguish the actual verb morphologies as they appear on the surface.

Std E prescriptive grammatical categories are also used in one of our factor groups, as an additional operational tool in order to extract regularities and patterns from the data, for example, the division according to morphological types in section 4.5.7 below. This method provides a means by which specific verbal structures will be grouped together and/or differentiated, depending on their individual behaviours. For example, *did* + V, *would* + V and *used to* + V are coded as separate factors of one factor group, but as members of the same group in another. This allows for their amalgamation into one category if they are found to function in a similar way, i.e. as alternate means of representing habitual actions in the past.

4.2.2. Circumscribing the context of variation

In order to examine variable morphological marking with past temporal reference it is first necessary to delimit the context of its occurrence. We include all verbal structures which refer to actual events, processes and states that occurred (or are assumed to have occurred) in the past (i.e. before now). This includes all questions (Did you go), negatives (You didn't go) and modal constructions, when the modal can be inferred to be an actual tense carrier rather than exclusively modal (You couldn't go) — everything that makes reference to 'real' past time. By this definition we restrict our analysis to what traditional grammars have called "real" conditions. These are defined as leaving "unresolved the question of the fulfillment or nonfulfillment of the condition, and hence also the truth of the proposition expressed by the main clause" (Quirk & Greenbaum 1972:325).

4.2.1.1. Exclusions

Using the basic definition of this variable as those verbal structures which refer to *realis past time* excludes a wide variety of constructions which are ambiguous with respect to temporal reference or have 'irrealis' semantic interpretations. Further delimitation of the variable context comes from the exclusion of categorical environments, as well as any context in which idiosyncratic features of oral discourse interfere with an accurate interpretation and assessment of verbal morphology.

4.2.1.1.1. Present temporal reference

In order to limit our analysis to unambiguous *past* temporal reference verbs, any context, idiosyncratic verb form or specific lexical item that could be construed as present temporal reference, e.g. example (116a-d) below, was excluded. This is an important consideration since the same surface forms can occur in present as well as past contexts and inclusion of forms which are identical in form but critically different in temporal orientation could irreparably skew the results.

- (116a) There's many thing that the old people *don't tell* {past or present ?} us. (006/112)
- (116b) She *say* {past or present ?} she was amaze to see how this child spoke English good. (006/188)
- (116c) But the boy didn't come because he *tell* {past or present ?} me the boy is in English school. (020/178)
- (116d) An every once in a while Morris will come to see the Samaná folks, you know. He grewed up here in Samaná and he *remain* {past or present ?} with that love of Samaná. (014/610-12)

In one context, as in (117), independent factors lead to the utilization of V-base morphology. Here, the construction may well have been borrowed from Spanish rather than a V-base form used for past temporal reference. Such forms are excluded from the analysis. They are not frequent, however, and likely represent idiosyncratic usage.

- (117) My husband *have* many years dead. (002/27)
'My husband has been dead for many years.'

Semantic features of the verb *call* in constructions, as in (118a-c) below, make it ambiguous with respect to simple past or simple present tense. To maintain consistency and prevent skewed results, these were excluded. Unambiguous past contexts which occur with the voiceless inflection [t], as in example (118b) as well as when *call* is used in a passive construction, as in (118c) below, are included.

- (118a) He came with a little boy what they *call* John Barrett. (002/64)
- (118b) My husband, they call[t] him ... uh, how they call[t] him? (008/67-70)
- (118c) And then his son *was call* Peter too. (002/8)

4.2.1.1.2. Irrealis contexts

Our restriction of this study to purely temporal and/or aspectual features of the grammar means that all non-temporal uses of verbs are excluded, i.e. irrealis events, processes and states, conditional and hypothetical clauses as well as uses of the past with a purely modal interpretation. In all of these cases, use of the corresponding morphological forms, i.e. modal + V-base, V-ed1, or *had/have* plus V-ed2, are involved in and contribute to semantic notions of "modality" (concepts such as volition, probability, and obligation)

rather than tense and/or aspect. Given the temporal (and aspectual) focus of this study such constructions are, by definition, not within the context of variation.

Speculative statements in the past, as in (119), refer to a probabilistic interpretation of events rather than the events themselves.

- (119) And we gave him a little bit of the medicine what the doctor had sent. I think that *must have killed* him more quicker. (002/735)

Special uses of the modals *would* and *could* as in (120a-b) have nothing to do with the cognate modals *will* and *shall*, but are instead used to mark the mood of the clause (Quirk & Greenbaum 1972:234). In these cases they are markers of hypothetical meaning rather than past tense.

- (120a) She had the idea that maybe they *would not do* us nothing. (002/329)
 (120b) They was going to town you know to go down to the town to see if they *could fling* the government. (002/397)

As Quirk et al. (1972:52) point out, the past tense can sometimes be used to convey impossibility in closed or unreal conditions in which case it "involves an attitudinal rather than a time distinction", as in (121) below.

- (121) I wish I *was* ninety. (003/365)

Any verbal construction which refers to the future, even future in the past, as in (122a-c), represent unrealized events and are also excluded.

- (122a) I wrote the father that I *wouldn't go* back. (014/119)
 (122b) She told me that she *was coming*. (017/483)
 (122c) I *would never want* to see dead so no more. (13/98)

For example, in sentence in (123) below the irrealis subordinate clause containing *would never get* would not be included in the analysis although the main clause verbs *said* and *got* were included.

- (123) I *said* I would never get on a plane and I *got* on a plane ... (011/737)

Further, this procedure excludes any syntactic constructions whose specific morphology is structurally motivated rather than semantically meaningful. For example,

overt *have* + V-ed₂ occurs virtually categorically in all hypothetical expressions, as illustrated in example (124), as does overt *had/have* + V-ed₂ in *if*-clauses, (cf. (125a-c) below.

- (124) 'Cause if they *could have spoke* the French, well it *would have been* something else but not that patois. (002/786)

Finally, we utilized syntactic criterion to exclude any verbal structures contained in clauses headed by the subordinators *if* or *unless* which are used to mark conditionals.

- (125a) I told her that the bunch of coconuts fell on this way and I was on the next side. If it *had fell* that side ... (002/270)
 (125b) I don't remember if I've *seen* the year he was born. (006/18)
 (125c) Because if they *had buried* the body, the bones had to be there. (002/926-7)

4.2.1.1.3. Discursive features

All interjections, comments, external evaluation in narratives etc. are, of course, excluded from the analysis since they are present reference contexts. They are also excluded from temporal relationship considerations with respect to the past-temporal verbs surrounding them (cf. section 4.5.10) since they represent temporal asides that are not, strictly speaking, part of the on-going time-line. For example in (126) below, the verb *had* is not considered to be anchored to the preceding commentary verb in the expression, *I'm telling you*.

- (126) [I'm telling you] that they *had* a lady ... (007/3)

4.2.1.1.4. Aspectualizing Verbs

Std E has a wide variety of partially grammaticalized verb forms which can occur before infinitives and participles to express aspectual meaning (Brinton 1988:59) e.g. *begin, cease, continue*. The grammatical status of these forms has been extensively studied within traditional and contemporary frameworks. Although there is general consensus on the meaning of these forms, their syntactic status has been the object of much debate. While the evidence suggests that some are bona fide auxiliaries, in this analysis only the most

productive uses of these forms are coded according to their auxiliary status, i.e. *began to*, *started to*, *commenced to*, *come to*. This simplifies the analysis by restricting the number of different lexical *types* that occur in the auxiliary slot(s).

Productive usage of inceptive aspectualizers, attested throughout the historical record, i.e. *begin*, *start* and *commence to* as in example (127a-c), are found in Samaná English and these are also coded separately from single main verb renditions of the same verbs, i.e. *begin the book*; *start the car*; *commence school* etc.

- (127a) Well then my mother *began* calling me and telling me a lot of thing. (010/408)
It was after that ... when I had my first baby that she *begin* sending me little things. (010/443)
- (127b) And then he *start to preach* and the people *start to gather*. (006/640-1)
- (127c) And then, the airplanes *commence to* run up and down . (002/822)
I just *commence to holler*, "why, why, why". (002/363)

Furthermore, the separation of certain forms into two categories is sometimes independently motivated in order to distinguish them from their simplex counterparts. For example, the constructions *had to* + V-base and *get to* + V-base, as in (128a-b), are coded as auxiliary structures in order to keep them separate from the simple PAST forms of *had* and *get*.

- (128a) He *had to come* (002/618)
You *had to have* in the hospitals a lot of midwives and things. (002/1146)
She *had to hide*. 002/1164
Well, they *had to learn* their medicines, them, their own selves. (002/1242)
- (128b) They didn't *get to know* that it was her. (002/1211)
My mother had seven children and she *got to run away* with five (006/455)
I *got to know* him. (011/720)

The same procedure is used with the construction, *come to* + V-base. In this case it is treated as an auxiliary verb in order to recuperate any differential marking that might

occur between it and the simplex form of *come*³², i.e. *came* /*come* vs. *come to*/*came to*, as in example (129a-c) below:

- (129a) Well, they *come to know*, you know. (002/620)
- (129b) Well then, she *come to be* just like our older sister. (002/1134)
- (129c) So they *came to be* Shepherd, yes, because they was married.
(002/184)

In most cases, however, our analysis treats the first non-auxiliary verb in a verbal construction as the main verb, regardless of whether or not it might be potentially interpretable as an aspectualizing auxiliary or semi-auxiliary. Justification for this decision comes from the fact that this analysis seeks to understand, in part, morphological past *tense* marking and it is the first verb in the verbal complex which is the potential recipient of inflection. Because of this it is important to be able to retrieve the morphological status, i.e. marked vs. unmarked, of the verb rather than complicate the analysis by separating the myriad of individual (aspectualizing) forms whose syntactic status is debatable.

For example, in the sentences in (130) below the potential aspectualizing verb in bold is treated as the main verb. Similarly, other constructions with the same type of structure, i.e. a preceding tense-marked semi-auxiliary + V-base, as can be seen additionally in (131a-b), are all included under the main verb classification. Note also that in such cases, the following verb always appears with its V-base form.

- (130) And there we ***finish***[Ø] *growing up*. (002/565)
- (131a) They ***made*** many people *throw*... (003/58)
- (131b) They ***made*** me *get off*. (003/418)

³² Note that, in contrast to the majority of semantic interpretations for the main verb *come*, this context is aspectually stative.

4.2.1.1.5. Features of oral discourse

4.2.1.1.5.1. Fixed expressions

A number of past time verbal forms occur in constructions which are fixed expressions. These show no variability in tense/aspect usage (remaining categorically inflected or uninflected) and thus were excluded from further analysis, as in (132) below.

- (132) Interviewer: How were they able to go back?
 Speaker (017): Well, I *couldn't say*. (017/37)

4.2.1.1.5.2. Quoted speech

In addition, all quoted speech, as in example (133) below, which may be imitative and/or otherwise distinct from other dialogue, was also excluded.

- (133) Then I spoke to her, "listen doctor, I *brought* this lady". (019/596)

4.2.1.1.6. Performance idiosyncracies

Due to the fact that our data come from naturally-occurring oral discourse, an accurate interpretation of certain verbal constructions is often impossible due to normal performance errors and/or other regularly-occurring disruptions in the course of conversation.

4.2.1.1.6.1. Ellipsis, false starts, hesitations, code-switches

Frequent disturbances of the discourse, i.e. ellipsis, e.g. (134), false starts, hesitations, e.g. (135a-c), etc. often lead to difficulty in interpretation and rare instances of code-switching, e.g. (136), can lead to the lack of a complete ('English') verb structure. All of these are excluded from the analysis, as well as any contexts that were generally incomprehensible.

- (134) Interviewer: You don't have to keep it wet?
 Informant: No, we *didn't* {have to keep it wet}. (18/888)
- (135a) The first *went*— we went up in the— there where they got that.
 (020/366)
- (135b) I lent— I lent it to an American once and I l-- lent and I got— I
 didn't lose it. (006/514)
- (135c) I didn't ... knew— knew how to talk it yes. (006/343)

- (136) My niece what went over there, she was— she *had just graduado del normal* ('graduated from normal school') and she went to the States. (005/287-8)

4.2.3. Categorization of surface form

An important consideration at the outset of this analysis was to set up factor groups that would enable the data to be subdivided according to (at least) two different hypotheses, i.e. relative tense vs. absolute tense. Because the nature of this study is to determine the underlying system governing the Samaná and Ex-Slave past temporal reference system, two very different points of departure are required. The analysis had to be capable of categorizing the data according to the underlying assumptions of Creole grammar as well as English grammar. In order to ensure that such an analysis would be achieved, we set up a coding system in which different divisions across the tense/aspect paradigm were possible thus providing appropriate means of comparison whereby the two systems could be visibly differentiated.

One of the complexities of this analysis is that the general focus of our investigation itself, morphological type of tense/aspect marking, has numerous individual morphological forms. Looking at the inventory in Samaná English, the range of possible tense/aspect types for past temporal reference can include up to two (optional) auxiliaries in addition to the main verb, as in (137a) and (137b) below.

(137a)	(aux) ₁ + (aux) ₂ +	Verb
(137b)	was/were	be (inf)
	ain't	V-ed ₁ (preterit)
	had/have	V-ed ₂ (participle)
	did/done	V-ing (participle)
	used to	V-present tense ³³
	(wi)'ll/would	
	got	

Our coding system had to recuperate the different lexical forms and morphologies in each position as well as each specific combination of morphologies that occurred on the auxiliary *and* the main verb, that is, it had to effectively differentiate *I had walk/I had walked/I have walk/I have walked/I walked/I walk*, for example. There also had to be a way to treat each unique combination of forms with respect to the interpretation given them vis-à-vis the underlying system and thus their assumed respective function(s). In order to accomplish this a number of different factor groups were set up, each of which focused on a specific characteristic of the verbal complex³⁴. In some instances the main verb is considered regardless of whether or not different auxiliaries occur with it, while in others it is the individual mark(s) on the auxiliary which is/are considered. This allows an assessment of the complete range of tense/aspect types and their various combinations of auxiliaries and inflections. For example, we had to be able to extract, on one hand all V-ing forms, but also distinguish on the other hand, the three possible morphological variants of the auxiliary preceding it, i.e. V-ed₁, V-base or Ø since each of these could be formally distinct.

³³ The use of unambiguous present tense morphology in past temporal environments, particularly in non-complicating action narrative evaluation clauses, occurs in Samaná English, as in (138) below.

(138) Well, we *turned back* and we *went* to the- turn to the ocean. When we *turn* to the ocean going out, out, out, when we *had* two hours going, "let's turn back". "Going back for what?" I *say*, "You know where we *was*?" "No." "Well, let us keep on 'til day. So when day break, well then we know where we is, you see." *Well then ya, he don't want to talk with me because I'm a child.* (667-74)

³⁴ While some of these were necessarily overlapping, only factor groups which had unique and non-interactive factors were included together in any single analysis.

The inclusion of all V-ing forms as one variable, as in (139) below, reflects an interpretation of that verbal complex as one in which an auxiliary is present underlyingly but which has the variants (*was*, *is* and $\emptyset$) as might be expected in (dialectal) English. Given this interpretation, the different types occur in the same semantic context with an independent process of auxiliary deletion operating at some other level of the grammar, perhaps conditioned by the type of subject noun. Alternatively, each of these variants could actually be a distinct and meaningful form of an underlying relative marking system. For example, in a Creole grammar the variant with *was* might represent overtly marked tense, while the variant with $\emptyset$ might represent covertly marked tense. Under this analysis the linguistic conditioning factors would be expected to be entirely different than in the first analysis. Here we would expect tense encoding in the surrounding discourse and other temporal disambiguating items to influence the occurrence of one or the other variant(s).

(139)	was $\emptyset$ is	] going going going
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Further, the coding system had to be able to make a gross distinction among all the tense/aspect forms based on marked (overt) vs. unmarked (covert) morphological form, regardless of individual type. Under a Creole interpretation, the overt *aspect* markers are said to appear under exactly the same conditions as the overt *tense* markers (Mufwene 1983:9). Thus we can expect a parallelism between the environmental conditioning effects on all overt as opposed to all covert forms despite the fact that the overt forms include both tense and aspect markers.

4.2.4. Defining the relevant linguistic context

The function of individual past temporal reference structures in Creoles and BEV is amply documented; however, most of these studies have been based on qualitative arguments and anecdotal evidence. Few *quantitative* analyses have explored the actual

distribution and conditioning on past temporal reference morphologies, especially across sentences. The exception, of course, is surface forms that are visibly similar to the Std E simple PAST tense. However, even in most of these studies there is little attention to other than phonological conditioning of these forms. One exception is Bickerton's (1975) analysis of PAST tense acquisition in Guyanese creole in which he considers both phonological conditioning and verbal aspect. Other studies have explored specific syntactic correspondences such as the collocation of certain lexical items with individual tense/aspect forms but these analyses have not been quantitative, while discourse-related conditioning is perhaps the most widely attested to account for the patterning of Creole marked vs. unmarked forms. No previous study, however, has examined a cross section of these different conditioning factors from various areas of the grammar, nor more specifically, their inter-relationship with other verbal structures within the general realm of past time. This presents us with an excellent opportunity to construct our analysis in such a way as to take into account the contribution of each of these effects simultaneously.

To our knowledge this dissertation examines *all* of the wide number of constraints and/or tendencies proposed in the literature in order to determine which, if any, of these may account for the variability in our data. Each verb structure was coded according to phonological, morphological, lexical, semantic and discursive features of the verb under study, characteristics of its respective auxiliary or auxiliaries (if any occurred) and features of the verb to which it was anchored (i.e. the reference verb). In addition, we coded for the temporal relationship between the verb under study and its reference verb, agreement features between subject noun and the verb under study, case features of the subject noun, other temporal indicators in the sentence (conjunctions, adverbs, particles) and their types, temporal remoteness and discourse context. All of these are described below including a rationale for why each factor was considered and subdivided accordingly.

4.2.5. The Factor Groups

4.2.5.1. The Verbal Unit

This set of factor groups considers the constituent structure of the verb phrase. In both the Samaná and Ex-Slave corpora past reference main verbs have the potential to have two auxiliaries. Thus, all the lexical verbs which could occur as auxiliaries and their potential morphological forms were tabulated as well as the lexical, typological and morphological characteristics of the main verb itself.

4.2.5.1.1. Lexical class of first auxiliary

The first auxiliary is defined as the first verbal unit in the verb phrase that is not a main verb. This factor group classes the auxiliary by its lexical form. For example, in Samaná English the verb *do* can appear in the first auxiliary but with two different morphological realizations, i.e. *did/done*. This factor group only records the fact that the verb *do* appears. It does not specify which morphological form it has. This categorization allows an overall tabulation of which lexical verbs can appear in the first auxiliary. It is not an exhaustive list; however, only productive lexical items are included. Some rarely-occurring semi- and other quasi-auxiliaries are not included (cf. section 4.2.1.4 above) but are treated under the main verb category.

- B the verb "to be", *am/is/are; was/were; been*
- A the form "ain't"
- H the verb "to have", *has/have; had'd*
- D the verb "to do", *did; done*
- O do-support as a separate category
This includes standard interrogative or negative sentences.
- W the modal "will/would" when it can be inferred to be the tense carrier of the structure.
- C the modal "could" when it can be inferred to be the tense carrier of the structure.

U	the auxiliary "used to"
G	the verb "to get" as an auxiliary or semi-auxiliary, e.g. "got married", "got frightened" or as a passive auxiliary
S	occurrence of a contraction whose full lexical form cannot be unambiguously reconstructed, e.g. <i>They's lose their life</i> . (005/476)
X	'had to'
Y	'got to'
1	'began to'
2	'started to'
3	'commenced to'
M	'come to'
K	<i>kept V-ing</i> '
—	no auxiliary ³⁵

4.2.5.1.2. Surface morphology of the first auxiliary

This factor group classes the first auxiliary by its surface morphological form.

B	V-base e.g. is/am; do
1	V-ed1 e.g. was/were; did; would; used to
Ø	A possible empty auxiliary slot Single verb structure; V-ing or V-ed2 morphology; no auxiliary.
—	An empty auxiliary slot Single verb structure; V-base or V-ed1 morphology; no auxiliary.

The Ø factor records the putative "have-deletion" and "copula-deletion" sites that have been cited throughout the literature. We use the appearance of a bare V-ed₂, V-ing or V-passive

³⁵ In every factor group, the elsewhere category is recorded as a dash.

as the morphological criterion for the Ø code whereas if a single verb structure appears with either V-ed1 or V-base morphology we code it as a single main verb.

4.2.5.1.3. Lexical class of the second auxiliary

Verbal structures with two auxiliaries (excluding *do*-support) are rare and only a small number of lexical items appear in second position:

- D the verb "to do", i.e. *did*; *done*
- B the verb "to be", i.e. *been*
- U the semi-auxiliary "used to"
- G the verb "to get", i.e. *got*
- H the verb "to have", i.e. *have*, *had*

4.2.5.1.4. Surface morphology of the second auxiliary

The morphological forms that occur in this slot are also quite restricted. Only the following two possibilities occur.

- 1 V-base i.e. *did* + *be*; *would* + *be*
- 2 V-ed2, i.e. *had* + *done*

4.2.5.1.5. Lexical class of the main verb

With respect to the main verb, we first record the actual lexical item that occurred. This factor group enables a verb-by-verb assessment of morphological marking characteristics. It has been hypothesized that certain verbs may show lexical conditioning, i.e. have particular temporal marking idiosyncracies. For example, verbs of higher frequency may be marked more (or less) frequently. Also, certain verbs, such as *come*, may demonstrate idiosyncratic marking patterns, (v. the preponderance of the unmarked *come* in past temporal reference environments in section 5.3.2.). For a list of all the main verbs that occurred in the data base refer to Appendix A.

4.2.5.1.6. Verb Class of the main verb

One of the attested determinants of irregular morphology in strong verbs in dialectal varieties of English is that verbs which are more closely related to each other could potentially behave in a similar manner. The problem, however, is to determine what divisions most appropriately describe the verbs in the data base and thus which verbs can be appropriately grouped. The classification systems provided by older grammatical texts or more recently by Quirk and Greenbaum (1972) based on the original strong verb classes, which categorize verbs according to the surface features of their past forms is not productive for Samaná English nor for the Ex-Slave Recordings since only a few of those classes are relevant to the data, i.e. verbs forms in *-en*, e.g. *gotten*, are extremely rare. Instead, we follow Christian et al. (1988:97) by classifying strong verbs into different classes based on the morphological change across the verbal paradigm. For example, the alternations in *fight/fought/fought* vs. *write/wrote/written* etc. can be viewed in terms of whether the surface form belongs to a verb class in which the morphology is expected to be the same or different across the different forms (V-base, V-ed1, V-ed2) of the verb: 1) they are all similar, i.e. X/X/X, e.g. *put/put/put*; 2) V-base and V-ed2 are similar, i.e. X/Y/X, e.g. *come/came/come*; 3) V-ed1 and V-ed2 are similar, i.e. X/Y/Y, e.g. *meet/met/met*; 4) V-base, V-ed1 and V-ed2 are all different, i.e. X/Y/Z, e.g. *go/went/gone*.

It is widely documented that the use of V-ed1 morphology in V-ed2 environments and V-base or V-ed2 morphology in V-ed1 environments is a common feature of dialectal English in (at least) Britain, the United States and Canada as the irregular verbs of an earlier time period gradually regularize. Labov et al. (1968:254) note the same patterning in BEV and suggest that the lack of differentiation of V-ed1 and V-ed2 is due to on-going historical change in the English verb system. While Labov et al. (Ibid.) observe that this phenomenon is erratic and unpatterned, the findings of Christian et al (1988) suggest that there is some systematicity to the distribution of these forms. Their results indicate that verbs which have distinct V-ed1 and V-ed2 forms, e.g. *went*, *gone*, will regularize one of

these to serve both functions while others use the V-base form, e.g. *eat*, *give*. Verbs in which the V-ed2 form is equivalent to the V-base form, i.e. *come*, *run*, demonstrate the highest degree of nonstandard (V-base) variants for the simple PAST tense.

This factor group permits a consideration of the morphological patterns for each verb. In conjunction with the actual morphology of the verb under study we will be able to assess what proportion of these verbs receive the standard morphological mark as opposed to the nonstandard one and compare the results to that of Christian et al. (1988) for dialectal varieties of Std E (Appalachian and Ozark). If the marking patterns and distribution of nonstandard V-base strong verbs in Samaná English can be shown to be comparable to these, and other nonstandard varieties of English then the hypothesis that those surface morphologies are the product of a Creole relative tense system becomes weakened.

W		weak, regular verbs, i.e. <i>stayed</i>
A	-	X/X/X V-base, V-ed1 and V-ed2 identical e.g. <i>put/put/put</i> ; <i>sweat/sweat/sweat</i>
B	-	X/Y/X V-base and V-ed2 identical; V-ed1 distinct e.g. <i>come/came/come</i> ; <i>run/ran/run</i>
C	-	X/Y/Y/ V-base distinct; V-ed1 and V-ed2 identical e.g. <i>meet/met/met</i> ; <i>fight/fought/fought</i>
D	-	X/Y/Z/ V-base, V-ed1 and V-ed2 all distinct e.g. <i>go/went/gone</i>

4.2.5.2. Morphological characteristics

Perhaps the most crucial factor to consider in this analysis of different types of morphological tense/aspect marking in past temporal reference environments is whether the verb is marked or not overall. In a Creole grammar this difference can be expected to be semantically meaningful and reflect an underlying relative tense system in which verbs receive marking based on their temporal association with verbs in the surrounding

discourse and their inherent aspect. On the other hand, it is also possible that these differences in surface morphological form are the result of independent linguistic processes, for example phonologically conditioned consonant cluster simplification operating variably in the case of weak past tense verbs

Surface morphological form was identified in two different ways. First by what surface form would be expected in Std E and second by what morphology actually occurred.

4.2.5.2.1. Expected (standard) morphology of the verbal complex

This factor group together with the following one assesses the "fit" of the Std E tense system to the tense/aspect structures occurring in the data base. In order to determine what morphology is expected in these examples it is necessary to know what probable tense structure is underlying. We code this factor group using Std E grammar as the point of comparison. If *had*, *have*, *was*, or *were* occur pre-verbally, V-ed2 or V-ing morphology is expected, depending on the context. If any other auxiliary occurs, either standard (i.e. *used to*, *would*) or otherwise (*did*, *been*, *done*), V-base morphology is expected. This is based on the assumption that the auxiliary carries the tense marking. If a single past-reference verb occurs with no auxiliary, then V-ed1 is considered to be expected. If a single past-reference V-ing or V-ed2 verb occurs with no auxiliary it is assumed that the auxiliary has been deleted, and the verb morphology expected is that which is required to appear after such a deletion in Std E. In some cases it is impossible to determine whether the V-base form is the result of auxiliary reduction/deletion or covert marking or is a simple PAST tense with suffixal deletion. These cases are coded separately.

- 1 - V-ed1, i.e. *came*, *was/were*
Single verb structure; V-ed1 morphology; no auxiliary.

- 2 - V-ed2, i.e. *have/has/had come*
Complex verb structure, V-ed2 morphology; with *have* auxiliary
- 3 - Ambiguity of interpretation between unmarked simple past or deleted auxiliary
- G - V-ing
Complex verb structure, V-ing morphology; with *be* auxiliary
- B - V-base
Included in the B category are verbs preceded by do-support, i.e. *didn't know*, *did you know*, in the present tense, or with other nonstandard auxiliaries, e.g. *did*.

4.2.5.2.2. Marking

This factor group records the surface morphological character of each verbal structure and subdivides these in such a way as to allow both Std E and Creole interpretations of "marking". In this factor group, class A verbs, i.e. those with invariant morphology e.g. *put*, are assumed to be 'marked' in either case. They can be recuperated if necessary in conjunction with the verb class factor group.

The first factor, M, groups all those verbs which can be interpreted as being overtly marked for tense in Std E and overtly marked for relative tense and/or aspect in Creole or decreolizing varieties.³⁶ As such it includes a wide variety of different morphological forms in one factor.

- M - i.e. *bin*, *did*, *-ed*, suppletion etc.

Another category of generally marked verb structures are those that are semi-marked. These are forms which are marked in the auxiliary in contexts where prescriptive Std E would require marking on the main verb as well. While forms such as those taken

³⁶ In this factor, we include those morphological forms that are comparable to the prototypical creole tense marker, i.e. *bin/ben*, as well as those which, in decreolizing varieties, replace the original form, i.e. Std E forms such as *-ed* inflection and suppletion.

into account in factor N are not explicitly mentioned in the Creole literature, they occur frequently in our data and presumably in *-t, -d* deletion contexts in BEV and WEV as well.

- N - Complex verb structure; V-base morphology; with *have* auxiliary, e.g. *I have walkØ*.

We also include a category for verbs which are doubly marked. According to Mufwene's (1984) framework these would be considered overtly marked for both tense (i.e. *spoke*) and aspect (i.e. *used to*). The factors M, N and D were able to be amalgamated into one factor to include *all* overtly marked forms regardless of type, but are kept separate to allow for an English-like division of forms as necessary.

- D - Complex verb structure; V-ed1 morphology; with auxiliary, e.g. *used to spoke*

The next factor, factor A can be interpreted as being unmarked for tense in Std E. Under the anglicist hypothesis this is a site which has had auxiliary deletion. Under the Creole hypothesis this is a site which has the covert variant of a relative tense marking system. That is it is marked overtly for aspect, (i.e. *-ing*), but covertly, (i.e. *Ø*) for tense.

- A - Single verb structure; V-ing morphology; with no auxiliary, e.g. *I Ø going*

Factor B records all instances of *been* which are not preceded by auxiliary *have/had*. These are sites which may be interpreted to exhibit the quintessential Creole anterior marker *bin/ben*. They are considered overtly marked in Creole. The *bin/ben* form is also considered to be a marker of remote aspect. A Std E interpretation, however, would classify these as auxiliary deletion sites.

- B - Single verb structure; V-ed2 morphology; with no auxiliary, e.g. *I Ø been*

Verbs which have no auxiliary and no inflection are coded as X. They can be interpreted as uninflected under a Std E hypothesis or they can be interpreted as exhibiting the covert variant of the relative tense under a Creole hypothesis. That is they are marked covertly (i.e. *Ø*) for aspect, and covertly (i.e. *Ø*) for tense.

- X - Single verb structure; V-base morphology; with no auxiliary,
e.g. *I walk*Ø, *I* Ø *go* or *I* Ø *walk*

Factors A and X were able to be amalgamated for a Creole interpretation of the data since both categories can be interpreted as having covert tense. For a Std E analysis, however, they would not be grouped together as they represent essentially different processes, i.e. auxiliary deletion vs. suffixal deletion (in the case of weak verbs). Factor B, on the other hand represents a form which has been considered a bona fide Creole overt tense form with its own unique function, yet it could be grouped with factor A in a Std E analysis as another construction in which auxiliary reduction operates. The differing interpretations of these constructions vis-à-vis the underlying system posited requires that each individual construction be kept distinct so that it could be grouped differently depending on the analysis.

A further possibility for main verb morphology is (unambiguous) Std E present tense inflection in contexts other than narrative discourse (where such morphology functions as HISTORICAL PRESENT). This does not include V-base strong or weak verbs which are ambiguous as to temporal reference morphologically. Here the verb is marked but with an *unambiguous* present temporal inflection. This surface morphology can be considered anomalous with respect to Std E grammar since by limiting this analysis to past temporal reference contexts we excluded all those that were *present* temporal reference.

- P - Single verb structure; V-s morphology; with no auxiliary,
e.g. *He walks*

4.2.5.3. Phonological conditioning

By far the most widely-attested factor conditioning inflectional morphology on past temporal reference verbs, at least by researchers working within the variationist paradigm (e.g. Fasold 1972; Labov 1972; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969; 1974) is the phonological configuration of the V-base form. This is a focal issue since it directly implicates the competing hypotheses of insertion or deletion as the explanatory process involved in the appearance of marked and unmarked forms. While the deletion hypothesis

is based on a view of language in which a set of syntactic rules generate forms, i.e. suffixal inflections, on which phonological rules, i.e. consonant cluster simplification, may subsequently operate, the insertion hypothesis entails that the variable suffixal inflections are actually the product of variant forms present in the underlying syntactic component of the grammar which appear under different discursive or pragmatic conditions. The following two factor groups investigate the validity of these two hypotheses by assessing whether the surface morphological marking on past temporal reference verbs with suffixal inflection is, in fact, phonologically conditioned, particularly when considered in relationship to influencing effects from other areas of the grammar. If the variable marking on V-ed1 and V-ed2 weak verb forms is due to (discursively- or pragmatically-conditioned) insertion, we would expect no differentiation between marked and unmarked forms with respect to their surrounding phonological environments. If, on the other hand, this variation is due to the application of phonological rules to syntactically generated inflection, significant phonological conditioning should be apparent. The relative importance of this factor compared to features such as aspect (Bickerton 1975), temporal disambiguation (Mufwene 1984), cf. sections 4.5.11 and 4.5.14, and temporal distance (Fickett 1972), cf. section 4.5.15, which are claimed to paramount in Creole grammars, will add to the strength of these results.

4.2.5.3.1. Preceding phonological environment

This factor groups records the phonological characteristics of the verb, whether it ends in a vowel, a single consonant or two or three consonants.

- 1 - V-base ends in a vowel, e.g. *die*
- 2 - V-base ends in a consonant, e.g. *walk*

3 - V-base ends in two or three consonants other than [t] or [d], e.g. *change, ask*³⁷

S - V-base ends in [t] or [d], or cluster including [t] or [d], e.g. *start, end*

4.2.5.3.2. Following phonological environment

This factor groups records the phonological characteristics of the following context, i.e. whether the verb is followed by a vowel, a consonant, a pause or is in a neutralized context which makes phonological recuperation impossible.

V - following vowel

C - following consonant

Q - following pause

N - neutralized context, e.g. *they walked together*

4.2.5.4. Verbal aspect

From the Creolist perspective, the most salient feature dictating the occurrence of marked and unmarked verb forms is the aspectual nature of the verb (Bickerton 1975; 1979; 1981; Mufwene 1984; Rickford 1977). In Creole languages, where the underlying system is generally characterized as aspect-prominent rather than tense-prominent, differential marking patterns are expected based on whether the verb is stative or nonstative. In the Creole prototype set out by Bickerton this is generally seen as an opposition between perfective (i.e. punctual) and imperfective or non-punctual (i.e. habitual and progressive) verbs. As pointed out by Singler (1990:xv fn. 5) creolists' tendency to group habituais and progressives together is a reflection of the fact that they are not distinct in Creole-like grammars.

³⁷ Clusters containing [mpt], e.g. *jumped*, [nst], e.g. *commenced*, [njd], e.g. *changed*, [rst], e.g. *divorced* etc. were considered under category 3.

The difference between stative vs. nonstative verbs is illustrated succinctly by (Rickford 1977:206) for the tense marker *bin*: Nonstative verbs with *bin* (or in decreolized varieties *had*, *did*) represent "total completion of an event" i.e. *She bin tell me that*. The interpretation of this sentence is that "telling" is a completed event which occurred a long time ago. On the other hand stative verbs with *bin* (or in decreolized varieties *had*, *did*) have "no suggestion of completedness but imply that the distantly initiated state is still in force", i.e. *I bin know you, you know* = 'I have known you for a long time and still do'. Std E represents these propositions with adverbials coupled with preterit or perfect forms, i.e. *She told me that a long time ago*, *She has known me for a long time*. (cf. factor group "time indicators" below). Rickford claims that "Whites typically see the form with *non-statives* as meaning 'simple past', and when it is used with a *stative* predicate, ... usually see it as completed rather than still in force" (Rickford 1977:206). In other words they make *no* distinction between the stative/nonstative verb while BEV speakers, presumably following a creole like system according to Rickford, *do* make that distinction.

This factor group addresses this issue by examining whether marking patterns in the Samaná and Ex-Slave corpora are affected by aspect. That is, is there a significant correspondence between marked forms such as *bin*, *had* and *did* and unmarked forms based on their aspectual nature. For example, in (140) below, the interpretation goes against a Creole hypothesis. Here, the *had* + *stative* V construction implies a state that is completive rather than still in effect. The simple PAST tense or a durative past construction (i.e. *used to*) interpretation is quite valid here since it is obvious from the discourse that the woman who is being spoken of is now dead. Thus, this completedness is what would be predicted for a Creole *nonstative* rather than stative verb.

- (140) They had an old lady what was yonder what had knowed
 medicines and thing ...(002/727)

Nonstative verbs are coded under three categories, punctual, continuous and iterative. This enables us to retain a distinction between habituals and progressives (cf.

(Comrie 1976) who makes this a basic division of imperfective verbs laid out in his framework). At the same time, we provide for the possibility of recoding this factor group to make it comparable with Bickerton's punctual/non-punctual division. These regrouping possibilities allow us to assess whether Samaná English treats non-punctuals unilaterally as would be predicted in the Creole prototype, or differently, as would be expected in English where the progressive is specialized for continuative contexts and habitual markers are often used for iterative contexts.

Verbs were coded as punctual when they referred to an event that was understood to have occurred once; as habitual/iterative when they referred to an event that took place repeatedly; and as durative/continuous when they referred to events or processes that are extended in time. The interpretation of a verb's aspectual reading is based on contextual information (e.g. adverbials, particles and other disambiguating temporal information) and not solely on the verb itself. Stative verbs, however, are considered to be inherently imperfective. We follow Quirk et al. (1985) who include as stative all verbs which are intellectual, i.e. representing mental perception (e.g. *know, think, understand*), states of emotion or attitude, (e.g. *want, like, care*), states of sensory perception, (e.g. *see, hear, feel*), states of bodily sensation, (e.g. *hurt, feel*), stance or relationship verbs, (e.g. *hold, depend, belong, live, stand, sit, lie, last*) and verbs of measurement, (e.g. *weigh, cost, measure*).

In categorizing verbal aspect according to these criteria we also note that in narrative complicating action clauses, verbs that are inherently stative are sometimes used, e.g. *remain, see, hear, lie*, as in (141a-b) below.

- (141a) When she reach on the next reef ... I *hear* in the dark ... In the night I *heard* my uncle Ike say, "ay, now she going." But then I look ... (001/712-13)
- (141b) Well, they had a day, only me and my little boy what was here. And I look at him and I *see* his face like change. (007/1302-4)

Although this context is, by definition, an environment for verbs which represent point-action events, and thus *all* of them were able to be interpreted within the discourse as [+punctual] in orientation, we maintain their stative categorization here in order to differentiate them from the more typical point-action event verbs that occur in complicating action clauses, i.e. those that are nonstative. This enables us to determine whether these will have different marking patterns in this context. Otherwise, *all* verbs in the complicating action section of a narrative would necessarily be coded as [+punctual].

By distinguishing these different aspectual readings of verbs this factor group will contribute to an understanding of the possible differential marking patterns across aspectual (stative vs. nonstative imperfective) types.

S	-	stative
P	-	punctual
C	-	continuous
I	-	iterative

4.2.5.5. Type of subject

Despite extensive variation in verbal morphology throughout the history of the English language, the only previously-attested syntactic conditioning factor we have discovered is one affecting auxiliary deletion. D'Eloia (1973:95) notes that the use of *been* and *done* as perfectives may be related to British regional dialects. She cites Wright (1905:298) who reports that many dialects of English use strong past participles with a 'zero' or 'deleted' *have* in affirmative sentences in which the subject is a pronoun and the subject is not separated from the main verb, i.e. *I done it, I been sick* etc. This factor has never, to our knowledge, been verified quantitatively.

In our previous analysis of the present tense inflection in Samaná English it was found that pronominal subjects promoted the deletion of tense inflection. From a theoretical perspective, Libert (1988) has demonstrated that the relationship between case and tense (as well as between case and other verbal categories such as aspect) is often indicated by

characteristics of their inflectional morphology, i.e. a particular nominal will promote a corresponding verbal inflection. In order to address these possibilities, we include a factor group which records the type of subject that occurs with the verbal structure under study. Because there are many *types* of subjects our initial coding procedure included a variety of factors differentiating these; however, these were ultimately collapsed into a basic distinction between pronouns and other subject nouns.

- P - personal pronoun
i.e. *I/he/she/you/they*

- Y - other pronoun
i.e. *everybody, everything, each man, some of them, something, this/the one, one, them, this, both, none, that, many of them, whoever, the other one, one of 'em etc.*
e.g. *I don't know what took her now.*

- R - Relative pronoun
i.e. *who, what ...*
e.g. *And that, what was his death.* (002/692)

- X - Existential pronoun
i.e. *it, they, there*
e.g. *There was great swords.* (002/421)
That was in Horacio's time. (004/112)

- G - Pronoun + relative pronoun
[the one]_{Pro} [that] Rel Pro...
I tell you they have 'bout 25 or- titles of [those]_{Pro} [who]Rel Pro- that they found- form family here. (18/138)

- H - Pronoun + deleted relative pronoun
... *it's they* $\emptyset$ *asked for it ...* (16/486)

- C - Reduced pronoun
e.g. *My husband died, $\emptyset$ left me with ...* (003/370)
e.g. *They was working, $\emptyset$ gaining their bread* (003/1136)

- F - Full noun
i.e. *(the) people, plenty, all those things etc.*
[A schoolmaster called Horacio]_{NP} ... (16/259)
[All those people]_{NP} formed family here. (006/57)
My mother, my grandmother, and all ... (002/1069)

- D - full noun + relative pronoun
e.g. [the children]NP [what] Rel Pro
e.g. [the church people]NP [all who]Rel Pro
- 2 - Full noun + reduplicated pronoun
e.g. My mother, she was living there a few years ..
(009/465)
e.g. The one, what did it, *he* passed away too. (015/23)
- E - Full noun or other pronoun (cf. "Y" category above) +
deleted relative pronoun,
e.g. *A pastor minister Ø came ...*(006/69)
e.g. *It was plenty people Ø they killed ...* (002/841)
- Ø - Deleted pronoun without any other subject
i.e. preposed locative (002/925)
- V - Other anomalous cases, i.e. reversed order V-NP
e.g. *After he came Philip van Putton* (18/1320)
e.g. *... what become of him* (16/752)
e.g. *... after that came Reverend William, then was who?*
(003/505)

4.2.5.6. Agreement

This factor group is limited to narrative complicating action clauses and takes into account agreement marking on potential Historical Present verbs occurring in narrative discourse. In this environment the appearance of a V-base form could be interpreted as representing the Historical Present, if given a Std E interpretation or, as in some Creole-based research, as covert tense marking (e.g. (Bickerton 1981; Rickford 1987)). It will be important to determine how many of all the presumably unmarked verbs in the data base are verbs that occur in these contexts. Under a Creole-like analysis both the W and Y categories below would be interpreted as the covert form of a relative tense system whereas under a Std E interpretation, only category Y would be considered to be unmarked. The final factor, S, takes into account verbs which are marked with -s, i.e. 3rd person singular agreement, as per Std E grammar.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| W | - | Third singular with Ø, i.e. no agreement
This can be interpreted as a possible nonstandard lack of agreement, or Creole zero mark, e.g. <i>he/she + V-base (sayØ)</i> |
| Y | - | Standard agreement with Ø,
e.g. <i>I /they/we + V-base (say)</i> |
| S | - | Standard agreement with -s, narrative-internal only, e.g.
<i>he/she + V-s (says)</i> |

4.2.5.7. Morphological type of unit

This factor group divides the verbal structures according to the combined lexical form of the main verb and morphological mark of the pre-verbal element (if any) so that the surface morphology of the verbal structure taken as a unit, i.e. (aux) + (aux) + main verb, was able to be considered simultaneously. It has certain features in common with some of the foregoing factor groups which categorize each individual element in the verb phrase separately. In these, a much more detailed division of the verb phrase is accomplished by tabulating individual parts of the structure separately according to variable morphological marking on the auxiliary and/or main verb, i.e. first and second auxiliary and morphological characteristics of the main verb. In this factor group, however, we treat all main verb forms which are preceded by a particular auxiliary form (i.e. *had, did, bin* etc.) and, in some cases, their assumed variants each in their own separate factor. This allows us to consider each type separately or as a combined grouping of all the forms that could potentially be interchangeable. For example, we were able to treat as one variable the variation across morphological types such as *I have been* and *I been*. Alternatively, forms such as *I been* were also treated separately. In this way these factor groups can be set up to correspond to Std E or Creole tense/aspect categories.

This flexibility also ensured that the data were capable of being examined from a number of different perspectives. This enabled us to address a variety of important claims that have been made in the literature. For example, this factor group allowed us to assess the relative frequency of different morphological structures in the two corpora. Researchers

have long claimed that BEV has more PERFECT constructions than Std E (e.g. (Dillard 1972; Fickett 1972)). This factor group also allowed us to examine the variety of morphological types that occur across different time periods or within specific contexts defined by the combination of various other factor groups. Furthermore, some of the factors, i.e. conjoined clauses where auxiliaries have been reduced, permitted us to include or exclude certain contexts depending on what type of analysis we intend. It must be kept in mind at all times that neither *all* of the factor groups we present, nor all of the factors included therein were necessarily used in any, or all, of the analyses we present in sections 5.0 and 6.0. Some of these were used to distinguish particular environments which have been subsequently removed from further analysis, to facilitate specific divisions of the data, or are used merely for sorting (cf. (Rand & Sankoff 1990:17)).

The following types of verb structures are distinguished:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | - | No auxiliary; present morphology with -s or other unambiguous present tense inflection |
| P | - | No auxiliary; past temporal reference (regardless of morphology) e.g. <i>I came, I stayed, I come, I stay</i> Ø |
| Ø | - | No auxiliary; a bare V-ed ₂ or V-ing, e.g. <i>I seen, I been; I Ø going; They done</i> |
| M | - | modal (tense carrier) |
| S | - | had + V, e.g. ... <i>had made</i> |
| R | - | have/has/s + V, e.g. ... <i>have got married</i> (14/127); <i>have been V-ing</i> |
| D | - | unstressed did + V, e.g. <i>I did came, I did come</i> |
| G | - | was + V-ing; Past morphology of "be", e.g. <i>she was coming, she was staying</i> |
| F | - | 'm/is/are + V-ing; present morphology of "be", e.g. <i>I'm watching</i> |
| I | - | ain't + V, e.g. <i>I ain't saw; I ain't going; ain't got; ain't been</i> |
| U | - | used to + V, e.g. <i>I used to come, I used to stay</i> |

- 4 - Present morphology of "be" + V (V-ed1 or V-base, but not V-ing), e.g. ... *is got civilized* ... (18/747)
- Z - done + V. e.g. *I done come; I done stay; I done had*
- L - 'll + V. e.g. *I'll go and I'll say* ...
- W - would + V, e.g. *I'd go and I'd say* ...
- V - "was" passive
- K - "got" passive

Three Verb Clusters:

- Y - with "had", had + done + V, e.g. *I had done come, I had done stay; I had done come, I had done stayed; I have done took out*
- X - with "be", 'm + done + V, e.g. *I'm been knowing*

Other complex verb structures:

- H - did + be + V-ing
- 2 - would + be + V-ing
- J - did + used to + V-base
- 5 - start/begin/come + V-ing, i.e. (006/183)
- 6 - V to V, e.g. start to V/begin to V
- 7 - Aux + to V + V-ing, e.g. ... had to be begging
- 8 - would have to V
- 9 - used to have to V; used to have to go out (5/158)
- N - no verb
e.g. *When white water Ø on a little while, there the vessel struck.* (001/795)

The factor N is basically a record of anomalous cases which are tabulated but which were subsequently excluded. The next two factor groups, C and I, differentiate two contexts in which independent processes having to do with the syntactic conjunction of two tensed clauses lead to the reduction of certain elements of the verb phrase. This explanation, however, is valid only within descriptive grammatical accounts of Std E. These environments have, to our knowledge, never been mentioned in previous studies of past temporal reference morphology in either BEV or Creoles. A non-negligible number of such contexts in our data led us to provide some means to account for their presence.

The first of these factor groups treats unmarked verbs which occur in syntactically legitimate reduction sites in Std E, i.e. (142a-b) below.

- C - No auxiliary; Std E reduction process
- (142a) They *had* some vessel what *did steal* them out and $\emptyset$ *come*
and $\emptyset$ *throw* them out in the Dominican land. (002/62)
- (142b) They *used to grate* the yams with a little flour and $\emptyset$ *make*
flitters

We include the second conjunct in these temporal structures in the analysis because the morphological form of the verb (i.e. V-base) that is realized on the surface, i.e. *come*, *throw* and *make*, can be interpreted differently depending on what underlying system is posited. In Std E the presence of a V-base form here is evidence that an auxiliary tense carrier is in fact present in the grammar but is reduced under certain syntactic conditions, e.g. in a 2nd conjunct. Under a creole analysis, however, these could be interpreted as covertly marked, relative tense verbs with the covert mark. The problem is that the surface morphology that is expected to occur in Std E due to one process or alternatively, in Creole due to another, is exactly the same. Separating such forms allows us to include them in a Creole-based analysis where they would presumably be relevant contexts to consider, while excluding them from a English-based one where they would not be relevant since their surface form (i.e. unmarked) is entirely predictable based on the surrounding syntactic structure.

The second of these factor groups records contexts comparable to the nonstandard reduction process in (143a-c) below.

- 1 — No auxiliary; nonstandard reduction process attested in BEV

These are identical to the Std E reduction sites except that in Std E both the subject pronoun of the second conjunct *and* its tense marker are reduced. In these sites only the tense marker is reduced, as illustrated in example (143a-c) below from Samaná English.

- (143a) She'll *go down* to town and she $\emptyset$ *stay* to my mother's ...
(002/1130-31)
- (143b) You'll *go* and you $\emptyset$ *stay* there (002/1133)
- (143c) Sometime in a year we'd *get* three month's school, you hear,
and there we $\emptyset$ *have* no more school. (002/223)

No previous research has demonstrated the actual frequency or distribution of these verbal constructions. Stewart claims, that Std E and BEV can be differentiated based on what linguistic items they can omit in these structures: Std E and Non-Std E omit both the subject pronoun and the auxiliary, but if the subject is present the auxiliary must also be present. In BEV and Gullah, however, he claims that the subject pronoun is *often* repeated in a conjunctive clause while omitting the auxiliary, even when this indicates past tense.

4.2.5.8. Possible Tense in Std E

One feature of the tense/aspect system which seems to have been simply ignored by previous research is the fact that Std E typically allows various different tense/aspect categories to be used interchangeably in certain contexts (cf. section 3.0.). This factor group investigates this fact quantitatively. Utilizing Std E grammar for our interpretation, each context in which the verb structure occurs is coded for what tense(s) and/or aspect categories are possible in Std E. This is an important consideration because different morphological types as well as different tense/aspect types can occur across different contextual environments in both Creole and Std E systems (as per the inherent polyvalence of linguistic form/function relationships, particularly in syntactic variables). Furthermore, the pervasive claim of creolists is that English vs. Creole grammars divide these possibilities differently due to their absolute vs. relative tense systems. Take, for example, the *been* + V construction. Under the Std E analysis, it is interpreted as having had the auxiliary *had* deleted and thus would be interpreted as being a variant of the PRESENT PERFECT tense category (a variable with the two variants: $\emptyset$ + V-ed2 and *had* + V-ed2). However, many researchers (Bickerton 1975; 1979; Dillard 1972; Mufwene 1983, etc;

Stewart 1970) have pointed out that although this form does correspond in some instances to the PRESENT PERFECT function as in, e.g. *John been workin' here all day today*, there are often cases where it corresponds to the simple PAST tense or PAST PERFECT constructions of Std E as well, suggesting that it cannot be solely equated with the PRESENT PERFECT category. What has not been taken into account is the fact that now and in earlier stages of the English language, overlapping functions such as these were quite common and, in the latter case, far more extensive than in the present-day system. The *done* + V construction also is claimed to reflect the underlying Creole relative tense system where it corresponds sometimes to the PRESENT PERFECT and sometimes to the PAST PERFECT of Std E depending on the context (Mufwene 1988:258). In Std E the PRESENT and PAST PERFECT are sometimes claimed to be non-interchangeable (i.e. (Comrie 1985)) providing an important distinguishing factor between the two systems. However, in some dialects of English, at least, these two types have been attested in the same contexts (Wright 1905:298).

Despite the fact that the individual tense types (categories) have different semantic values, there are some contexts in which they are interchangeable even in the standard language, for example the simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT and the PAST and the PAST PERFECT (Quirk et al. 1985:191) all of which refer to past time. Such overlaps often indicate change in progress. For example, in some European languages (e.g. French) the gradual relaxation of the degree of recentness required for use of the PRESENT PERFECT enabled it to supplant the simple PAST.

Thus, this factor group links each surface tense/aspect form with its corresponding tense type possibilities permitting a distributional analysis of which morphological forms are associated with which tense interpretations. This will indicate whether or not the tense/aspect forms in Samaná English are comparable to Std E, English dialectal patterns, or to what is expected in a Creole grammar.

In this regard, there were a number of problematic contexts that had to be considered. In some cases the Std E PAST PERFECT is possible, but unlikely. For example in the course of conversation there are many instances of interruption in which a previously established time line is broken and then taken up again. Theoretically, at the point of re-entry into the aforementioned time-line the PAST PERFECT could potentially occur; however, when there is a resumption of an iconic story line, this verb structure does not generally appear. Thus, in contexts such as these, the first statement after the discontinuity is coded as potentially PAST PERFECT. Verbs that occur thereafter are not considered to be potential environments for this category. An example of a context such as this in which PAST PERFECT was considered to be possible is illustrated in (144) below.

- (144) I *was working* in the hospital and that day I *reachØ* home. I say, "I gon' make a bread for her". Because she *was coming* flying, but ya she *was* dead, yes. And she *was coming* in a airplane and I *was waiting*. Every now and then I'll go to the door, I'll say, "Lord, she's coming yet?" She *was coming* and she *was coming* and she *was coming*. In a little while the telegram *reachØ*. That's the onlyest what I *had* and after that I *ain't had* no others.
- ...
- Interviewer: But what happened to her?
She *caught* a draught. (007/1847-56)

Each verb was coded for what tense/aspect categories were permitted in the context under study.

P	-	simple PAST (preterit) (includes passives, do-support, modals)
R	-	PRESENT PERFECT
S	-	PAST PERFECT
T	-	PRESENT tense
G	-	PAST PROGRESSIVE
Habituals:		
3	-	PAST or would + V
4	-	PAST or used to + V
5	-	PAST, would + V or used to + V (all three forms acceptable)
X	-	PAST or PAST PERFECT
Y	-	PAST or PRESENT PERFECT
W	-	PAST or PAST PROGRESSIVE

Q	-	PAST, PAST HABITUAL, PAST PERFECT
U	-	PAST, PAST PROGRESSIVE, PAST HABITUAL and (would + V) only.
V	-	PAST, PAST PROGRESSIVE, PAST HABITUAL and (used to + V) only.
1	-	PAST, PAST PROGRESSIVE, PAST HABITUAL (used to), PAST PERFECT
7	-	PAST, PAST PERFECT, PAST HABITUAL
8	-	PAST, PRESENT PERFECT, used to + V

4.2.5.9. Classification of Non-standardness

This factor group considers the verb structure in terms of its "standardness" vis-à-vis prescriptive Std E grammar. The reason for this is to provide for the fact that the vast majority of these data approximate typical English patterns; however, we distinguish between structures which are consistent with the *prescriptive* standard, those which are typical of English vernaculars in general, i.e. unmarked single main verbs, use of *ain't* etc., and those which are potentially anomalous to either, i.e. confusion of tense categories, pre-verbal auxiliaries such as *did*, *done*, *been* etc. Only the latter are unambiguously suggestive of a Creole-like grammar. This factor group will enable us to recuperate not just the frequency of nonstandard types overall, but what types of nonstandard forms occur. For example, verbs forms which appear with the voiceless inflection [t] where voiced is also an alternative, e.g. *burnt*, are included in order to assess the frequency of such forms and their relationship to other varieties of English. This will help determine how many of these so-called "nonstandard" features can actually be attributed to dialectal varieties rather than forms that are alien or aberrant to English grammar. For example, Christian et al. (1988) demonstrate that the patterning of irregular verb forms in Appalachian and Ozark English is actually quite systematic. This factor group will allow us to assess whether or not similar patterning can be found for Samaná and the Ex-Slave Recordings.

S - standard

Nonstandard:

- Ø - non-std, due to lack of past-tense morphology on a bare strong verb, e.g. *I give, I come, I throw, I sen[Ø]*
- 1 - non-std due to lack of past-tense morphology on a bare weak verb, e.g. *I walk[Ø], learn[Ø]*
- R - non-std due to lack of past-tense morphology on a weak past participle, e.g. *He was call[Ø].. (001/675); was marrie[Ø](18/690); they's dieØ*
- 2 - non-std, due to possible deleted auxiliary, (determined by presence of V-ed2, V-ing, V-passive), e.g. *I Ø been; We Ø going (002/362); When that child Ø 'ttacked with ... (002/1009); There where we Ø raiseØ up ... (002/124)*

Nonstandard due to *form(s) of auxiliary*:

- 3 - *did + V, ain't + V, had + done + V; 'll + V, done + V, did + used to + (be) + V (ing)*

Non-std, due to *double inflection*:

- Z - An inflected auxiliary tense carrier in addition to a tensed main verb, e.g. *they'll went and they'll hid; could had; didn't had*

Non-std, due to *tense used*:

- 4 - (PAST PERFECT instead of PAST), e.g. *I had came* instead of *I came*
- Y - (PAST instead of PRESENT PERFECT), e.g. *I came* instead of *I have come*
- X - (PAST instead of PAST PERFECT), e.g. *I sent* instead of *I had sent*
- T - PRESENT (base) instead of have + V (PRESENT PERFECT), e.g. *From since I know myself ... (002/1075)*
- Q - PRESENT PERFECT instead of PAST, e.g. *It was God that's told me*

Other non-standard forms:

- 5 - non-std, due to lexical verb in auxiliary; "be" instead of "have", e.g. *I have a daughter down to Colon, I'm never put a switch on her, never. (021/814)*

- 6 - non-std, due to -s inflection in a past temporal environment that is not the environment for the Historical Present, i.e. that is not narrative complicating action clause.
- 7 - non-std, due to -s inflection in a past temporal environment that is the environment for the HP, i.e. narrative complicating action clauses.
- 8 non-std, due to a bare verb with its present morphology, unmarked weak verb or present (-s-marked strong verb) in the site of either past or a deleted aux + bare V
- 9 - non-std, due to V-ed1 instead of V-ed2, e.g. *I had came; I was chose* (11/1009); *I have went* (11/1021); *I had got; It got broke; I've forgot*
- S - non-std, due to V-base instead of V-ed1, e.g. *I had catch; I had speak; They's give*
- B - V-ed2 instead of V-ed1
- E - regularized PAST tense morphology, e.g. *I knowed*
- F - voiceless inflection where voiced is expected, e.g. ran → run[t]
- G - irregularized³⁸ strong verb morphology, e.g. *fought* → *fit*

All the nonstandard factors were able to be re-coded as N, to provide an overall distinction between standard and nonstandard forms.

4.2.5.10. Temporal Relationship

One of the most enigmatic claims with respect to past temporal reference morphology in BEV is that specific forms occur in contexts in which they are temporally related to previous verbs in a particular way. For example, Rickford (1977:206) observes that the earlier of two *actions* under discussion tends to be marked by perfective *had* and *did*. Also Bickerton (1975:53) says that "the relationship between creole and English ways of handling past events; even where one occurred prior to another, both can be handled by the English simple PAST, but (unless the *actions* are sequential ones in a narrative) creole

³⁸ The term "irregularized" refers to strong verbs which appear with *irregular* strong verb morphology. This is the opposite tendency to that found with strong verbs which appear with regular verb morphology, i.e. the different processes represented by: *fought* → *fit* vs. *fought* → *foughted*.

will normally give the [-anterior] one the stem form, the [+anterior] one the marked-past form". Furthermore, when the reference time is speech time, or else once it has been clearly identified with some other time in the universe of discourse, the covertly marked verb form (V-base) is usually preferred (Mufwene 1983; to appear:5). The overt marker, i.e. *bin/ben* of Creoles (Gullah, Jamaican, Guyanese) would presumably occur in the opposite case.

Temporal relationships such as repetition, temporal reorientation, coincidence and question/answer sequences, which are typical of naturally-occurring discourse, however, have never been considered in the literature. Inclusion of these is vital in order to compare them with other sequences which are temporally ordered in more customarily-cited ways, i.e. posterior, anterior etc. In order to examine whether the marking of verbs is influenced by the temporal relationship that they have to their preceding reference verbs, we examine that behaviour across *all* possible types of temporal relationships that occur in natural sustained discourse.

Determination of which preceding verb is the reference verb, and thereby the relationship that obtains between the two was accomplished via a protocol which was established in order to maintain internal consistency and allow comparable quantifiable categories. We use the framework outlined in Lo Cascio (1986), Lo Cascio and Rohrer (1986) and Adelaar and Lo Cascio (1986) to provide the theoretical justification for determining the location of the reference verb.

In general, temporal structure and organization in discourse can be seen as hierarchic in nature (Adelaar & Lo Cascio 1986 etc.). Tenses are bound by other higher order tenses. Within complex syntactic structures this is fairly straightforward. When the verb under study is in a subordinate clause or stacked embedding, i.e. relative clause, 2nd or 3rd conjunct, temporal clause, NP complement, syntactic criteria determine the location of the reference verb. This will usually be the verb in the syntactically related, next highest clause, either matrix or subordinate depending on which is in first position in the discourse, or merely a higher level subordinate clause. For example, in a second conjunct, the verb in

the first conjunct is taken as the reference verb. In (145) below the reference verb for the main clause verb, *took* is the pre-posed temporal clause verb, *came out*.

(145) [After] we *came out* here my mother *took* 'fraid.

But when the verb under study is in a main clause in the discourse how can we systematically determine which (preceding) verb it is temporally related to? Comrie (1985:65) suggests that the establishment of a reference point be done by examining the context, for example time adverbials and verb form in the preceding clause. In this factor group we consider, in detail, the latter possibility. The verb to which the verb under study refers temporally is termed the "preceding reference verb".

If the verb is preceded by a question or is in direct response to the interviewer, the reference verb is taken to be the verb of the preceding question but no ordered temporal relation is inferred, as in example (146) below.

(146) Did you go to school? Yes, I *did go* to school.

In the majority of cases, however, verbs are preceded by contextually-related sentences which are part of the on-going discourse. In these cases, the reference verb for a main clause (or pre-posed subordinate clause) is taken to be *the last related verb that is on the time line relevant to the verb under study*. For example, the reference verb for the verb *sent* in example (147) below is the preceding event verb *did speak*. Although the stative commentary verb (*was*) intervenes between it and the verb under study it expresses coincidence relation across *all* these verbs and thus no temporal order can be specifically inferred between it and the verb *did speak*.

(147) The boy *did speak* with him and the- him and the boy *was* friends, good friends. And he *sent* him ...(002/656)

In general, a reference verb is located in the last preceding main clause. This means that a relative clause often intervenes between the two as in (148) below. In this case, the verbal unit, *was going* provides the reference for the verb *come*.

(148) She *was going* to her farm what *stayed* right to the top of Saint John hill. And when we *come* ... (002/334)

In the case of stacked relative clauses, however, the embedded verbs take the verb of the higher level main clause as their reference verb. Thus, in (149) below the presentative verb *had* provides the reference for both the embedded verbal units, *was* and *had knowed*, i.e. coincidence.

- (149) They **had** an old lady **what was** yonder **what had knowed** medicines and thing... (002/727)

In other cases there is discontinuity in the temporal orientation between the verb under study and the preceding discourse as in (150). These can be identified as shifts away to another contextually and/or pragmatically defined time axis and are treated in a separate category as environments in which the temporal line is reoriented.

- (150) And when he **got over-** Then the road **used to pass to go to** town. (002/705)

Verbs contained in preposed existential constructions or matrix verbs of opinion (i.e. *I don't know ... I think .*) are not considered to be reference verbs. In the pre-posed introducing matrix verbs in (151a) and (151b) below, the verbal unit in the embedded clause is coded as a subordinate clause³⁹ but the temporal reference verb is sought in the main clause of the preceding sentence, the last verb on the time line, not in the immediately dominating clause.

- (151b) That's where they **was** all the time. (001/427)
That's why they **used to keep** ... (002/429)

When the preceding reference verb has present temporal reference⁴⁰, the verb in question is coded, as with other reference verbs, according to its temporal relationship to it, which by definition in this variable context, is 'anterior'. A purely relative tense, as laid out

³⁹ As we outline in section 4.5.12. below this will allow an assessment of what forms typically occur in specific syntactic structures.

⁴⁰ In cases where the preceding main clause is hypothetical, as in (152), it is coded under the factor P for preceding mark.

(152) I'd rather **go** in the country where I **was raise**. (007/990)

in Bickerton's Creole prototype would presumably mark this context overtly (but cf. Singler 1990:fn5).

There are many cases in which the reference verb cannot be unambiguously determined, for example, when there is no locally identifiable or semantically visible reference time. These are coded as indeterminate or irrelevant to temporal relationship, along with question/answer sequences.

Stative verbs such as *was*, *had*, *know* are included here even though they are stative and refer to an extended period of time. This takes into account the fact that some researchers (e.g. (Labov et al. 1968)) have suggested that *was* may well be a substitute for the creole *bin/ben* for anterior (i.e. when the time reference of the described event precedes that of another event taken as reference point in the discourse). Furthermore, in the case of creole *bin/ben* or the BEV *been*, *was* can often be omitted once the context of time reference is clear, i.e. *we tired* could be interpreted to refer to the past or the present, depending on the reference time in relation to which it is used in the discourse (Mufwene 1983).

This factor group does include verbs used by the interviewer or other informants when they intervene in the discourse and are crucial to the time line interpretation.

This factor group was also used to assess claims about where the preterit and the PAST PERFECT are predicted to occur in Std E. In Std E, sequential order is said to be the environment for simple PAST tense (preterit) and non-sequential order is said to be the environment where PAST PERFECT can occur. However, there is substantial overlap here as well since the preterit is also said to occur here if there is sufficient specification from other time-indicators to enable a correct ordering of states or events (Comrie 1976). Thus, even in Std E the meaning encapsulated by the PAST PERFECT tense does not always appear on the surface with PAST PERFECT morphology and may be represented by the simple PAST.

The codes for these temporal relationships are outlined below.

P - sequential order (posterior to preceding reference verb = >)

Sequential order can be observed in the following examples:

When Trujillo come in_{E1}
we had to give up_{E2} all them things E1 > E2

When I send_{E1} the vessel 'round ...
her rudder touch[Ø]_{E2} the bar E1 > E2

A - non-sequential order (anterior < to preceding reference verb)

It must be kept in mind with non-sequential order that the majority of these sequences are not contexts for Std E PAST PERFECT tense at all, even though this ordering relationship is said to be the context for the PAST PERFECT. Contexts which *are* appropriate for Std E PAST PERFECT are recuperable from the factor group which assesses possible tense in Std E (see section 4.5.8 above). For example, in (153) below, the verb *came* is anterior in relation to the preceding verb *went* but the presence of a PAST PERFECT form here would be inappropriate given the specificity of the adverb *last Saturday*. In (154) the anterior verb *live* is marked by the pre-verbal *did*. A simple PAST, PAST PERFECT or *used to* + V would have been appropriate in Std E.

(153) Her mother went Saturday. I came last Saturday- last Friday
and she went this Saturday.

(154) It's in after my mother died what I come here, yes. And the
place I did live ...

In our data, temporal sequences are sometimes discontinuous (Tagliamonte 1988:41). In such cases temporal orientation is sometimes re-established by a repetition of the last mentioned temporal adverb or lexical verb belonging to the previous temporal sector, just before the next event in that temporal sector occurs. Furthermore, (Ibid 1988:29) such an 'echoed' verbal structure often contains a linguistic unit which marks it as a repetition, i.e. a shift in morphological marking (especially in the direction of Ø → -ed)

and/or other discursive markers, i.e. *and*). This occurs when the temporal frame of the on-going discourse is interrupted by some non-coherent state of affairs. If the verb is a repetition of an earlier verb, either sequentially, after a discourse embedding or by outside distractions, it is coded as a repetition.

R - REPETITION

To be considered a repetition, the verb must be semantically the same as its reference verb, as in (155a) or a direct response in (155b). It must reflect the same temporal reference as its preceding counterpart and it must express an identical idea, otherwise it would have a valid temporal relation as in (155c) below. This excludes repeated verbs as in (155d). Segregating repetitive verbs in this way ensures that only verbs which represent actions, processes or states which include each other in some way are coded as C and all verbs which are complete repetitions of previous verbs are coded under R.

- (155a) ... and *after that* my father built a boat {comment from interviewer}*after that* my father built a boat.
He told me, he say ... And I went. (007/699)
- (155b) What would he write you? He would write you
...(002/609)
- (155c) My father, he came out too... *well then after the many years rolling up and down and passing over and thing*, he came and he married with Mrs. Johnson...(002/82)
- (155d) One was from Delaware and one was from Philadelphia
(002/47)

Another type of temporal relationship comes from cases of temporal discontinuity or reorientation that are not repetitions. This often happens in narrative complicating action clauses with a summary verb after an ordered sequence. This is a verb that summarizes or encapsulates a preceding series of verbs, as in (156a). It also occurs in cases where there is a reorientation to a preceding discourse which has been interrupted by questions, as in (156b), comments or for other independent reasons, or in cases in which a statement is made, which is then expounded on, as in (156c).

N - TEMPORAL DISCONTINUITY/REORIENTATION

- (156a) Look like they had some vessel what did steal them out and come and throw them out in the ... Dominican land. And so, my great-grandfather, he *came* with a little boy ... (002/64)
- (156b) No, I have never been yonder. They *had* a captain ... (004/277-8)
- (156c) He died out from here. They *went* to ... Saint Thomas. From here they went. They move to Saint Thomas and they died out there. (014/594-6)

The INCLUSIVE/COINCIDENCE factor includes all verbs that are simultaneous with the reference verb. If the reference verb or the verb under study is not a single point on the temporal dimension but is itself an event with some duration, then one event can include the other, they can coincide exactly, or they can overlap partially. These types are shown in (157a-b).

- (157a) They had a fence and they *had* hogs loose in that fence and that *had* one, they said like it *was* mine and I *pass* going after water and he *was* up to the house *looking* at me. (013/308-10)
- (157b) My mother *was* little girl [sic] when he *died* (002/68)

I - INCLUSIVE/COINCIDENCE

Finally, an elsewhere category records those contexts which are incomprehensible or indeterminate.

— - INDETERMINATE

4.2.5.11. Morphological mark of preceding reference verb

The sequential patterning of marked and unmarked forms in BEV and Creoles has frequently been used as evidence for the underlying relative tense organization of their grammars. In example (158a-d) below, repeated from section 3.4, verbal constructions that are more suggestive of a Creole-like patterning are those in (158a) and (158b); those in (158c) are quite standard; whereas those in (158d) are atypical of either Creole or Std E.

(158a) Marked + unmarked:

My mother did study, she Ø say
They take all them ammunition

When I had four years,
my mother move[N] to town

(158b) Unmarked + unmarked:

[soon] the government go up
They dig hole
They bury them ...

(158c) Marked + marked:

She had three boys,
but one died

(158d) Unmarked + marked:

She come and she bought

However, the frequency and distribution of these patterns has not previously been determined in any study. This factor group records the surface morphological character of each preceding reference verb and subdivides these in the same way as the morphological mark of the verb under study was recorded, i.e. in such a way as to allow both Std E and Creole interpretations of "marking" (see section 4.2.5.2.2 above). While the marking of verbs in Creoles is claimed to be influenced by the mark of the preceding reference verb, the converse, that the marking of verbs in Std E or English dialectal varieties should *not* be influenced by the preceding reference verb has never explicitly been claimed. Given that temporal reference, in general, is influenced by the preceding context, we cannot exclude the possibility that this might also be true for English. Nevertheless, this information together with the previous factor group, i.e. temporal relationship, will permit a tabulation of the verbal marking relationships in (158a-d) above and allow us to determine the frequency of each type, their individual conditioning factors, and whether those conditioning factors are the same or different with respect to each type. The factors included in this factor group are identical to those in section 4.5.2.2. for the morphological mark of the verb in question.

4.2.5.12. Syntactic Location of verb under study

There has been at least some indication in the literature that the syntactic structure in which a verb is contained may influence its marking characteristics. For example, Bickerton (1975:150) claims that temporal clauses favour the deletion of aspect markers. It

is also the case, however, that data from dialectal studies of English suggest that temporally marked clauses such as these may influence the appearance of unmarked verbs as well (Hughes & Trudgill 1979) (cf. section 3.2. above). In addition, prescriptive grammars of the English language record that some tense/aspect categories are more likely to occur in the environment of a marker which disambiguates the temporal ordering of the states of affairs under consideration. Moreover, current research into the temporal structure and organization of tense in discourse suggests that particular tense forms are influenced by the type of syntactic structures in which they occur (Kamp & Rohrer 1983; Partee 1973; 1984; Smith 1978; 1980; 1981). This factor group investigates the relationship between the syntactic location of the verb under study and its form. We also explore the possibility that verbs in embedded syntactic structures will be more likely to be unmarked than those in main clauses.

The codes for each syntactic environment are listed below:

M - Main clause

The "main clause" factor also includes clauses with initial *and*, *but* and *because* which do not exert their conjunctive function but serve, instead, as discourse introducers, for example (159) below.

(159) Yes, she did 'count us plenty history, you hear. Yes, uhm, and they came out, look like in the time of slavery.

L - locative clause, e.g. *where the Jones' used to stay* (002/178)

Conjoined clauses are determined by main noun or main verb identity across clauses, as in example (160) below. Both *and* and *but*⁴¹ are considered conjunctions.

C - 1st conjunct of a couple (or series) of conjoined clauses
2 - 2nd conjunct
3 - 3rd conjunct

⁴¹ In coding for syntactic structure *but* is normally considered conjunctive. In the event that *but* occurs along with a temporal conjunction, however, e.g. *but when ...* the temporal conjunction is given precedence and the structure is coded as a temporal clause.

- (160) And she took her baby and she was away. And she took
and she threwed me that baby.(002/358)

Relative clauses are headed by *who*, *what*, *that*, etc. Relative clauses which are in second or third conjunct position are coded to conform to the codes for conjunctive clauses above. Relative clauses which are in second or third conjunct position are coded to conform to the codes for conjunctive clauses above, i.e. 2 and 3.

R	-	Single relative clause
2	-	2nd relative clause
3	-	3rd relative clause

Temporal clauses are those which begin with *(un)til*, *before*, *when* or *since*, *whenever*, *while*, etc. Temporal clauses which are in second or third conjunct position are also coded to conform to the codes for conjunctive clauses above, i.e. 2 and 3.

T	-	Single temporal clause
2	-	2nd temporal clause
3	-	3rd temporal clause

Subordinate clauses are those which begin with *that*, $\emptyset$, *because*, *than*, *how*. Stacked subordinate clauses are given the same code as above.

S	-	Single subordinate clause
2	-	2nd subordinate
3	-	3rd subordinate

The final category records those cases which where incomprehensible or indeterminate:

—	-	Indeterminate
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4.2.5.13. Syntactic location of preceding reference verb

This factor group records the syntactic location of the preceding reference verb. The same categories are included as in the foregoing factor group with the addition of:

Q	-	preceding question or comment
X	-	non-proximate preceding sentence

The X factor is used when there is intervening embedding or other material between the verb under study and its reference verb. The two previous factor groups, in combination, record the syntactic locations of verbs that are temporally related to each other.

The general protocol we have outlined above can be demonstrated in the series of sentences presented in (161) below:

- (161) [That one wrote *some years ago* to my father from Switzerland] S1
 [He said he found the family in Germany] S2
 [He say he found the family in Germany] S3
 [He wrote him from- ...] S4 (001/11-14)

In sentence one (S1) the verb, *wrote* will have no preceding reference verb coded for because there is no preceding (local) verb. The adverbial, *some years ago* is taken up in another factor group, see section 4.5.14.1 below. The verb *wrote* is the reference verb for the verb *said* the sentence two (S2). The reference verb and the verb under study are coded for syntactic location, i.e. the preceding sentence and the matrix sentence respectively. The morphological mark, cf. section 4.5.2.2, of the verb *wrote* is recorded as marked, (M), and the sequential order between the verb under study *said* and the reference verb *wrote* is categorized, i.e. *said* is posterior, (P), to *wrote*. The reference verb for the verb *found* is the verb in its matrix clause which is *said*. It is coded for syntactic location, i.e. (matrix). The location of the verb under study is recorded, i.e. (subordinate). The morphological mark of the verb is recorded, (M) and the sequential order is determined by the temporal relationship between *found* and *wrote*. In this case *found* is anterior, (A), to *said*. Note that this is a location for either simple PAST or PAST PERFECT in Std E. In a Creole-like grammar a [+anterior] overt marker might be expected. The case of repetition of the verb *say* is noted in the temporal relationship code for the verb *say* in sentence three (S3), where it is coded as a repetition.

Within the discourse, there are many stylistic uses of temporal sequencing. These are interpreted as being ordered according to their pragmatic interpretation. In (162) below

the verbs *never found* in S2 and *didn't find* in S3 are interpreted as coincident to *never found* in S1 and *never found* in S3 respectively, while *didn't bury* in S4, which is anterior to them all, is coded as anterior, (A) to its preceding reference verb *didn't find* in S3. This is also a context in which a Std E simple PAST or PAST PERFECT could occur.

- (162) [They never found head] S1
 [they never found body] S2
 [they didn't find nothing] S3
 ['cause they didn't bury him] S4

4.2.5.14. Temporal indicators

Throughout the literature discussing the temporal reference systems of Creole, BEV as well as Std E grammars, researchers have claimed that temporal indicators other than verbs and auxiliaries contribute to the interpretation and surface morphological realizations of different tense/aspect types. For example, in a relative system the covertly inflected verb is said to occur in the environment of other time indicators (Mufwene 1983:8). However, even in Std E, particular tense types are associated with specific temporal adverbs, particles and conjunctions with temporal value. Grammar books (e.g. (Quirk & Greenbaum 1972:44)) claim that the choice of PRESENT and PAST PERFECT predisposes the linguistic context to specific adverbs, conjunctions (i.e. *lately*, *so far*, *already* *yet*, *up to now* etc.) and prepositions (i.e. *before*, *after*, *since* etc.). In light of these considerations any potential temporal indicators in the immediate (sentential) environment of each past-reference tense/aspect structure are recorded in order to tabulate their patterns of co-occurrence.

4.2.5.14.1. Adverb Type

Adverbs are by far the most widely recognized temporal indicators apart from tense/aspect morphemes. This factor group investigates the collocation restrictions of different tense/aspect forms (and by extension absolute versus relative tenses) and different

adverbials. For example, in BEV Rickford (1977) claims "there is an absolute restriction against the use of some adverbials with stressed BIN", i.e. (163).

(163) *I *BIN* know you for a long time.

In Std E, on the other hand, there is a restriction against the PRESENT PERFECT with time-position adverbials referring to specific times, i.e. (164). Such an adverbial is said to force the occurrence of the simple PAST tense instead.

(164) *I *have seen* him last night.

This factor group will also show what types of adverbs occur with each type of verbal structure, thus enabling a comparison of co-occurrence patterns that are attested for Std E, Creole and/or BEV grammars. For example, time-position adverbials with the Std E simple PAST tense, time-frequency adverbials with simple PAST tense forms with iterative semantic interpretation and indefinite temporal adjuncts and those that refer to a period of time that stretches from a point in the past to speech time for the PRESENT PERFECT (Visser 1970). Such comparisons will contribute corroborating evidence for relevant semantic delimitations for the Samaná and Ex-Slave tense/aspect categories.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| E | - | "then" ⁴² |
| D | - | DEICTIC ADVERB (past temporal reference), e.g. <i>yesterday, today, now last week, three days ago</i> |
| P | - | DEICTIC ADVERB (with PRESENT PERFECT or sometimes PAST PERFECT), e.g. <i>today, (just) now, already, yet</i> , i.e. 002/794) |

⁴² The meaning of 'then' referred to in this factor is restricted to its function as a marker of subsequence. Occurrences of 'then' with the meaning of 'at that time', e.g. (165a), are included as "dependent" adverbs. Other occurrences of 'then' are not temporal, e.g. (165b), having the sense of 'on the other hand' or 'but remember/recall'; these are excluded.

(165a) 'Cause, you see *then* the Americans had a ... terrible finca here in Cano-Hondo. (002/525)

(165b) They sent him to represent the government yonder 'cause he knew English. And *then* he had the trade that help him out. (019/145-6)

- R - DEPENDENT; refers to some time established within the text, by means of anaphora (Huddleston '69:799), e.g. *then, (the) next day, the day before, afterwards, later ...*

Two frequently occurring dependent adverbs are included separately due to their frequency.

- 1 - [in/at] [one/that] [another/a next/in them] time(s)
- 2 - [a/one/that] day
- T - TIME/FREQUENCY adverb, e.g. *always, every year/day/time, plenty, Saturdays*
- S - LEXICALIZED TIME PERIOD: REFERENCE POINT
Refers to some axis independent of the speech act and of other parts of the text (Huddleston '69:799) e.g. *in 1640, toward the end, in the middle*
- C - LEXICALIZED TIME PERIOD: REFERENCE CONTINUOUS
E.g. *He lived 82 years, a time*, (meaning "awhile")

4.2.5.14.2. Subordinating conjunctions with temporal value

Describing the temporal reference characteristics of surface verbal morphology in terms of the surrounding discursive environment is more complex than in isolated or abstracted sentences where temporal reference can only be determined with respect to the moment of speech. In the analysis presented here we are concerned with events within the context of discourse so that we can determine how different tense/aspect forms are related to one another. In such a data base many different syntactic structures are considered. In the case that one event is syntactically subordinate to another, the subordinate or secondary event can be characterized temporally both with respect to the matrix (or primary) event and with respect to the speech moment (Chung & Timberlake 1985:209). However, within the local syntactic structure, particular lexical subordinating conjunctions with temporal value help to restrict the temporal freedom of the secondary event. Such restricting elements may have implications for the relative tense marking system in that they will affect the surface morphological form of the associated verb. For example, prepositional items such as *after*

are said to imply that the secondary event must be anterior to the primary event; *while*, that the secondary and primary events overlap; and *before*, that the secondary event must be posterior. Moreover, in traditional grammatical texts these lexical subordinating conjunctions are said to indicate specific tense category possibilities. Quirk et al. (1972:339) note that "*after* and *when*, in referring to a sequence of past events, can be followed either by a PAST PERFECT or by a simple PAST tense verb" whereas "*when since* is used in a temporal sense, the PRESENT PERFECT is used in the superordinate clause". This factor group investigates the collocation characteristics of the various lexical forms used for temporal subordination and the range of tense/aspect forms.

H	-	when
U	-	until
B	-	before
A	-	after (that)
W	-	while
S	-	since ... also includes, <i>from since that</i> (002/890, 317)
T	-	(by the) time ...
F	-	from ...
N	-	(as) soon (as)
D	-	under that ...

4.2.5.14.3. Aspectualizing particles

Traditionally, English has not been thought to have significant aspectual categories; however, several partially grammaticalized markers occur. One of these is the presence of aspectualizing particles which appear in addition to the verb but are not actually verbal. Recent work on Std E (Brinton 1988) has suggested that these markers form a coherent aspectual system traceable to Old English. This factor group records the presence of a punctualizing, e.g. *up*, *down*, *in*, *out* etc, or 'durativizing', e.g. *on*, spatio-temporal particles, as in (166) below. Contrary to the pre-verbal particles typical of Creoles, these particles appear in *post-verbal* position.

- (166) Well then you see, all them arms, they *took 'em up*. They *took up* all them arms. (001/427)

Such forms are not explicitly mentioned in most of the literature on Creole or BEV tense/aspect systems, although Mufwene (1984) includes similar items, i.e. *start 'star'*, as aspectual markers. Their resemblance, lexically and distributionally to Std E forms in this data, however, provides evidence for a Std-E interpretation of their function.

P	-	particle
—	-	no particle

4.2.5.15. Reference point

One of the typical claims of many researchers working with contemporary BEV has been that its different past temporal reference tense/aspect forms can be directly related to the distance back in time to which they refer. For example Fickett (1972) posits three different pre-verbal forms, each of which represents a time period further removed into the past, i.e. *did* for immediate past, *done* for recent past, and *been* for some remote past time. Although this particular function for *did* and *done* is not widely attested, the remote time interpretation for *been* is quite widespread (e.g. (Dillard 1972; Stewart 1965; Wolfram 1974)). However, Rickford's (1975) study makes it clear that the remote time interpretation is only applicable to the stressed version of *been*, i.e. *BIN*, while he claims that the unstressed *been* is used in BEV in ways paralleling the Std E PRESENT PERFECT. In order to determine the pertinence of temporal distance to the appearance of past temporal reference morphology in Samaná and the Ex-Slave Recordings, this factor group provides a measurement of the distance back in time that is represented by the verb form under study by recording the specific temporal reference time period associated with each. It will also address the claim made by Comrie (1976:68) that the PAST PERFECT can be distinguished from remote aspect (typical of creoles) by the fact that the temporal location of the PAST PERFECT is not necessarily remote. Further, it will also address the suggestion by Dahl (1984:118) that there is a connection between recency and the PRESENT PERFECT. These hypotheses were tested first, by the categorization of each verb structure by its distance in the past, and second, by the distribution of tense/aspect

types across these temporal reference time periods. This provided a quantitative assessment of which morphological forms represented what time periods. For example, in (167) below three distinct time periods are represented by the verbs: 1) a remote time (i.e. during the time of Trujillo) represented by the verbal structure *did buy*, 2) a (medial) past time (i.e. since the time of Trujillo) represented by the verbal structure *had went*, and 3) a comparatively recent past (i.e. now) represented by two unmarked conjoined verbs. Such an isolated example suggests that the Creolists' claims may be correct; however, it is not until *all* contexts are tabulated that an accurate assessment can be made.

- (167) But *in that time* we *did buy* sugar four cent the pound, you hear, four cent the pound, *time of Trujillo*
 And *from since that* look, the sugar *had went up* even to thirty cents, you hear.
 And it come back *now* to twenty and eighteen
 And stay so, you hear. (002/890)

In order to assess reference time independent of surface verbal morphological form we appeal to the subject matter of the informants' discourse. Six major divisions were tabulated which neatly subcategorized the majority of topics covered in the informant interviews.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| L | - | long ago (remote)
events that took place within the lifetime of grandparents or parents |
| N | - | early childhood and adolescence up to marriage
revolution, courtship. Trujillo's time, when the Americans came in, i.e. 1916, etc. |
| S | - | more than a year
things they've done in their adult life, work, children etc. |
| Y | - | in the last year or so |
| D | - | in the last week (recent) |
| U | - | understood as continuing up to present |

4.2.5.16. Type of Discourse

Researchers working with both English and Creole data have claimed that tense-marking often becomes redundant in contexts in which reference points or time intervals have already been located. The foremost location for this type of disambiguation occurs in narrative discourse where temporal orientation is, by definition, provided by the context (Comrie 1985:61). In contrast to most previous work on narrative discourse, we distinguish here between complicating action narrative clauses and non-complicating action narrative clauses which have been found to contain completely different verbal marking characteristics. In relative tense systems, as in Creoles, the narrative complicating action clauses would be the prime site for the unmarked (covert) verb forms. In Std E on the other hand all verbal forms within a narrative occurring in the complicating action, and to a much lesser extent the abstract and orientation, have the potential to occur in the Historical Present, which in all verbal persons except third singular are also identical on the surface to the Creole unmarked form. This factor group distinguishes discourse contexts in order to investigate whether the distribution of tense/aspect morphology is influenced by their discursive location. This discourse factor group along with the "agreement" factor group, cf. section 4.5.6 above, can recuperate how many of the unmarked verbs are potential Historical Present verbs.

Furthermore, dividing the data in this way will allow us to address specific claims about the marking characteristics of individual morphological types. For example, some researchers have noted that in BEV the PAST PERFECT is used "freely in narrative" (Labov et al. 1968:225). In fact, it is said to be used much more commonly in BEV narratives than in the narratives of Std E speakers (Fasold & Wolfram 1975:65). An interesting observation in Dahl (1983) suggests why this might be so. In general, PAST PERFECT is a non-narrative, or more specifically a non-complicating action category in Std E; it tends to occur in the marked chronological case, namely when events are presented

in other than chronological order. Given that the PRESENT PERFECT developed on the model of the PAST PERFECT it is also natural that both are used in non-narrative contexts in Std E. However, as Dahl (1983:118) points out, in languages which make a distinction between recent and remote past time, as Creoles have been claimed to do, there is no dichotomous treatment of narrative vs. non-narrative discourse. Instead, any past reference verbs are segregated according to their degree of remoteness regardless of the discourse type. This factor group will enable us to characterize the behaviour of tense/aspect morphology according to this feature as well as to verify which, if any, of these hypotheses are relevant for the Samaná and the Ex-Slave corpora.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| N | - | Narrative, complicating action clauses |
| S | - | Iconically-ordered, but not fully structured narrative |
| O | - | Narrative, non-complicating action clauses |
| — | - | Non-narrative discourse |

4.2.5.17. Speaker information

The last three factor groups record each individual separately as well as extra-linguistic information about the speakers, i.e. sex (male or female) and education (whether the informant had gone to school or not). Table (7a) lists the number of tokens per person in the Samaná English Corpus and Table (7b) provides this information for the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Table (7a): Total number of tokens per individual⁴³ included in the study —
Samaná English

Speaker #	Tot	Speaker #	Tot
001	1226	011	506
002	1034	013	111
003	706	014	365
004	252	015	59
005	313	016	316
006	631	017	241
007	369	018	515
008	230	019	475
009	224	020	198
010	140	021	135

Table (7b): Total number of tokens per individual included in the study —
Ex-Slave Recordings

Speaker #	Tot	Speaker #	Tot
001(BL)	99	007	5
002(WQ)	71	008(FH)	317
003(AG)	46	009(HS)	289
005(BM)	127	00W(LS)	526
006(JM)	60	00X(CS)	367
00Y(CB)	86		

4.2.6. Implementation

Each of the factor groups described above was laid out in grid-like fashion to create a coding sheet upon which the relevant codes for each factor group were entered as well as the actual context and explicit reference characteristics of each token, i.e. tape, counter and line number, see Appendix B. For the Samaná English materials, which were coded and analyzed first, we tabulated *all* of the described factor groups. Preliminary analyses

⁴³ Speaker 012 did not have enough tokens in the variable context defined to warrant inclusion.

indicated, however, that several of these were not particularly relevant to the issues we outlined, e.g. subject noun, and were not considered in coding the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Coding for both corpora was done with the aid of both the written transcripts *and* the highest quality audio-taped version of each interview so that the crucial phonological renditions of individual morphemes were coded as accurately as possible. In the case of the Ex-Slave Recordings we utilized a reel-to-reel copy from which much of the original distortion had been removed. All this information was then entered into a computer data base in the format required by the GoldVarb 2.0 token file (cf. Rand & Sankoff 1990). In addition to the character string, the token file also included the line number and actual utterance from which the token was extracted, see Appendix C. This procedure greatly facilitated our ability to retrieve examples, maintain consistency, as well as provide a close working relationship between the coded string and the original sentence it was created to represent.

Chapter 5: Distributional Analyses of Factor Groups

5. Prominent Patterns

In the following sections we provide a general overview of some of the most prominent patterns in the data. Such a distributional analysis will aid in differentiating the exact features of the contextual environment which are relevant to the issues we address in this dissertation. Identification of these will permit recoding, collapsing and/or elimination of the coded factor groups and factors so that we might arrive at more pertinent groupings of the many different past temporal reference verbal morphological structures that appear in these data. Because the focus of our inquiry, in general, involves a wide spectrum of tense/aspect categories and forms, the idiosyncratic characteristics of individual verb classes and lexical types produced many instances of unique surface representation which had to be differentiated, at least at some level of the analysis. For example, surface forms such as *he came*, *he come*, *he did come*, *he didn't come*, *he done come* etc. all had to have a unique entry in, at least, one factor group of our analysis so that the overall frequency of each type could be tabulated.

Not every factor group used in the coding procedure was included for the purpose of identifying some feature of the linguistic or extra-linguistic context suspected of having some importance vis-à-vis verbal marking patterns. Instead, many were solely used to differentiate specific individual forms so that they could be easily included or excluded from particular analyses if required. Others, which were thought to be potential conditioning factors, turned out to be irrelevant. Furthermore, within factor groups, not all factors were found to exert an effect on variable marking and the vast majority have been subsequently eliminated or collapsed into a few key factors.

The following overview of the many different morphological types that occur in these data is not intended to provide an in depth view of variation *within* different tense/aspect categories, but as a preliminary examination which will 1) aid in determining how the individual morphological types found in these data might be differentiated or alternatively, considered as variants of the same variable and 2) account for a number of correlated features that have been mentioned in the literature which are more felicitously examined from a distributional viewpoint than a variable rule analysis. An amalgamated view, such as this, of all the possible tense/aspect forms does not and cannot present a characterization of the conditioning effects which operate within the variable context of separate variables once they have been identified; however, it can serve to uncover the very distinct mechanisms that might be involved therein. We utilize this type of information to configure the variable rule analyses which we perform in section 6.0. below.

5.1. Distribution and marking characteristics of verb forms

The entire Samaná English data base contained 8,046 tokens and the Ex-Slave Recordings 2,114 tokens of verbal structures that made reference to real events, processes and states that occurred in the past. Initial examination of these data reveal that past temporal reference is made by a number of different lexical forms, i.e. auxiliary and/or suffixal and/or suppletive⁴⁴ morphology, e.g. (168a), and several types of combinations of their respective morphologies. Both data sets evidence at least some tokens of each these variants. More than two auxiliaries, e.g. (169a-d), also occur, but rarely,⁴⁵ and these are virtually restricted to the Samaná English Corpus.

⁴⁴ Our use of the term 'suppletive' here is not restrictive, but is used generally to refer to all the many different morphological forms that are used for past temporal reference of strong verbs.

⁴⁵ For purposes of clarity and simplification of the analyses that follow, when a verbal structure has more than two auxiliaries, except for verb structures with *done*, it is included in the category represented by the first occurring auxiliary. For example, a structure such as *did be telling* or *did used to speak* as in examples (169a-b) will be included with all *did* + V forms, *had to keep on speaking*, (169c) will be included with *had to* + V forms, and *'d be getting up*, (169d) will be included with *would* + V forms.

- (168a) I walk [t] on the beach *yesterday*[past temp. ref.]
 walk
 had walk [t]
 had walk
 have walk [t]
 have walk
 did walk
 used to walk
 'll walk
 would walk
 been walk [ing]
 was walk [ing]
 walk [ing]
- (169a) She all the time did be telling me the medicines was good for the children. (002/1135)
 (169b) My father did used to speak English. (015/108)
 (169c) People had to keep on speaking the English what they knowed. (014/250-1)
 (169d) As I was going in so, I'd be getting up the children ... (018/576)

In order to arrive at a general understanding of the morphological characteristics of these verbal structures, we define factor groups which record overall verbal mark and morphological type⁴⁶.

5.1.1. Marking

Despite the inclusion of a number of structures as unmarked whose lack of inflection may be accounted for independently, i.e. V-base forms in second conjuncts, narrative complicating action clauses and neutralized contexts, the overall marking rate remains high in the English of both our Samaná speakers and the Ex-Slaves. Contrary to what would be expected within a Creole system, there is a clear preference for overt tense and/or aspect marking in general in these data: a full 82% in the Samaná data and 80% in the Ex-Slave Recordings exhibit some kind of overt morphological mark. Moreover, there

⁴⁶ The factor groups involving lexical and morphological data of individual auxiliaries were used primarily to construct specific condition files which meticulously circumscribed the structures which were included and/or excluded in a given view of the data. For example, the separate tabulation of *do*-support permitted these forms to be excluded from examinations of the data which specifically explored the suffixal deletion hypothesis to which these structures are irrelevant.

are striking parallels across the two corpora with respect to frequency and distribution of these forms.

The entire range of verbal structures in each data base with respect to overall verbal mark is depicted in Table (8)⁴⁷. Here, it can be observed that the all-important unmarked form of the verb, i.e. V-base, represents only 17.9% and 20.2% of the Samaná and Ex-Slave corpora respectively whereas fully marked verbs represent 77.9% and 75.6% of the total number of verbs.

Table (8). Overall Morphological Marking in Verbs

Marking type	Example	Samaná %	English N	Ex-Slaves %	N
marked	<i>I walked</i> <i>I came</i> <i>I did walk</i> <i>I had walked</i> <i>I used to walk etc.</i>	77.9	6271	75.6	1598
V-base	<i>I walkØ</i>	17.9	1439	20.2	426
semi-marked, only on aux	<i>I had walkØ</i>	1.9	153	1.5	32
semi-marked, only on main verb	<i>I Ø walking</i> <i>I Ø born</i> <i>I Ø done</i> <i>I Ø been</i> <i>I Ø seen</i> <i>I Ø been</i>	1.4	117	.7	15
<u>Rare:</u>					
marked, present tense	<i>I walks</i>	0.6	49	1.2	25
doubly marked	<i>I didn't walked</i>	0.3	25	Ø	=

⁴⁷ A number of irregular morphologies were found. Of these, two were quite rare: 1) inflected main verbs (V-ed1) where a V-base would be expected, e.g. *I used to spoke*, and 2) unambiguous present morphology, e.g. *don't*, *-s* etc. in non-narrative past temporal environments. These could be construed as reflecting a non-English system (cf. Schneider (1989) for *-s*). However, in Samaná only 10 present-marked verbs occur outside narrative discourse — only 0.12% of the data. Doubly inflected forms are equally rare. Due to the fact that these types represent an extremely small percentage of the total sample, they have been collapsed into the "marked" factor group and have been excluded from subsequent analyses unless otherwise indicated.

5.1.2. Morphological type

This categorization of the data, however, does not distinguish the different *types* of marking. Such a differentiation is also important to the issues described above. It is not only relevant to know if a verb is marked or not, but when it is marked, what type of mark it has, especially in light of the fact that overt marking is, by far, the largest category.

Quite an extensive variety of different overt morphological types occur in both corpora and these are depicted in Table (9). By "morphological type" we refer to the surface morphological form of the entire verbal structure, taking into consideration *both* the main verb, its potential for inflection *and* the possible co-occurrence, in addition, of pre-verbal items between it and the subject noun.

Table (9): Distribution of morphological types of past temporal reference

Morphological Type	Example	Saramá English			Ex-Slave Recordings		
		N	TOT N	% of Data	N	TOT N	% of Data
Single Verb with inflection: weak (includes negatives) ⁴⁸ strong	walked came	715 4146	4861	60.4	952 210	1162	55.0
Single Verb without inflection	walkØ come	682 628	1310	16.3	163 171	334	15.8
<i>used to</i> + V ⁴⁹	<i>used to</i> + V-base	—	315	3.9	—	26	1.2
____ / V-ing: <i>was / were</i> (past tense "to be") Ø (bare V-ing) <i>am / is</i> (present tense "to be") ⁵⁰	was walking coming	257	304	3.8	44	55	2.6
	walking coming	28			10		
	am walking coming	19			1		
____ / V-ed2	I done I born I been (V-ing)	23 55 11	89	1.1	10 18	28	.9
Semi-auxiliary or Aspectualizing Particle + <i>to</i> V-base + V-ing	<i>had to</i> + V <i>got to</i> + V <i>began/begin</i> + <i>to</i> V V-ing <i>start / started to</i> + V <i>commence to</i> + V <i>come / came to</i> + V	97 23 33 12 12 18	195	2.4		23	1.1
<i>would</i> + V	would walk 'd walk	—	148	1.8	—	213	10.1
<i>had</i> + V	had walked walkØ	71 49	120	1.5	10 5	15	.7
Passive Constructions with <i>be</i>	was born raiseØ	88 30	118	1.5	35 19	54	2.6
Passive Constructions with <i>got</i>	got married marrieØ	55 33	88	.7	1 3	4	.2
Modal + V	could go	—	85	1.1	—	34	1.6

⁴⁸ Also included in this grouping are doubly marked verbs, e.g. *didn't had* which represent only 1.9% of these tokens in the SEC.

⁴⁹ Included in this grouping is a single double marked verb, *used to spoke*.

⁵⁰ The majority of these forms are used only in narrative discourse and are likely Historical Present progressives.

<i>have</i> + V	have walked walkØ	70 16	86	1.1	17 1	18	.9
<i>did</i> + V	I did walk come	—	82	1.1	—	13	.6
Verbs with reduced pronouns and auxiliaries in conjoined clauses (Std)	e.g. They used to grate the yams and Ø make flutters.	—	72	.9	—	88	4.2
Verbs with reduced auxiliaries only in conjoined clauses (non-std)	e.g. She'll go down to town and she Ø stay to my mother's.	—	8	.1			
Present tense <i>be</i> + V	'm walked 'm walkØ 'm been V-ing	20 18 2	40	.5		1	.04
Ain't + V	ain't gave give giving been ain't —	17 7 4 7 1	36	.5	3 2	5	.5
'll + V	'll walk	—	31	.4	—	4	.2
<i>done</i> + V	done walk (V-base) been (V-ed2) had done pass been 'm done been	3 7 2 4 4	10 6 4	.3	6 1	7	.3
<i>kept</i> + V-ing			9	.1		1	
No verb	e.g. 'When we Ø in Puerto Rico ...'	—	6	.07	—	2	

Table (9) depicts the complete spectrum of morphological types for past temporal reference in these data. Despite slight differences, the frequency of morphological marking types is amazingly similar across the two data sets. Obvious deviations occur in only two categories. First, the Ex-Slave Recordings have a far greater percentage of habitual *would* + V constructions than Samaná English, i.e. 1.8% vs. 10.1%, while the Samaná English Corpus has more *used to*, i.e. 3.9% vs. 1.2%. This can be explained by the overall discursive differences between the two corpora. The Samaná corpus contains many more narratives of personal experience which typically utilize single main verbs while the Ex-Slave corpus has far more generic and/or de-personalized descriptions of past events, e.g. things that were going on during the time of slavery, and thus more habitual verb forms, e.g. *would* + V. The second major difference is the fact that in Samaná conjoined clauses with reduced pronouns or auxiliaries make up only .9% of the data, while in the Ex-Slave Recordings they represent 4.2%. Again, this is likely due to non-linguistic factors, e.g. speech style, discourse context, the type of events being recounted etc. and should not effect the organization or distributional of individual tense/aspect categories.

Contrary to most Creole varieties, where past temporal reference is said to be indicated either with pre-verbal particles or a covert $\emptyset$ tense marker, in Samaná English and in the speech of the Ex-Slaves suppletion or suffixal inflection on a single main verb is the most prevalent type of morphological marking in both samples, representing 60.4% and 55% of all the verbal structures used for past temporal reference respectively. The largest category of forms which could represent potential Creole items are the V-base verbs which represent 16.3% and 15.8% of all verb structures in these corpora respectively. Note the similar frequencies of these two forms to one another (V-ed1 vs. V-base) in both corpora! Pre-verbal aspectual markers are either absent entirely (e.g. *come*, *steady*) or exceedingly rare (e.g. *done*). Note that structures with *done* in pre-verbal position represent only .3%

of either data set⁵¹. Possible ANTERIOR markers specifically associated either with English-based creoles, e.g. *bin*, or with contemporary BEV, e.g. *had* and/or *bin*, are also quite rare or are relatively infrequent compared to other markers such as simple PAST tense inflection, *-ed* and suppletion. Thus, while some of the surface morphologies cited in the Creole literature are present, they are restricted in frequency. This can be said, of course, of syntactic variables in general, and this fact alone reveals little of their grammatical nature. However, as we will detail below, not only are forms which resemble Creole morphemes rare, they do not parallel their Creole counterparts either in distribution or in function.

In the next sections we examine the distribution of these morphological types across a number of different dimensions as categorized by the numerous factor groups outlined in section 4.0. above.

5.2. Standard?

One of the foremost questions that is at issue in examining data such as these is which forms can be considered to be representative of a Creole grammar. One way that has been commonly used in the literature on this subject is to treat any of the variety of morphological features found in a given data set, which deviate from what would be expected in (prescriptive) Std E, as potential creole forms. However, our review of past temporal reference morphological forms in contemporary WEV as well as historical varieties suggests that many forms that are different from what would be expected in the prescriptive contemporary "standard" are acceptable dialectal variants, or were once even the norm in the standard variety. In order to determine the relative frequency of forms which are typical of English vernaculars in general, i.e. unmarked single main verbs, use of *ain't* etc. as opposed to those which are potentially anomalous to either, i.e. confusion of

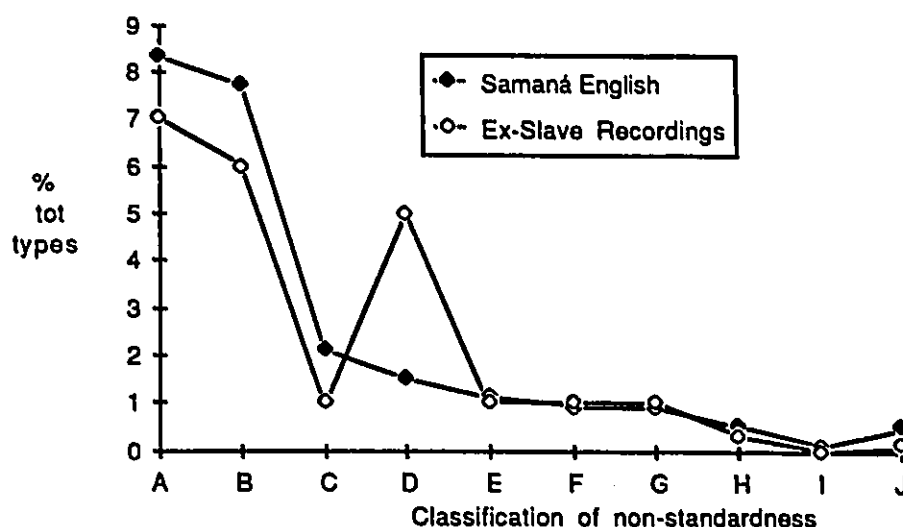
⁵¹ Although the relative infrequency of forms such as *done* or *been* may be directly linked to the fact that they are only permissible in certain contexts, we will demonstrate below that even when calculated within the contexts in which they *could* occur, the frequency remains low, relative to the other forms that are used.

tense categories, pre-verbal auxiliaries such as *did*, *done*, *been* etc., we classify each token as standard only if it is entirely consistent with the *prescriptive* standard outlined in contemporary grammar books and *any other form* is distinguished according to its deviance from that standard. It is these forms that we refer to as "nonstandard". This permits an assessment of the overall frequency of forms which are anomalous with respect to Std E as well as a tabulation of how frequent each type actually is. We specifically seek to establish how many of these forms can be attributed to WEV or to some previous stage in the history of the English language and those which can actually be unambiguously identified as *non-English*.

Our findings show that a full 74% of the verbal structures used for past temporal reference in Samaná English and 76% in the Ex-Slave Recordings are completely acceptable from the perspective of contemporary English grammar books and thus entirely compatible with Std E grammar. Verbal structures which do deviate from Std E usage do so in two major ways: 1) their surface inflectional *morphology* differs from what is expected from the prescriptive standard, e.g. *I walkØ* vs. *I walked*, or 2) the surface tense and/or aspect *category* itself (vis-à-vis Std E) is used where another one is expected, e.g. simple PAST instead of PRESENT PERFECT: *She had plenty time yonder and now she came to the capital to live.* (002/794-5). By far the majority of nonstandard forms in these data are of the first type, while those of the latter are rare. Figure (1)⁵² depicts the percent frequency of nonstandard verbal structures out of the total number of verbs in the data set according to type. The ten types illustrated below display the most frequent types of non-standardness that occur; the few remaining types (i.e. simple PAST for PAST PERFECT, V-base instead of V-ed1 etc.) represent very small numbers and are not listed in the Figure.

⁵² The actual numbers and percentages for this graph are included in Appendix D.

Figure (1): Frequency of different types of nonstandard verb forms in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings



The first observation that can be made is that surface morphologies which are nonstandard occur in exactly the same proportions in both data bases, except for one. The Ex-Slave Recordings have twice the frequency, 5% (N=99), of bare verbs in past temporal environments that are ambiguous between 1) a simple PAST tense with a deleted inflection or 2) a habitual form with a deleted auxiliary than the Samaná English Corpus where they represent 1.5% (N=121). Additionally, the Samaná data seems to have a slightly elevated frequency for the three most frequent nonstandard types — use of V-base forms for strong verbs, A, use of V-base forms for weak verbs, B, and use of auxiliaries that do not appear in Std E, C. Nevertheless, the patterning between the two data sets is the same. We find that the most prevalent type of nonstandard usage is with verbs which can be construed in Std E to be simple PAST tense verbs, i.e. single main verbs, but which exhibit V-base morphology. These can be divided into two groups based on the verb class involved: strong verbs, which are generally more frequent than weak verbs overall, e.g. *I give*, *I come*, represented as A in Figure (1), and weak verbs, e.g. *I walk*Ø, *I learn*Ø, represented as B in Figure (1). V-base single main verbs represent the majority (Samaná

English 61%, N=2124; Ex-Slaves 52.6%, N=267) of nonstandard forms overall in both corpora, yet they represent only 16% of the total verb forms in the Samaná data base and 13% of the Ex-Slave Recordings.⁵³ The next most common nonstandard verbal structure are those that are nonstandard due to the form(s) in the auxiliary, e.g. *did*, *done*, *ain't*, 'll etc., represented in C. We have seen that many of these forms have been attested previously in English, *did* and *done* from 16th century Britain, *ain't* from nonstandard English, even synchronically, etc. This type of nonstandardness represents a mere 2% of the Samaná data and 1% of the Ex-Slave Recordings, even when *all* nonstandard auxiliaries are included together in one category as we have done here. Another relatively prevalent type are those that are nonstandard due to a V-base verb, either weak or strong, in a site that could be construed as requiring the simple PAST *or* an auxiliary, represented in D. These differ from A and B in the sense that it is unclear from the context whether a simple PAST tense form was intended or whether the unmarked verb represents a habitual form with its auxiliary reduced. This form represents contexts which are [+past] and [-punctual] — the quintessential environment for unmarked verbs in decreolizing varieties. The context has also been attested in English, however, where the absence of auxiliary-marked structures produces a surface unmarked form. This type, as well, represents a small amount of the data, at only 1% in Samaná. In the Ex-Slave Recordings on the other hand, these forms represent 5% of the total sample — a five-fold increase. Other types of nonstandard structures are those that are nonstandard due to the possible deletion of an auxiliary, represented in E, e.g. *I Ø been*, *We Ø going*, of which, at least the former has been attested in English dialects. Those that are due to an uninflected main verb with an

⁵³ In actuality, these figures, although quite low in frequency in both corpora, are likely somewhat inflated nonetheless. V-base forms in complicating action narrative clauses were included under the 'non-standard' category, and thus were included in our figures for V-base single main verbs (strong and weak) with past temporal reference. If they had been excluded from these calculations the figures would be somewhat lessened. Recall that the figures do not include V-base forms which have *present* temporal reference since these were, by definition of our circumscribed context of investigation (i.e. *past* temporal reference structures), excluded.

inflected auxiliary, e.g. *He was callØ*, *He was marrieØ*, are represented in F. These can be considered another environment for suffixal deletion. A further category of nonstandardness comes from single main verbs which exhibit morphological marking, but of a type deviant from the accepted standard. These include regularized forms, e.g. *knowed*, G, forms which exhibit the voiceless variant of the simple PAST tense suffix, i.e. [t], in environments where the voiced one, [d], is expected, i.e. *killed* vs. *kilt*, H, and irregular strong verb morphologies, i.e. *fought* vs. *fit*, I. All of these surface forms are clearly and consistently identified as English both historically *and* synchronically in dialectal varieties as well as in informal speech. Additional types of nonstandardness — those having to do with inappropriate use of tense categories, double marking, confusion of present, preterit and past participle morphologies and/or tense categories, all of which are more likely to represent evidence for Creole-like verbal patterning, since they could potentially represent incomplete acquisition of or inappropriate usage of Std-E tense/aspect categories, are all less than 1% of the data. For purposes of illustration we record the percent frequency of these rare non-standard types for Samaná English in Table (10) below:

Table (10): Rare non-standard types.

Type:	N	%
PAST PERFECT instead of PAST	36	.4
Double inflection, i.e. <i>didn't had</i>	24	.3
V-ed2 instead of V-ed1	16	.2
voiceless inflection instead of voiced e.g. <i>ran/run[t]</i>	10	.1
-s inflection in past temporal environment that is not narrative complicating action	9	.1
PAST instead of PRESENT PERFECT	8	.09
No verb	7	.08
V-base instead of V-ed1	6	.07
PRESENT instead of PRESENT PERFECT	5	.06
PRESENT PERFECT instead of PAST	2	.02

Thus, although nonstandard verbal forms appear in these data, the majority of them are largely consistent with surface verbal morphologies commonly attested in present-day varieties of Std E, what has been previously reported in dialectal varieties, and in the case of rare pre-verbal forms, variants which were once productive at different stages of the language. Nevertheless, we are left with a substantial number of verbs which do not follow what can be considered "prescriptive" Std E grammar — 25% of all verbal structures. This includes those which are identical in form to surfacing verbal morphologies in contemporary varieties of WEV and/or historical varieties of the English language as well as contemporary BEV, diachronic BE and English-based Creoles. Our task then, is to assess whether these items function in accordance with what we know about the English morphemes or whether they can be more properly understood within the confines of an alternative grammatical system.

5.3. Lexical distribution

In examining a great number of verbs, there is always the possibility that lexical factors are relevant to their marking characteristics. Moreover, because different verbs appear with varying frequencies, this too, may affect their surface form. In this section we provide an overview of the many different verbs that occur in these data and explore the possibility that lexical factors may influence the choice of form. We have seen from our review of the history and development of past temporal reference verbal morphology in English that strong verbs especially, have been subject to widespread and radical change with respect to the type and classification of their inflections. It is also clear that this disruption can still be observed in irregular morphological forms in many dialectal varieties of contemporary English. Here, we examine the variation in usage of different verbal inflections in our diachronic corpora in order to determine if the marking patterns are consistent with those attested in the historical record and/or with contemporary studies of irregular inflection.

In the Samaná data base there are 2,579 main strong verbs representing 64 different lexical types which have no other additional morphology (i.e. do-support, modals, auxiliaries etc.). In the Ex-Slave Recordings there are 595 of these, representing 42 different lexical items. Of the 64 different types in the Samaná English Corpus, nearly half (47%) are completely standard, appearing with their appropriate Std E past tense morphology 100% of the time in contexts where it is required. The other half of the lexical types exhibit variable inflection in which the V-base form appears 24% of the time overall. V-base morphology in those that exhibit variability ranges in frequency from 3% (*bring* for *brought*) N=61 to 75% (*say* for *said*) N=320 with a wide spectrum of marking rates in between. Of the 42 different types in the Ex-Slave Recordings, 35.7% always appear with their appropriate V-ed1 morphology. Here, strong verbs appear with V-base morphology 30% of the time overall, a little more frequently than in Samaná. V-base morphology in these exhibit variability ranging from 7% (*tell* for *told*) N=27 to 95% (*give* for *gave*) N=19. Can any systematic patterning be observed?

5.3.1. Lexical features of strong verbs

A number of linguistic factors may influence the occurrence of the V-base form in strong verbs. In particular, numerous strong verbs, unlike their weak counterparts, demonstrate idiosyncratic marking characteristics originating in the seven classes of strong verbs in Old English. These class distinctions have subsequently become obsolete; however, some contemporary verbs retain their older morphological variants, albeit, irregularly.

Originally, different subclasses within the strong verb category had strict morphological patterning depending on their internal vowels. The remnants of this system, at least in the receptive competence of speakers, may influence the appearance of the V-base form for past temporal reference. For example, the class of verbs which have identical preterit and past participle forms, i.e. *come/came/come*; *run/ran/run*, have been claimed to

have a propensity towards the V-base form across temporal environments while verbs which have unique morphology across the present, past and participle paradigm may be more likely to appear with the unique morphology associated with each form of the paradigm. In another vein, certain verbs have been identified as having unique marking properties. The foremost of these is the verb *say*, which has been claimed to have a propensity to be invariant across present and past temporal reference environments in many dialects of WEV as well as BEV. In the distributional analysis that follows we investigate these claims by examining the individual lexical strong verbs based on a number of different features.

5.3.2. Verb class

The marking patterns of strong verbs have most often been regarded as unsystematic, with researchers appealing to the breakdown and loss of the older classification system (e.g. Labov et al. 1968) to explain the variability. More recently, however, Christian et al. (1988:106) have noted that this variable morphology on strong verbs has a "systematic nature" in two dialectal varieties of American English (Ozark and Appalachian). Their claim is that the different classes of strong verbs behave differently, though regularly, based on their internal marking patterns. Verbs whose V-base form is identical to their V-ed2 form regularize the V-ed1 form to the same surface morphology, i.e. *come/came/come* → *come/come/come* and thus exhibit the highest rates of V-base forms. Verbs that have three different morphologies, i.e. *take/took/taken*, regularize to the V-base forms the least, while verbs that have a distinct V-ed1 which is the same as V-ed2 have a median tendency towards V-base. Invariant verbs (e.g. *put*), which have no distinct morphology for any category, of course, exhibit no variability.

In Table (11) we examine the frequency of V-base forms across verb classes based on morphological patterning. The results, for both corpora indicate that class D verbs, i.e. those verbs whose V-base form is identical to their V-ed2 form appear with V-base

morphology far more frequently than any other. This is entirely consistent with the the results reported in Christian et al. (1988). However, note that the D class is largely made up of the lexical verb *come*. In Samaná English this verb is 37% V-base (N=413). Nevertheless, the other verb in this class, *run* (N=13) does exhibit a high frequency of V-base morphology as well, at 46%. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, although the proportions of each verb type are similar to what is found in Samaná, we find no distinction between class B and class C verbs; both exhibit V-base morphology at the same rate of 23%. Also, the rates of V-base morphology in the Ex-Slave Recordings are higher than for Samaná. For class D verbs this is quite pronounced; the occurrence of the V-base forms in this category in the Ex-Slave Recordings is 90% compared to 38% in Samaná.

Table (11): Frequency of V-base morphology across strong verb classes

Class	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
	% V-base	N	% V-base	N
A e.g. put	100	72	100	39
B e.g. take/took/taken	10	839	23	205
go/went/gone				
C e.g. bring/brought/brought	15	921	23	282
D e.g. come/came/come	38	432	90	69

Another level of systematicity in strong verb morphology observed by Christian et al. (1988) was the distribution of all irregular preterit and past participle strong verbs across all nonstandard types. In Samaná English we find that a similar hierarchy of irregular forms occur: V-base morphology is most frequent, followed by regularized strong verbs e.g. *knowed*, followed by irregular strong verbs, e.g. *fit* instead of *fought*, followed by the use of V-ed1 morphology for V-ed2 representing 1.1.% of all strong verbs, followed by V-base forms used for V-ed2, representing .23% of all strong verbs. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, despite the fact that many of these irregular morphological forms are

exceedingly rare, virtually the same hierarchy is maintained. The only exception is the relatively frequent occurrence of V-ed2 forms as V-ed1 at 1.1% (N=6).

Table (12): Frequency of different types of nonstandard strong verbs

	Samaná %	English N	Ex-Slave %	Recordings N
V-base	21	548	22	116
regularized, 'knowed'	3	68	4	23
V-ed1 as V-ed2	1.1	29	.6	3
'had got'				
V-base as V-ed2	.23	6	—	Ø
'had give; had teach'				
irregularized, 'fit'	.2	5	.2	1
V-ed2 as V-ed1	.07	2	1.1	6
[t] variant, i.e. <i>run[t]</i>	.03	1	.2	1

One observation that can be made with regard to strong verbs is that lexical features of the verb itself tend to be more relevant than with weak verbs. For example, in Samaná English *give* is the most frequently used V-base strong verb (43%) along with *come* (37%). Of the regularized strong verbs, *knowed* is the most frequent (35/68), of the V-ed1 usage for V-ed2 *got* is generally the case (11/29), and the verb *fit* for *fought* is the most generally used example of an irregular strong verb (5/6). In the Ex-Slave Recordings, *give* is also the most frequently used V-base strong verb (95%) along with *come* (93%) and of the regularized strong verbs, *knowed* is also the most frequent here as well (10/23). These facts point to particular lexical effects rather than systematic variation with regard to the irregular morphologies in these categories. The only regular non-lexical effects seem to occur in the case of V-base vs. V-ed1 morphology, which we will examine in much more detail in the analyses that follow.

5.3.3. Quotative markers

One lexical effect that is particularly striking is with verbs used for introducing direct speech. Examination of the marking characteristics of all strong verbs in Samaná

English reveals that environments in which verbs are used quotatively, as in example (170a-c) below, strongly promote the V-base form. It is not the case, however, that these lexical verbs lack PAST tense morphology overall. In the examples in (171a-c) below, we find that their V-ed1 form occurs in any other context. Because the verb *say* is the most commonly-used quotative verb, it appears very frequently in this function, and thus appears to lack surface morphological tense marking much of the time. In contexts that are not quotative, however, *say* exhibits the V-ed1 form with the same general frequency, 36%, as all strong verbs for V-base morphology. This suggests that the lack of surface morphology on *say* is not the result of having no underlying tense marker, but of surface syntactic conditioning. These distributions can be seen in Table (13).

Table (13): Percent V-base morphology in quotative vs. other environments.

	quotative		other	
	%	N	%	N
"say"	88	238	36	25
"tell"	32	87	10	111

- (170a) So one day, this man, he met up with Trujillo, he say, "ay, man you fooled me, you fooled me, man. You ain't give me nothing."
He say, "such a one ain't give you the mo--?"
He say, "no, he ain't give me, no."
He say, "listen, the governor ain't give you that money?"
He say, "no, the governor ain't give me no money." (001/990-3)
- (170b) I told him in the night, I say, "notice we's near land."
He tell me, "no my boy, no my boy. Far from land."
I say, "hmm, captain, I'm been sail. We coming to the land."
You see, because he ain't giving account.
That's why I told you he was a *poco* sailor. (001/652-660)
- (170c) He tell her, "bring me the chair".
She say, "I don't know of this ..."
He say, "bring me a spoon."
She say, "I don't know what you tell me." (006/901-903)
- (171a) And they said we had a private war between Haiti and Santo Domingo.
But they said the Haitians was more patriotic than the Dominican.
(002/488-489)

- (171b) When mother see that, she say, "Gosh!"
 She say, "my child is dead."
 And when she look, I say, "No Mama."
 She say, "why?"
 I say, "It fell on the next side ..."
 I told her that the bunch of coconuts fell on this way and I was on
 the next side. (002/266-270)
- (171c) My mother in law told me to go to my mother and beg her
 pardon. ...
 And so I did.
 And I went and I knelt down to her.
 I say, "mama, won't you please pardon me?"
 And I knelt down and just so I got up ...
 Never again, I said I was going back.
 And it was after that, you hear, when I had my first baby that she
 begin, you understand, sending me little things.
 And then she told me that whenever I wanted I could have went
 home. (009/436-444)

5.3.4. Tense types

Perhaps one of the most revealing ways of looking at the distributional attributes of verbal morphologies is to categorize them according to type, based on the lexical category and inflectional morphology that appear at the surface. We differentiate several major types: V-ed1, V-base⁵⁴, *would* + V, *used to* + V, *did* + V, *'ll* + V, V-ing, *is/am* V-ing, Ø V-ing, *have* + V and *had* + V, *be* + V, *is/am done* V, *had done* V, *done* V, bare V-ed2. In order to simplify the analysis we exclude contexts 1) in which verbal markers could have been reduced through independent syntactic processes, e.g. conjoined clauses with reduced auxiliaries or verbs, 2) passivized contexts either with *got* or *was*, and 3) the form *ain't* which appears to cross-cut a number of different tense/aspect categories. Complex verbal structures which were quite rare in these data as well as the forms *bin* and *did* are considered independently as there were very few tokens. These have been collapsed into the preceding grouping according their patterning, as we outline below.

⁵⁴ Because there are sufficient numbers of bare V-ed1 and V-base forms, we include these separately.

In the analyses that follow, we examine the distribution of a number of features of the linguistic environment for each of these types in order to determine whether they follow patterns attested for English or for Creoles.

5.4. Tense overlap

We have previously referred to the fact that various different surface forms can be used interchangeably in the same environments in both Std E and Creole grammars. For example, Mufwene (1984) makes the observation that the absolutely unmarked verbs in creoles, i.e. V-base forms, are highly "polyvalent", as they are used for a number of different temporally and/or aspectually-defined contexts, e.g. iterative events, punctual action etc. However, we found that the ability of one surface form to have extended meaning over multiple semantic interpretations is also found in Std E. We refer to this interchangeability among different tense/aspect categories as "overlap" since it is a phenomenon whereby a specific form can be used in a number of differently specified temporal/aspectual contexts or whereby a number of specific forms can be used in an identical context.

According to this definition, we differentiate between two different types of overlap which we can illustrate with examples from our data. In the first, a surface verb form exists, i.e. V-base, which is identical to the creole absolutely unmarked form and which appears in a wide range of semantic interpretations. What is it a variant of? In Std E, for example, single V-base verbs alternate with V-ed1-marked verbs according to a widespread process of consonant cluster simplification. In the second, different tense/aspect categories in English can often be used interchangeably within the same contextual environment. While verbs represented by the simple PAST tense typically indicate punctual, point-action events, traditional grammarians commonly assert that the simple PAST tense forms can be used for many other tense/aspect interpretations. Thus, iterativity in the past, although typically expressed by the forms *used to* and *would* is also possible with the simple PAST

and, in some contexts, the PAST PROGRESSIVE. The same is true of other tense/aspect specifications. The simple PAST and the PAST PERFECT as well as the simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT are often interchangeable, as well, also depending on the context. Thus, in theory, different tense/aspect morphological types are actually variants as well. How can these facts help us to determine the underlying organization of the Samaná and Ex-Slave past temporal reference morphological systems?

Turning to the data at hand, we know, first of all, that the predominant nonstandard verb types in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings are single main verbs (weak or strong) appearing in their V-base form, e.g. *I come/workØ yesterday*. Morphologically, these are indistinguishable from the creole absolutely unmarked verb. Many researchers have argued that these V-base forms in different varieties of BEV represent surface renditions of the category simple PAST tense of English. If it is true that such V-base forms actually represent an underlying PAST tense category, and hence the Std E simple PAST tense, then, like the Std E simple PAST tense those forms could potentially be used for a number of other temporal specifications, also in accordance with English grammar, i.e. in contexts where the simple PAST can occur. For example, Std E allows the simple PAST tense to be used for habitual (*would/used to*) as well as anterior (PAST PERFECT) meaning. This means that the V-base form, a known variant of Std E simple Past could also be used in these sites. However, virtually identical distributions as have been claimed for the creole absolutely unmarked verb, i.e. the V-base form. These facts illustrate the extensive overlap here between the described Creole system and Std E. Thus, it is obvious that simple correspondences between a given form and its function cannot determine the underlying tense category that is being used or whether or not that category is Creole or English.

The problem then, for any analysis attempting to distinguish Creole-like from English-like tense/aspect phenomena is that the same surface form, used in virtually the same contextual environments, might be expected to appear in the case of either grammar.

However, one way in which the two systems could be distinguished is in an interactive distributional analysis of all the surface morphological forms together. The crucial factor which allows this is that the alternate forms permitted in a given context *differ* between the two systems. Thus, the co-occurrence patterns of particular tense/aspect forms in various contextual environments *along with* the forms attested to be their alternates will provide us with an unprecedented view from which to examine the potential function of all of the surface forms in our data.

Traditional and contemporary grammars typically list a number of possible alternatives for Std E tense/aspect categories, i.e. simple PAST and PAST PERFECT, PAST PROGRESSIVE and simple PAST, PRESENT PERFECT and simple PAST etc. The analysis presented here takes these facts about the tense/aspect system and uses them to examine the distribution of morphological types. We approach this problem through the use of the factor group which records, for each context, what tense and/or aspect categories are possible in Std E. With this information, we tabulate the frequency and type of each morphological form that occurs at each site. Of course, the fact that certain forms *can* occur, does not necessarily mean that they will occur. Nevertheless, these inherent tense overlaps appear to be pervasive in the grammar as they are attested throughout the history of the English language. Moreover, the fluidity and extent to which certain forms can be used in a variety of different temporal/aspectual environments was even more pronounced in the past than is prescribed by contemporary grammars. For example, in Middle English the preterit and PRESENT PERFECT were completely interchangeable (Visser 1970). Furthermore, many variants of individual categories that were once current in the English language have now disappeared from most modern dialects. For example, the initial development of the perfect tenses (both present and past) in English was characterized by extensive variation between auxiliary *have* and *be*. The affirmative periphrastic *do* construction once occurred variably with the simple form of the verb without any change in

meaning (Traugott 1972; Visser 1970; Williams 1975). These historical facts have led us to believe that we might find at least some indication of this patterning in our diachronic data.

We hypothesize that if a particular set of Std E forms can be expected in a given context, for example iterative past events can be expected to be designated by the simple PAST tense or HABITUAL markers, then we should be able to observe some proportion of occurrence of each of these forms within the range of contexts which in Std E are possible sites for their occurrence. In other words, each context in our data was coded according to which Std E tense/aspect categories *could* occur there, regardless of which form actually did occur. Additionally, we hypothesize that if remnants of older variants are present in the varieties, then these, as well, would be expected to appear in the contexts where they were once productive. Furthermore, in contexts which have become specialized to only one category in the contemporary language, an environment which necessitates the PAST PERFECT for example, we should observe restricted usage of that form in those sites. Thus, this analysis will enable us to evaluate if the distribution of morphological marking parallels what is expected in a Std E system. Finally, this view of the many morphological types which we have identified in our materials will provide a means by which the rarely-occurring forms can be collapsed into the categories where they appear to function as variants. This elimination of small cells is a necessary prerequisite for the variable rule procedure that we perform in subsequent stages of the overall data analysis.

5.4.1. Habitual markers

The first general context we consider is past habitual meaning which, at least in Std E grammar, is represented by the widest variety of different morphological types — V-ed1, V-base, *would* + V and *used to* + V. In both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings the same forms occur in addition to two nonstandard forms, *did* + V and *'ll* + V. The frequency and proportions of each of these forms vary considerably between the two corpora, however, as can be seen in Table (14) below. Perhaps the most striking difference

between them is the fact that the form *used to* is quite prevalent in Samaná (37% of forms used for habitual meaning) whereas it is used very infrequently by the Ex-Slaves (4% of total forms used for habitual meaning). In contrast, the Ex-Slaves use an abundance of simple PAST tense forms for this semantic interpretation, (46%), followed by *would*, 32%, while in Samaná the simple PAST tense form is used only 15% of the time, virtually the same proportion as V-base, (14%), and *would* + V forms, (18%), while *used to* + V takes 37% of the total. In the Ex-Slave data, the bulk of reference to habitual activity is made through V-ed1 and *would* + V. This apparent difference between the two corpora may be related to the nature of the discourse itself. As we have suggested in section 5.1.2, the Ex-Slave Recordings can be characterized as a corpus containing a great number of descriptions of past events. With respect to the forms discussed here, *would* + V is the past habitual form that is said to be specialized to events and actions. Furthermore, the form with *would* is said to have an added connotation of personal perspective (Jespersen 1964). This is exactly the mode of communication used by these speakers. While the discourse is not narrative, it describes events and actions that have taken place in the past in which the narrator was either a participant or near participant, and thus personally involved. Because nearly all of the past habitual contexts in this corpus are of this type, it is not surprising that *would* and V-base (with which is potentially alternates) is used to represent the majority of them. Finally, the nonstandard variants *did* and *'ll* are infrequent in both corpora, at 8% and 4% respectively in Samaná and extremely rarely in the Ex-Slave Recordings, both at approximately .5%.

Table (14): Frequency of habitual markers in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings out of all habitual contexts

<u>Morphological type</u>	<u>Samaná English</u>		<u>Ex-Slave Recordings</u>	
	N	%	N	%
V-ed1	163	20	302	46
V-base	113	14	112	17
used to + V	298	37	25	4
would + V	146	18	213	32
did	61	8	3	.5
'll	31	4	4	.6
<u>Total past habitual contexts</u>	<u>812</u>		<u>659</u>	

In each of the figures that follow, we exploit our factor group which records the tense overlap possibilities (vis-à-vis Std E) for each context. The data is viewed according to the percentage of each morphological type of the total verb types that appear in each context. In the contexts described Figure (2a) and (2b) display the percent distribution of forms used in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings for past habitual meaning. These are the same data as in Table (14), but the different morphological types are displayed according to which of them *could potentially occur*. These are defined as contexts which in Std-E would permit: 1) *used to* + V or the simple PAST tense, e.g. (172a), 2) *would* + V or the simple PAST tense, e.g. (172b), and 3) all three forms, e.g. (172c). The actual numbers and percentages for each of these bar graphs can be found in Appendix D.

- (172a) She was a awful *curiosa* lady. She **did** make all little medicines. (002/1003)
- (172b) Anybody what they didn't like form the beginning well then ... they **pick** on them, you see. (002/840)
- (172c) You only had to go there and by the time she seed it, she'll look at it so and she'll pass her hand over it, and *ya* it was good. (002/1229-31)

Figure (2a): Percent distribution of tense types used in past habitual contexts
— Samaná English.

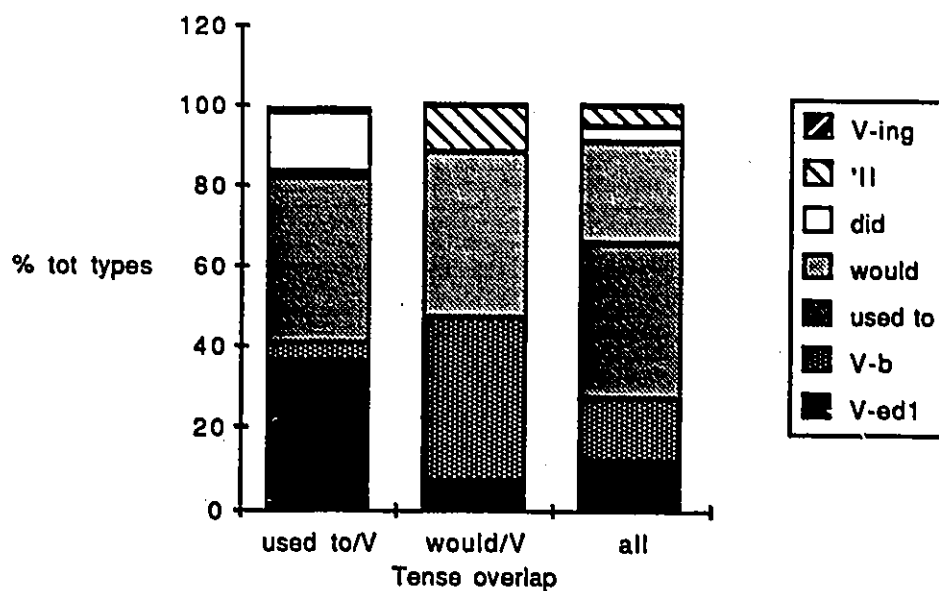
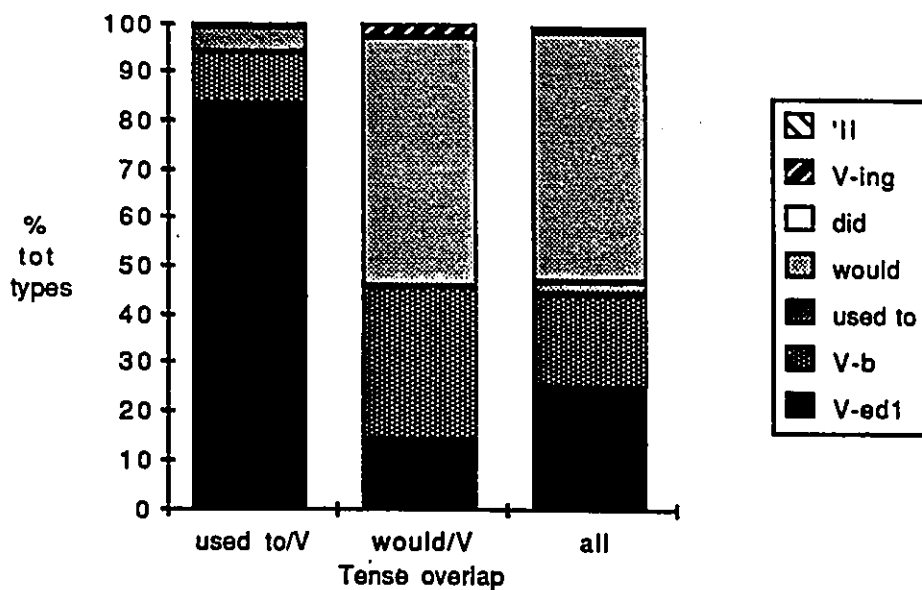


Figure (2b): Percent distribution of tense types used in past habitual contexts
— Ex-Slave Recordings.



These figures clearly demonstrate that habituality in the past can be represented by a variety of forms in either data base, although this is more pronounced in Samaná. The majority are similar to those found in Std E grammar with the exception of *did* + V and *'ll* + V. While rare, these pattern productively along with the other habitual markers in Samaná English. Here, environments that permit the simple PAST tense and *used to* + V-base demonstrate an ample number of occurrences of *did* + V (N=44) yet no occurrences of *'ll* + V. The same is true of the Ex-Slave Recordings where *did* + V occurs most frequently in this environment as well. In both data bases, the opposite is true of environments that permit the simple PAST tense and *would* + V. In this case, there are a number of occurrences of *'ll* + V but none of *did* + V. This suggests that the *did* is a variant of *used to* specialized to express habitual past states. This hypothesis is supported by the examples in (173) below where *used to* and *did* appear to be used in exactly the same context by the same speaker in the same discourse. Note, too that repetition of the same statement does not necessarily lead to a more standard form, as might be expected if the speaker were moving from a non-prestige variety to a prestige variety. This type of argumentation has been found in some previous research studies on BEV tense/aspect markers (Fasold 1972:130)

- (173a) Informant: Then, the road used to pass over there by
 uh- Mr. R.
 Interviewer: Yeah, C.R.?
 Informant: Yes.
 Interviewer: Yeah.
 Informant: Over there where the road *did* pass to go to
 town, because here they hadn't cut the road yet.
 (002/705-708)
- (173b) Informant: ... I *did* like to eat the sugar, you see.
 Interviewer: You didn't like sugar?
 Informant: I *used to* like to eat the sugar. (017/241-
 242)

These findings differ somewhat from that of Ihalainen (1977) who claims that the form with *did* was used interchangeably with both *used to* and *would* in a dialectal variety of contemporary British English (i.e. East Somerset). This was not a quantitative study,

however, so it is unknown what the distributional characteristics of these forms might be. This does not detract from the striking similarity between these data; the form *did* in both Samaná English, the Ex-Slave Recordings *and* the variety spoken in East Somerset, England reported in Ihalainen is used with identical function, i.e. to represent repeated or habitual activity in the past. Our distributional analysis suggests, however, that in Samaná and the Ex-Slave Recordings, it is further specialized to stative or durative states of affairs. The variant *'ll*, on the other hand is, to our knowledge, unattested in any variety of English. In the Samaná data it appears to be a variant of *would* used to represent habitual events in the past. Here, it represents 12% of all tense types used for contexts that allow either simple PAST or *would* but no occurrences are found in contexts that allow simple PAST and *used to*. This hypothesis is supported by the examples in (174a-b) below. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, since it only occurs in environments where all three are permitted, it is impossible to determine what it is a variant of.

(174a) Every time I'll pass, she'd call me and then she'd say ...
(002/1136-7)

(174b) And when he'd come- they used to be with slates. And then when you'll mark there, you'd give it a mark, it **would** never come out, the mark there. He'd come, he'll say, "what figure is this?" And you'd tell him, "that's such a thing". He'd- he'll cross it. (018/607-610).

Finally, in contexts that allow all three standard habitual markers, both corpora evidence all the possible forms described above, which is exactly as we would expect if they were functioning as markers of past habitual. It is important to point out that environments in which either *would* + V or the simple PAST tense are possible, tolerate the largest percentage of V-base forms — far more than contexts permitting *used to* + V and simple PAST or all forms. These frequencies are illustrated in Table (15) below:

Table (15): Percent frequency of V-base in Habitual contexts

	<i>used to</i> + V or simple PAST tense		<i>would</i> + V or simple PAST tense		all three forms	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Samaná	5	15	40	30	15	68
Ex-Slaves	11	27	32	12	19	73

One possible explanation for this is that contraction of the full form *would* to 'd makes the complete elision of the auxiliary more likely in these cases, leaving a bare V-base. The fact that past habitual contexts can be differentiated at all in this way, makes the hypothesis that marking in non-punctual environments is generally inhibited, as per the Creole grammar (Bickerton 1975), far less tenable. If aspect (i.e. non-punctuality) were indeed the explanation for the lack of marking in these contexts there would be no reason for the different marking patterns we observe since they are all equally non-punctual. As such, this lends further support to the contention that unmarked verbs in these contexts represent the reduction of an underlying Std E auxiliary.

5.4.2. Simple past and the perfect tense

The second major area of tense overlap in the Std E grammar is in contexts where the simple PAST tense and the PERFECT tenses are interchangeable, either simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT, as in example (175a), or simple PAST and PAST PERFECT, as in example (175b).

(175a) God left me here for some purpose. (002/390)

(175b) Well, then they killed the boy. After they killed the boy, well then ... (001/948-9)

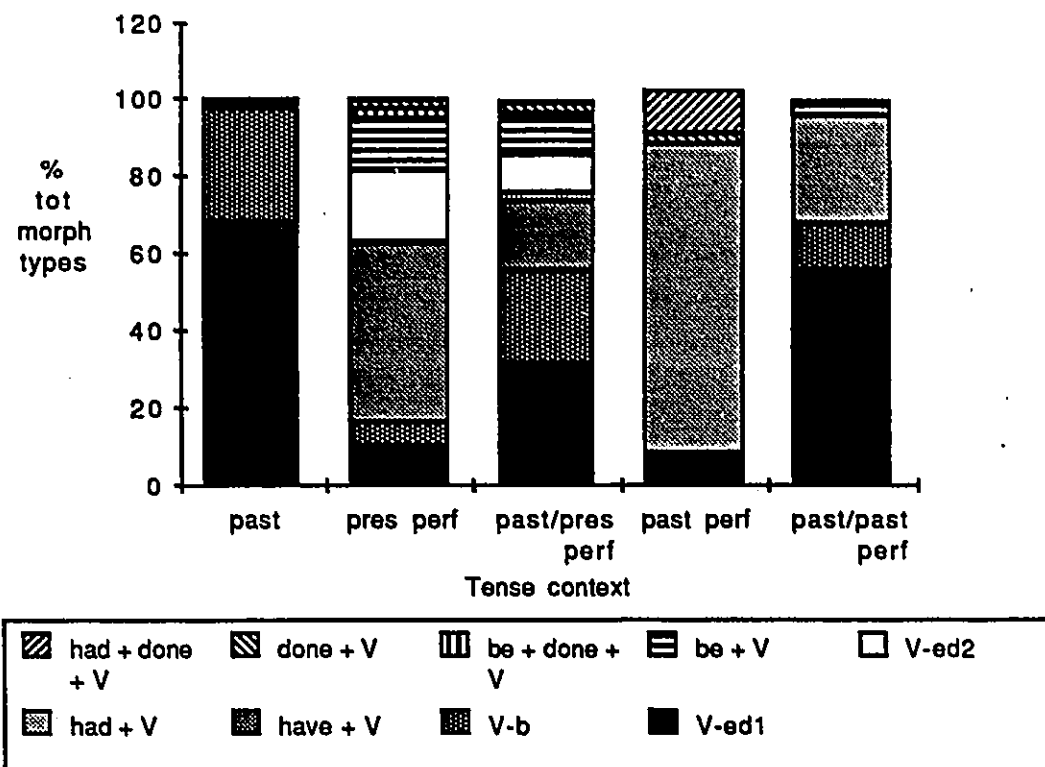
In circumscribing these variable contexts, we include surface variants which are likely the result of consonant cluster simplification. Contexts in which the simple PAST tense and PERFECT tenses are utilized can be defined as follows: 1) simple PAST only, represented by V-ed1 and V-base, 2) simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT represented

by the forms V-ed1, V-base, *have* + V-ed1 and *have* V-base, and 3) PAST PERFECT, represented by *had* + V-ed2 and *had* + V-base, and 4) simple PAST and PAST PERFECT, represented by the forms V-ed1, V-base, *had* + V-ed2 and *had* + V-base. In addition to the morphological types typical of contemporary WEV, we find four additional forms, which are used in these contexts, *done* + V, *be* + V, *had* + *done* + V, *be* + *done* + V.

Once again, virtually the same range of forms occurred in both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings, although the frequency and proportions of individual types are quite different. First, the Ex-Slave Recordings contain no instances of *be* + *done* + V and only 3 instances of *have* + *done* + V. These three-verb clusters are also quite rare in Samaná with only 4 tokens and 6 tokens respectively. Perhaps the most salient differences between the two corpora, however, are in their usage of the forms *be* + V, *done* + V. In Samaná English the form *be* + V occurs quite frequently in terms of its distribution whereas in the Ex-Slave Recordings it appears only once. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, on the other hand, the form *done* + V is quite productive distributionally, being used as a variant of all the categories considered here except for the simple PAST tense. In Samaná English, in contrast, it is rare, appearing only as an extremely rare variant of the PRESENT PERFECT as can be seen from the small percentage of forms appearing in the PRESENT PERFECT and simple PAST or PRESENT PERFECT contexts.

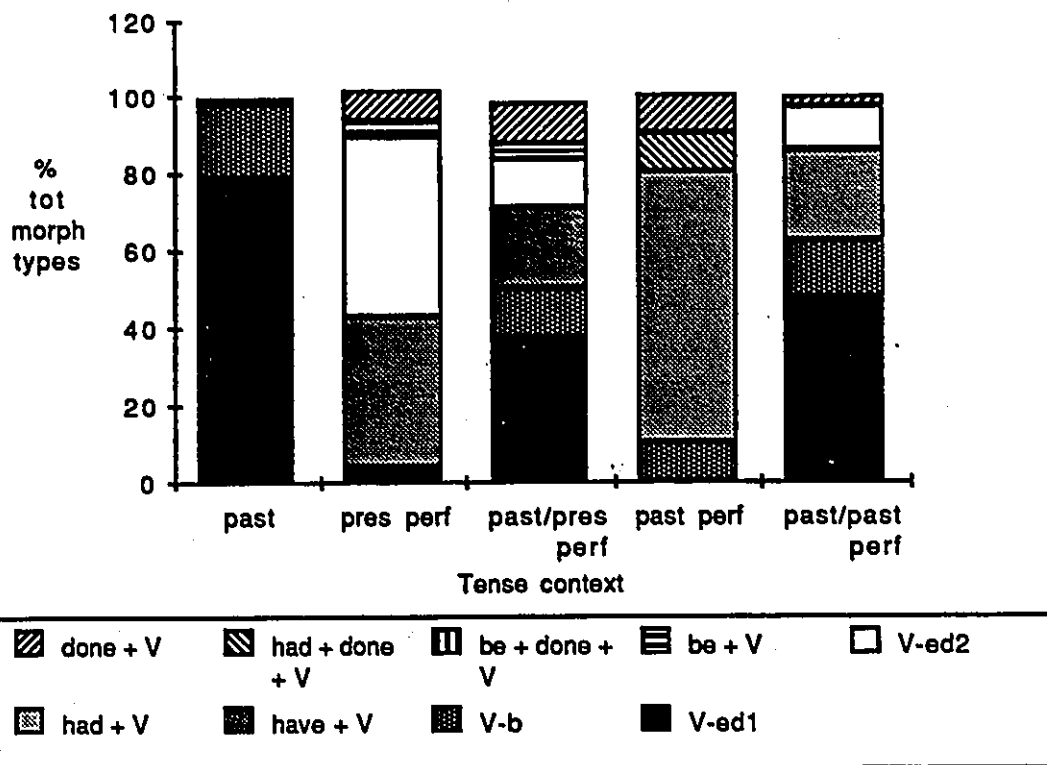
In Figures (3a) and (3b) below we view the percentage of each morphological type that appears in each context as a function of the total verb forms that appear there in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings respectively. The Figures depict the percent distribution of morphological types that occur in environments that in Std E permit 1) the simple PAST only, 2) the PRESENT PERFECT only, 3) the simple PAST or the PRESENT PERFECT, 4) the PAST PERFECT only, and 5) the simple PAST or the PAST PERFECT. The actual numbers and percentages for each of these bar graphs can be found in Appendix D.

Figure (3a): Percent distribution of tense types in contexts permitting different combinations of the simple PAST, the PRESENT PERFECT, and the PAST PERFECT — Samaná English⁵⁵.



⁵⁵ The reason that not every bar reaches 100% is due to the fact that some contexts contain a small number of forms, e.g. progressives, which were not listed in these calculations.

Figure (3b): Percent distribution of tense types contexts permitting different combinations of the simple PAST, the PRESENT PERFECT, and the PAST PERFECT — Ex-Slave Recordings.



5.4.3. Simple PAST and PRESENT PERFECT

In Samaná English contexts which allow only the simple PAST are virtually restricted to V-ed1 or V-base (68%, 29.6%) and the majority of the contexts which allow only the PRESENT PERFECT are restricted to *have* + V (46.9%). In fact, 79% of all the *have* + V-base or *have* + V-ed2 forms in the entire Samaná English Corpus are used in contexts that require the PRESENT PERFECT only, whereas these forms are used only 1% of the time in contexts that require the simple PAST. Contexts which allow either simple PAST or PRESENT PERFECT, exhibit a relatively balanced frequency of V-ed1, V-base and *have* + V, at 31.2%, 24.3% and 18.1% respectively. Similar patterns are found in the Ex-Slave Recordings where contexts which allow only the simple PAST are also

restricted to V-ed1 or V-base (78.7%, 19.4%). Contexts which permit only the PRESENT PERFECT in the Ex-Slave Recordings differ slightly from Samaná in that the majority of forms used in this context are bare V-ed2 forms, i.e. 46% (N=13); however, *have* + V is favoured 39.3% of the time. Contexts which allow either are covered by V-ed1, (37.5%), V-base, (12.5%), and *have* + V (20.8%). In addition to these three forms, both corpora also exhibit approximately the same percentage of bare V-ed2 forms in simple PAST or PRESENT PERFECT contexts, 10.3% in Samaná and 12.5% in the Ex-Slave Recordings. Contexts which permit only PAST PERFECT are predominately *had* + V in both corpora, i.e. Samaná English, 80.7% (N=21) and the Ex-Slave Recordings, 70% (N=7). In contexts that permit either PAST PERFECT or simple PAST, the distribution of forms is similar to that found for PRESENT PERFECT or simple PAST contexts in that three forms dominant — V-ed1, *had* + V, V-base. In both corpora these forms exhibit a consistent hierarchical distribution, i.e. 55.2% > 27.9% > 11.9% in the Samaná English Corpus and 47% > 24% > 15% in the Ex-Slave Recordings.

In general, these distributional facts illustrate the partitioning of individual forms or specific variants to the circumscribed contexts. Taking into account the fact that simple PAST tense is often rendered by the V-base form, these are entirely consistent with what would be expected in an English system. Both corpora, however, evidence a small number of variants in addition to those just discussed which are either 1) Std E in form but appear in contexts where such forms would not appear in Std E or 2) are not Std E forms. Looking at the distribution of these, e.g. V-ed2, *be* + V, *be* + *done* + V etc., we make the overall observation that Samaná English has a wider variety and permits a much wider portion of the above-mentioned contexts to be covered by these nonstandard variants. For example, contexts which permit the simple PAST only, are covered by V-ed1 or V-base as well as a small number of bare *had* + V, V-ed2, and *be* + V forms whereas the Ex-Slave Recordings evidence only a minuscule percentage of bare V-ed2 and *have* + *done* + V forms. Contexts which permit the PRESENT PERFECT also permit V-ed1, V-base, V-ed2

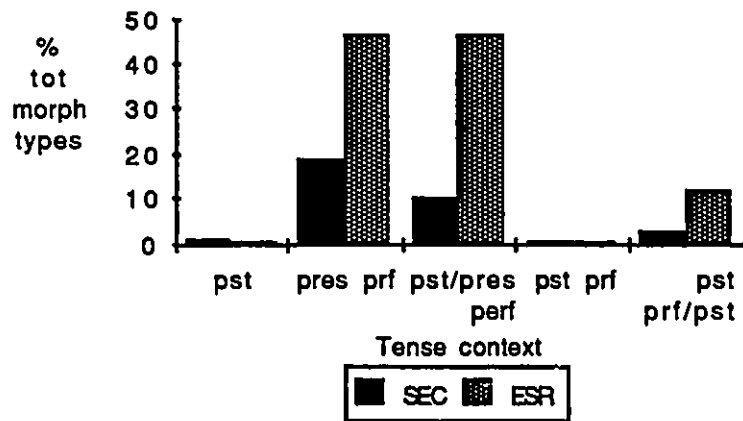
and *be + V*, *be + done + V* and *done + V* while in the Ex-Slave Recordings only *V-ed1* and *V-ed2* and *be + V* occur alongside *have + V*. Similarly with contexts which permit either, Samaná English allows *had + V*, *V-ed2*, *be + V*, *be + done + V* and *have + done + V*, and the Ex-Slave Recordings have only *V-ed2* and *be + V* and *done + V*. While these distributional facts may possibly be explained by stylistic differences between the two corpora, (the Samaná English Corpus is more informal than the Ex-Slave Recordings) they may also suggest the developmental phase of the grammar. The Samaná English corpus, which we have claimed represented a slightly earlier variety of BE (see section 1.0), may contain a number of synchronic variants which had not yet disappeared at that time.

In both corpora we observe that the aforementioned forms are virtually restricted to environments where the PERFECT is possible, i.e. in contexts other than the simple PAST. Turning to the history of the English language, we know that the PERFECT category went through a long phase of development, evidencing both alternation of *have* and *be* in the auxiliary and additional segmentalization in the auxiliary marked by verbal clusters such as *have + done* and *be + done*. Thus, a possible explanation for the sporadic occurrence of these forms here is that they represent synchronic remnants of the former variation between these combinations of auxiliaries in this context. The regular occurrence of bare *V-ed2* forms here is also consistent with the literature from early America which documents widespread usage of bare *V-ed2* in PERFECT and simple PAST contexts. The fact that it rarely occurs in simple PAST tense only contexts here suggests that it functions as a variant of the perfect, (either present or past) but not of the simple PAST in this data. If so, then this provides some support for the fact that there is an auxiliary underlying this surface form. Thus, its possible encroachment into the simple PAST tense category as has been claimed for dialectal varieties of English is not borne out by this data. With respect to the putative creole function of this form, this evidence runs counter to a relative tense hypothesis.

The form *done* + V as well, seems to involve a specialized function independent of that of the simple PAST as it appears everywhere *except* in this context in the Ex-Slave Recordings and in PRESENT PERFECT only and PAST/PRESENT PERFECT contexts in Samaná. This is consistent with most attestations of this form in both Black and White varieties of English in that its function is often equivalent to the auxiliary *have*, and thus the PRESENT PERFECT tense.

Additionally, if we separate out the form *been* + V, it appears virtually restricted to contexts in which the PRESENT and PAST PERFECT can occur in both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings, as can be seen in Figure (4) below. This suggests that it functions as a variant of the perfect rather than as a generalized form for anterior tense.

Figure (4): Percent frequency of *been* + V out of all morphological types permitting different combinations of the simple PAST, the PRESENT PERFECT, and the PAST PERFECT — Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings



5.4.4. Simple past and PAST PERFECT

In some contexts in Std E the simple PAST tense and the PAST PERFECT are interchangeable. The results in Figures (3a) and (3b) clearly indicate that contexts in the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings which allow both simple PAST and

PAST PERFECT are quite similar. In both data sets this context is predominately covered by V-ed1, *had* + V, and V-base forms⁵⁶. Here, the only difference between the two data sets is that the Ex-Slave Recordings contain a small percentage of *done* + V forms whereas Samaná English contains some *be* + V variants. In Samaná English, in contexts which in Std E allow only the PAST PERFECT, *had* + V occurs 80.7%% of the time (total N=21), whereas in contexts where it is optional it represents only 27.9% (N=56) of the total tense types used. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, in contexts which in Std E allows only the PAST PERFECT, *had* + V occurs 70% of the time (N=7), whereas in contexts where it is optional it represents only 23.5% (N=8) of the total tense types used. This shows, first of all, that contexts in which the PAST PERFECT is the *required* tense/aspect category are quite rare. Despite this fact, the overwhelming majority of these are overtly represented by *had* + V suggesting that this form is indeed the PAST PERFECT category.

5.4.5. Summary

In this section we have examined the distribution of tense types according to contexts which we have categorized according to possible tense/aspect category or categories in Std E. The results of this analysis consistently point to English-like usage. Morphologies used in contemporary Std E are the predominant forms used in every one of these contexts and their marking patterns are as would be expected in a Std E temporal reference system. While there are a number of nonstandard forms, all of these have been previously attested both in the history of the English language or in dialectal varieties of contemporary English. Moreover, their functions, as can be determined here by the forms with which they pattern, are also identical to what has been described.

Due to the distributional facts uncovered by this examination of our data we henceforth include the forms *done* + V, *be* + V, V-ed2, *been* and *be* + *done* + V in the same "morphological type" category as the PRESENT PERFECT forms *have* + V-base and

⁵⁶ In Samaná English, only contexts which allow the simple PAST tense demonstrate any occurrences of *did* + V or V-ing and these are all less than 1% of the total.

have + V-ed1. The form *had* + *done* V, however, is included with the PAST PERFECT forms *had* + V-base and *had* + V-ed2.

5.5. Reference time

One distributional characteristic of past temporal reference morphology that has been frequently attested yet never, to our knowledge, quantitatively verified is whether temporal distance is pertinent to tense/aspect marking. In this analysis of the data we address the claim that in an underlying system which is creole-like, particular tense/aspect forms would be expected to be associated with unique time periods, e.g. *bin* + V is thought to mark remote past; *did* + V is thought to mark more recent past etc. In Std E grammar, on the other hand, differential location in time is not relevant to any of the past temporal reference forms, except for one — the PRESENT PERFECT — which occurs under conditions of recency and current relevance. If the underlying system of Samaná English is creole-like, then we would expect to find a correlation between specific time periods and specific morphological forms whereas if the system is English-like, the only area in which temporal distance will demonstrate an effect will be in immediate or continuing past contexts.

5.5.1. Simple PAST, PAST PERFECT and PRESENT PERFECT forms

We consider first, the major morphological types that make reference to past time in Std E — V-ed1, V-base, *had* + V and *have* + V. Figure (5) compares their distribution across reference points at different temporal intervals in the past, i.e. remote, distant, medial, recent, immediate and continuing. These are given in terms of their percent occurrence out of the total number of all tense/aspect morphological types.

Figure (5a): Distribution of single main V-ed1, V-base, *had* + V, and *have* + V morphological forms by time period — Samaná English.

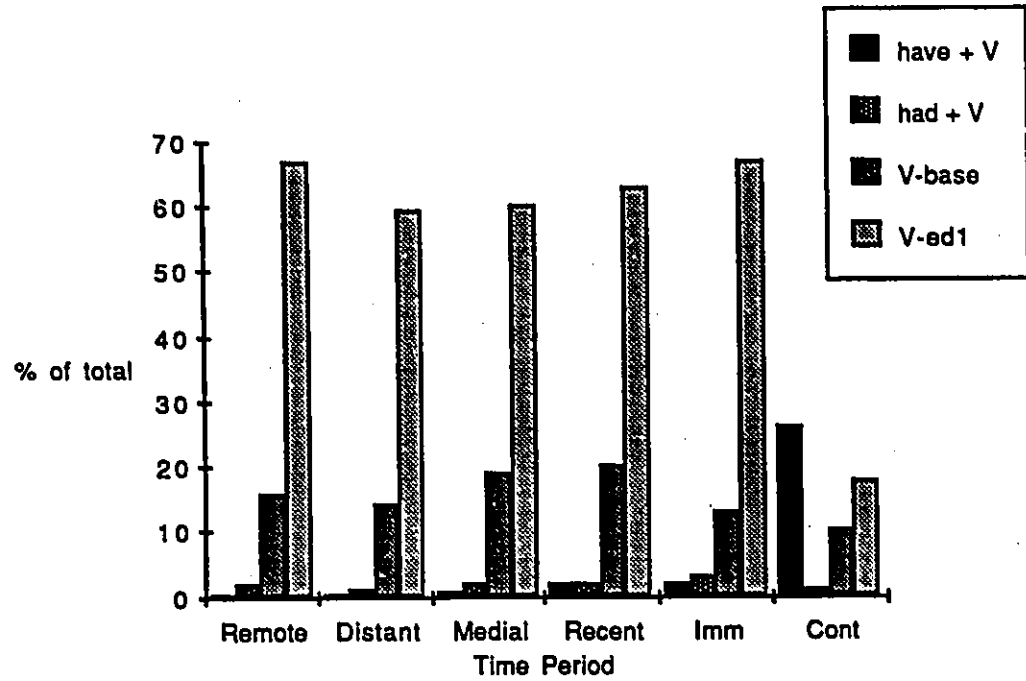
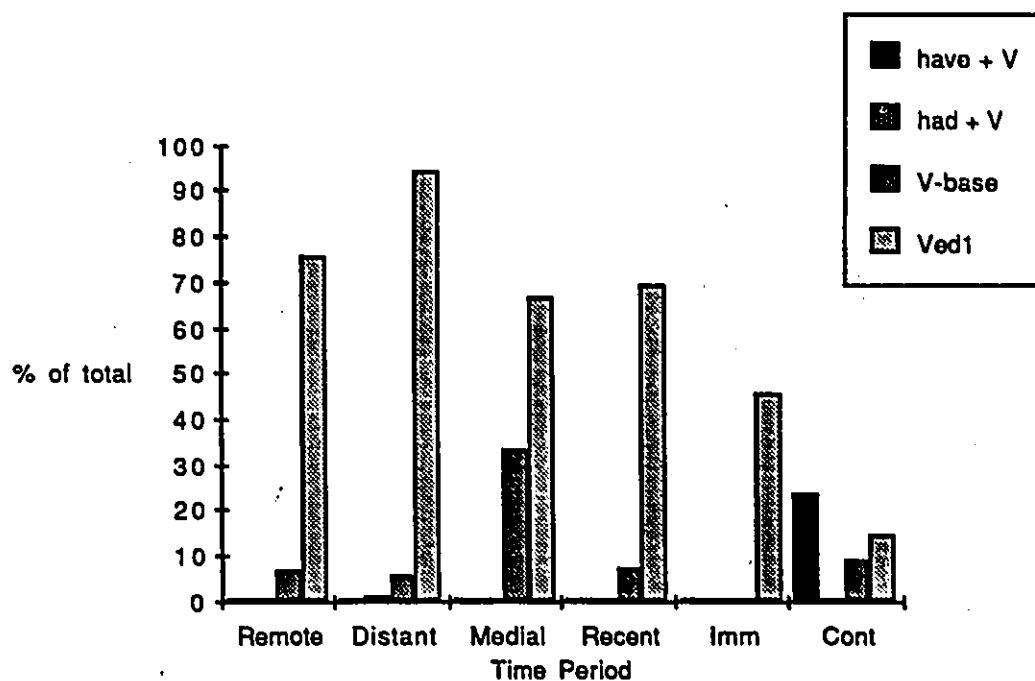


Figure (5b): Distribution of single main V-ed1, V-base, *had* + V, and *have* + V morphological forms by time period — Ex-Slave Recordings.



The figures clearly illustrate that there is no differentiation across time periods for single V-base forms, single V-ed1 forms, *had* + V-ed2/V-base forms in Samaná English. In the Ex-Slave Recordings this is less clear cut, however, the slightly aberrant patterns are undoubtedly due to the relatively small numbers in every one of these categories but one in this data base: Overall, 94.2% (1992) of all verbs considered in the Ex-Slave Recordings come from the same time period — that of the "distant past". This is the time period of the Ex-Slaves' youth and/or childhood and it is during this temporal period that most of their reminiscences take place. All other time periods combined make up only 122 tokens.

Despite this skewed representation of temporal distance in the Ex-Slave Recordings, all morphological types exhibit virtually parallel occurrences (when tokens do

occur) across past temporal reference time periods except for the "continuing past". This temporal reference period is differentiated from all other time periods in both data sets. While *have* + V-ed2 or V-base forms are virtually non-existent in 'remote', 'distant', 'medial' and 'immediate' past reference times, they represent 26.1% of the total morphological types in the 'continuing past' reference period in Samaná English and 23.5% in the Ex-Slaves. Because of the preponderance of these forms, V-ed1 is substantially reduced in this context. Thus, the reason for the low frequency of V-ed1 forms in the 'continuing past' time period compared to the other time periods is because much of that temporal reference period is represented by *have* + V-ed2 or *have* + V-base morphology — the only past temporal reference form which is associated with a unique time period of all these morphological types. Moreover, the Figures show that the proportion of *have* + V, V-ed1 and V-base forms in the "continuing past" time period in the Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings is virtually identical.

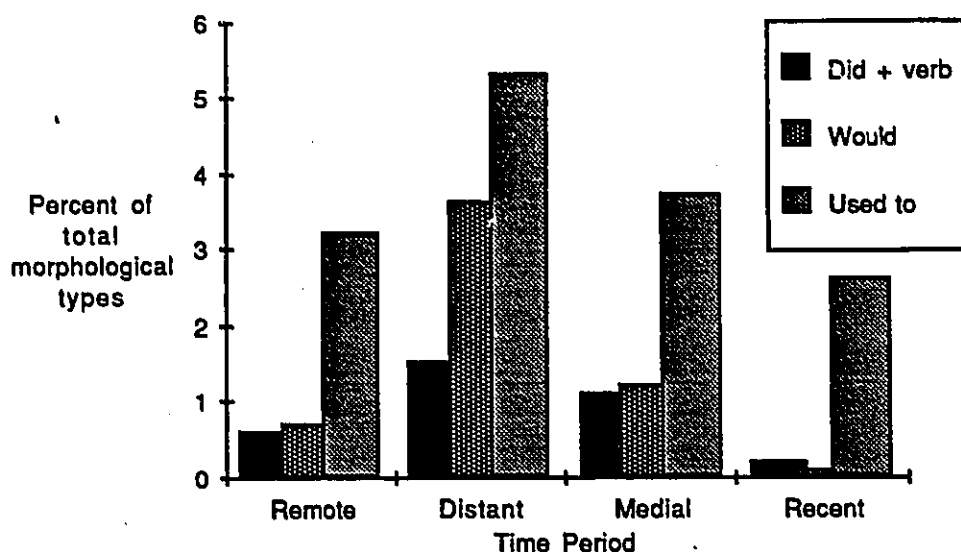
Recall that the foremost function of the PRESENT PERFECT category in Std E is to describe an alliance between past and present time (Jespersen 1964). In these data, a form identical to that used in Std E for PRESENT PERFECT, distinguishes itself from other potential past temporal reference morphologies of sufficient frequency by the restriction of its occurrence to contexts which have been identified throughout the prescriptive and historical literature on English as being typical of the PRESENT PERFECT.

These distributional facts lead us to believe that there is no remoteness distinction in the past temporal reference system of either of these varieties. Furthermore, we have been able to demonstrate that one temporal domain *does* distinguish itself — that of recency. Moreover, the form(s) which are used to mark this temporal domain are exactly what we would expect from the Std E PRESENT PERFECT. Such correspondence between form and function can hardly be coincidental and we conclude that the Std E PRESENT PERFECT is a viable tense/aspect category in these varieties.

5.5.2. Habituals

Figure (6), which compares the distribution of the next most frequent past temporal reference morphological types, i.e. habitual verb morphologies, shows that the different markers used to indicate habitual action in the past are also not specialized for specific time period. Instead each time frame in the past has representatives of each type in exactly the same ranking: the most frequent form is *used to* followed by *would* followed by *did* except in the "recent past" category where the paucity of examples of *would* (N=1) and *did* (N=2) skew the rank ordering of these forms. The consistent ranking of *would* after *used to* is also consistent with prescriptive grammars of Std E which state that of all habitual markers, *would* is the least common (Quirk & Greenbaum 1972:43). Note also that in "remote" and "medial" past environments the frequency of *would* and *did* are virtually identical whereas in the "distant past" category *would* is approximately double that of *did*. These observations, however, do not detract from the fact that different time periods in the past are not differentiated, the contrary of what is expected in a Creole-like grammar.

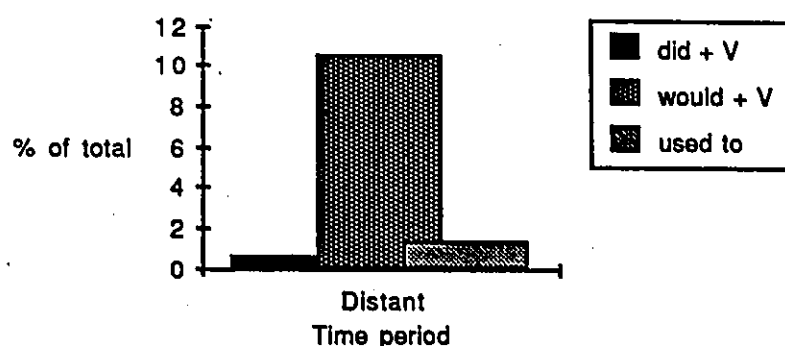
Figure (6): Distribution of habitual morphological forms by time period — Samaná English⁵⁷.



The Ex-Slave Recordings cannot be evaluated in the same way as there are insufficient representatives of these morphological types in any other time period but that of the "distant past". Taking the distribution of forms from this time period alone, however, indicates that the distribution of forms differs between the two data sets. Figure (7) illustrates the frequency of the three morphological types used for past habitual contexts in the distant past for the Ex-Slave Recordings.

⁵⁷ None of these forms occur in the 'immediate' or 'continuing' categories.

Figure (7): Percent distribution of morphological forms in the distant past — Ex-Slave Recordings



While our Samaná speakers use *used to* more frequently than *would* or *did*, the Ex-Slaves use *would + V* far more frequently (10.6%) than either of the other two forms, i.e. *used to* (1.3%) or *did* (.6%). We have no functional explanation for this distribution other than the fact that the content of discourse itself determined this array of forms, i.e. the slaves talked about iterative past events more often than states and about states of affairs in which they were involved rather than "vague implications of the past" both of which would be more likely to be rendered with *used to* (Jespersen 1964; Visser 1970). Such considerations do not affect the underlying organization of the grammar, however, and we might consider these differences to be pragmatically determined, rather than governed by internal linguistic constraints.

5.5.3. "bin"

The form *bin*, i.e. *been + V* without a preceding (standard) *have* auxiliary, deserves special mention since it has been specifically described as the Creole and/or BEV remote time marker. Can we find any evidence for this characterization in Samaná or the Ex-Slave Recordings? First of all, this form (without any preceding auxiliary) occurs very infrequently in these data (N=12 in Samaná English and N=18 in the Ex-Slave

Recordings). Most important, however, is the fact that in neither data set does it occur in a remote past time period. In fact, 83% of these forms in Samaná English, and 83% in the Ex-Slave Recordings, occur in 'recent' or 'continuing' temporal reference periods, the very opposite location where it would be expected to occur if it had any function to which far distance in the past was a relevant feature. Instead, the pertinent factor with respect to temporal distance is recency, the very characteristic which would suggest that its function parallels the Std E PRESENT PERFECT and that the *have* auxiliary which would be expected to proceed it in Std E, has in fact, been removed by some process of deletion. These distributional facts lead us to hypothesize that this form is, in fact, a variant of the PRESENT PERFECT category, whose auxiliary has been removed through surface linguistic conditioning.

5.5.4. Summary

All the evidence we have examined with respect to the distribution of morphological types across reference time, indicates that the temporal reference system of Samaná English and the Ex-Slaves makes no distinction between different time periods in the past based on different tense/aspect forms. They do, however, distinguish one temporal reference environment related to the past — that of continuing present relevance. Further evidence for the distinctiveness of this category is explored more thoroughly below.

5.6. Temporal relationship

The relationship that different tense/aspect forms have to each other has been a primary focus of analyses examining Creole temporal reference systems since this feature is thought to influence the occurrence of specific surface morphological types. For example, contexts which represent states of affairs anterior to the last related tense form in the discourse are thought to require a specific and overt ANTERIOR marker in a Creole grammar; contexts which represent states of affairs that are concomitant or subsequent, on the other hand, are said not require overt *tense* marking (although depending on the

context, can be marked by particular aspectual markers). Thus, the correlation of different temporal relations in the course of discourse with the different morphological types that appear is an important consideration in the analysis presented here. What is interesting, and what is not mentioned in any analysis of Creole temporal organization, to my knowledge, is that Std E as well, has a temporal reference system in which specific tense/aspect categories are said to be specialized for contexts involving particular temporal relationships. The two systems, however, can be differentiated, at least in some cases, based on the *type* of morphology that is expected for a given temporal relationship. Perhaps the clearest example of this in Std E is the use of the PAST PROGRESSIVE tense, which is unique among all the Std E tense/aspect categories in that one of its primary usages is to designate *time-inclusion* (Leech 1988). In contrast to this, the simple PAST tense is primarily used to designate *time-sequence*. The perfect tenses on the other hand can be characterized as relational tenses which involve an alliance either between the present and a past reference time (the PRESENT PERFECT) or between a past reference time and an earlier past reference time (the PAST PERFECT). While they are differentiated by the fact that they refer to essentially different time locations, i.e. present/past vs. past/anterior past, both are tenses which are retrospective (Jespersen 1964). Their primary function then, is to make reference to a specific reference time, *earlier* than the one which has already been mentioned, i.e. present or past. Finally, we distinguish Std E habitual markers, whose foremost capacity, in the analysis circumscribed here, is to describe states of affairs that were on-going during a given temporal span of time in the past. Given these brief descriptions of the Std E repertoire, it is clear that particular temporal relationships might be more frequently marked by one tense/aspect category over another. We hypothesize that ANTERIOR temporal relationships will be associated with morphologies corresponding to the Std E PERFECT tenses, COINCIDENCE relationships with the Std E PAST PROGRESSIVE and HABITUAL forms and POSTERIOR relationships with the Std E

simple PAST. Finally, the V-base form could be expected to occur across all temporal relationships.

In the following analysis we examine the distribution of each verbal structure in the data base according to the different temporal relationships it is used to represent. We define temporal relationship based on the semantic interpretation of the context of discourse independent of the morphological form. In addition to POSTERIOR, ANTERIOR, and COINCIDENCE, the primary temporal relationships considered in previous analyses, we include two additional relationships, i.e. REPETITION and REORIENTATION, which are also important temporal relations in oral discourse (see section 4.5.10).

Since naturally-occurring dialogue such as that represented by our sample contains frequent interchanges between speaker and interviewer as well as between different informants interviewed simultaneously, many of the verbal sequences in our sample represent alternation between two interlocutors. Since it is unclear how these contexts can be interpreted with respect to temporal relationship, they have been excluded from the calculations.

In Figures (8abc), which depict Samaná English and Figures (9ab), which depict the Ex-Slave Recordings, we illustrate the frequency of each morphological type as a percentage of the total tense types according to the temporal relationship they elucidate.

Figure (8a): Frequency of morphological types V-ed1 and V-base in contexts as a function of temporal relationship — Samaná English.

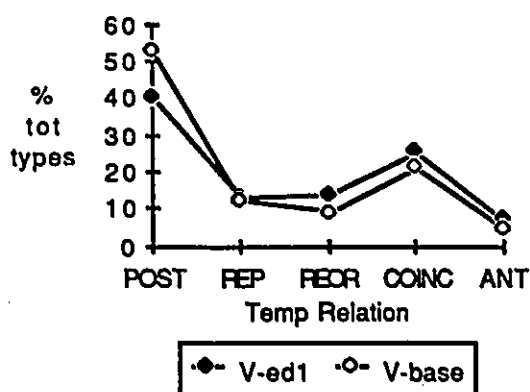


Figure (9a): Distribution of morphological types V-ed1 and V-base in contexts as a function of temporal relationship — Ex-Slave Recordings.

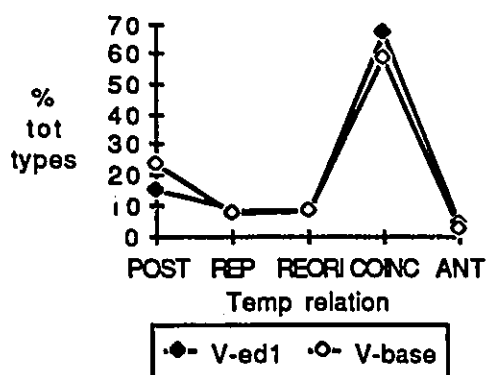


Figure (8b): Distribution of morphological types HABITUAL and V-ing in contexts as a function of temporal relationship — Samaná English.

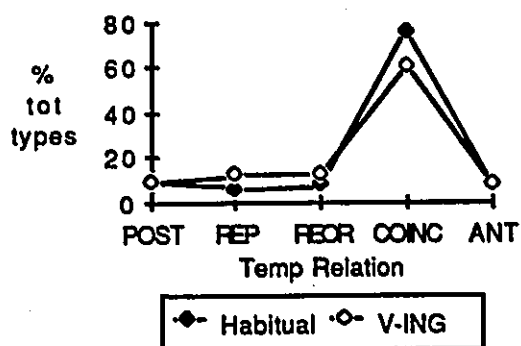


Figure (9b): Distribution of morphological types HABITUAL and V-ing in contexts as a function of temporal relationship — Ex-Slave Recordings.

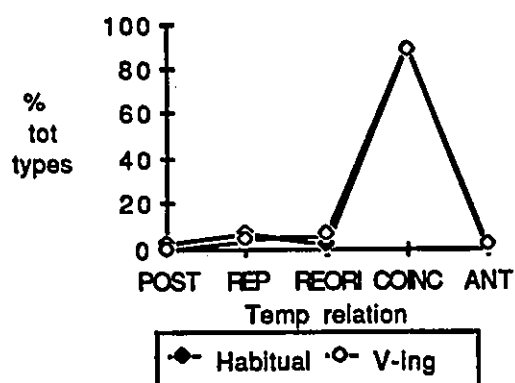
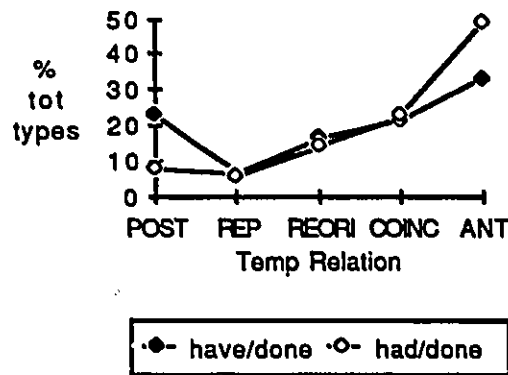


Figure (8c): Distribution of morphological types *have/be/done* and *had/had done* in contexts as a function of temporal relationship — Samaná English.



As can be seen in the preceding figures, the six categories of types can be grouped together into pairs which function similarly with respect to temporal relationship in both data sets⁵⁸: 1) V-ed1 and V-base, 2) habitual markers and forms with V-ing (*was/were* + V-ing, *is/are* + V-ing and $\emptyset$ V-ing), and 3) *have/done/have done/be* + V and *had/had done* + V. Given a Std E interpretation of these data, such distributional patterns are not surprising.

In the case of V-ed1 and V-base forms, we observe that they pattern identically with respect to temporal relationship. This suggests that, contrary to what would be expected in a Creole system, this dimension is irrelevant to their distributional patterning. Unmarked forms show no particular propensity to occur in contexts distinct from that of inflectionally marked forms. The one possible exception to this, is in posterior temporal relationship contexts, where in both corpora V-base forms are slightly more frequent than the marked V-ed1 form. However, this is the *only* temporal relationship where this patterning is visible

⁵⁸ This striking similarity appears absent in the Ex-Slave Recordings for *have* and *had* + V forms, however the total number of forms represented by the figure is likely skewed by the very sparse number of tokens for each cell, 19 for the forms in *have*, only 13 for the forms in *had*.

— a far more restricted range of contexts than would be predicted by the Creole hypothesis, i.e. the occurrence of unmarked forms in temporally disambiguated discourse contexts regardless of temporal relationship. While it is true that this particular context does meet that requirement, so do two of the other temporal relationships, namely repetition and coincidence. We observe no propensity for the unmarked form to occur in either of these contexts. These observations are important in that they support the hypothesis that V-ed1 and V-base forms are actual linguistic variants of the same tense/aspect category, i.e. simple PAST tense. Furthermore, the absence of distinct patterning for the unmarked variant, i.e. V-base, argues against interpreting this form as a covert relative tense form.

Further observations with respect to the V-ed1 and V-base forms indicate that in Samaná English they are predominantly confined to the posterior and to a much lesser extent, the coincidence temporal relationship contexts. Similarly, in the Ex-Slave Recordings, the same forms are used almost exclusively for contexts of temporal coincidence although they show a slight tendency to be used for posterior temporal relationships as well. As we have alluded previously, these differences may be attributed to characteristics of the subject matter of each of these corpora. The Samaná English corpus contains many narratives of personal experience and thus many sequentially ordered contexts while the Ex-Slave Recordings are almost exclusively non-narrative reminiscences of a general time period in the past — the time of slavery — and thus coincidence temporal relationships rather than personal accounts of specific events which tend to be represented by temporally ordered and thus, posterior temporal relationships.

Figures (8b) and (9b) clearly show that HABITUAL and PROGRESSIVE morphological types are used almost exclusively in coincidence contexts and these patterns are identical between the two corpora. This is exactly what would be expected in Std E where these forms are also used almost entirely used for temporal relationships which temporally include each other in some way. While this is not necessarily inconsistent with what might be expected in a Creole system, i.e. forms comparable to these, e.g. *usta*, are

considered aspectual markers by Mufwene (1984)., in conjunction with the distributional characteristics of the other morphological types, they provide corroborating evidence for an undeniable English-like system.

Finally, morphological types with *had*, *have* and *done* demonstrate yet another unique pattern of frequency. Forms with *had* and the nonstandard variant *had* + *done* + V are used almost exclusively for anterior temporal relationship. This is exactly what we would expect of the Std E category PAST PERFECT to which the more frequent variant in these data, i.e. *had* + V, corresponds exactly. Forms with *have* and the nonstandard variants *be* + V, *done* + V, *be* + V, *be done* + V are used most often for POSTERIOR and ANTERIOR temporal relationship. Again, this patterning is entirely consistent with the Std E category PRESENT PERFECT. The fact that *have* + V is the most frequent variant here, lends support to this hypothesis as do the nonstandard variants, e.g. *be*, which we have suggested above may be synchronic remnants of earlier forms used in PRESENT PERFECT contexts. Unfortunately, there were insufficient tokens in these categories for similar patterns to be observed in the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Viewing the distribution of morphological forms in these data across contexts defined by their temporal relationship has enabled us to observe that while specific tense types can occur across various temporal relationships, in general, they are concentrated in contexts representative of one, or sometimes two specific relations. Despite the fact that certain morphological types can be used for the same temporal relationship delimitation, i.e. simple PAST or PAST PERFECT for anterior temporal relationship, specific relationships were found to be represented more frequently by one form than another. Perhaps most important to the issues addressed in this dissertation, these correspondences are largely consistent with what we would expect in an English temporal reference system. Perhaps the most obvious exception is the use of V-base forms in posterior contexts. We will see in our analyses in section 6.0 below that this may be a reflection of the combined effect of narrative discourse, where complicating action clauses typically contain sequences of

unmarked iconically-ordered verbs, and the counterfunctional "unmarkedness" of this temporal relationship in languages, in general, which might also contribute to the general lack of marking in this context.

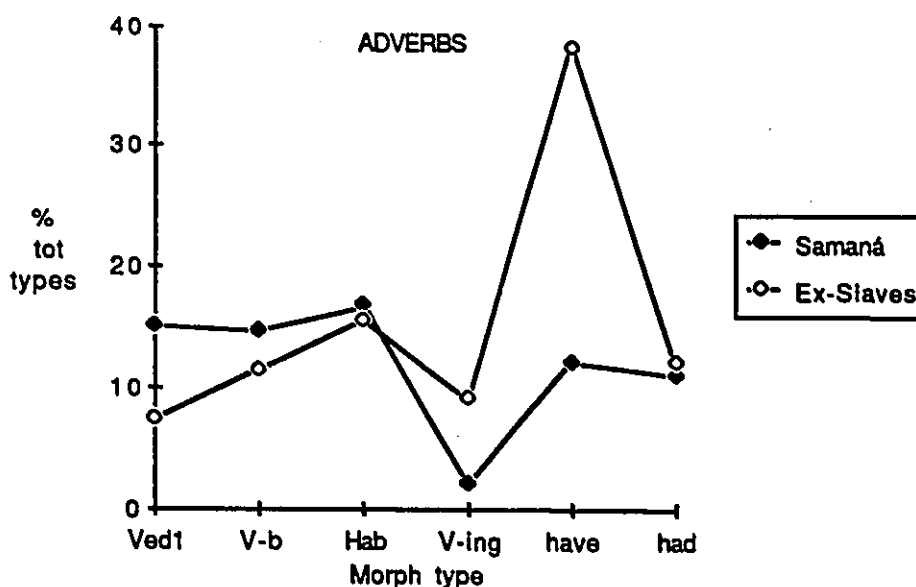
5.7. Temporal indicators

Temporal indicators are widely held to be an important influence in the surface rendition of tense/aspect morphology in Creole grammars, where they are claimed to disambiguate the temporal reference time, thus allowing for the appearance of the covert relative tense marker, i.e. $\emptyset$ (unmarked verbs). In both Creole and English grammars, however, the co-occurrence restrictions between certain adverbs and specific tense/aspect forms have been one of the foremost mechanisms used to determine the functional characteristics of the tense/aspect category represented by the co-occurring surface morphology. In the following sections we provide an overview of temporal indicator/morphological type correspondences in our data in order to elucidate these important considerations.

5.7.1. Adverbs

The most obvious temporal indicators are temporal adverbs. In Figure (10) we provide a view of adverbial distribution by presenting the occurrence of adverbs as a percentage of all the forms used for a particular morphological type, i.e. this figure answers the question (for example): of all V-ed1 forms, how many occurred with adverbs?

Figure (10): Percent frequency of adverbs by morphological type.



We observe that the frequency with which adverbs appear with different morphological types differs slightly between Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. In Samaná adverbs are fairly evenly distributed across the major morphological types, V-ed1, 15.1%, V-base, 14.6% habitual, 16.7%, have + V, 12.2% and had + V, 11.1%; however, very few occur with V-ing forms. The lack of adverbs in these contexts may be because this category has relatively few tokens (N=47), and thus there was less of a chance for adverbs to appear. Excluding this context then, shows that morphological type has little effect on whether or not a given context will be disambiguated by a temporal adverb in Samaná English. This is particularly interesting in the case of V-ed1 and V-base forms. In a Creole grammar, adverbs would be expected to occur more frequently with unmarked forms, i.e. V-base, yet it is clear from Figure (10) that Samaná English shows no such propensity. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, as well there is little difference between these two forms; adverbs occur with V-ed1 forms 7.3% of the time (N=89) and with V-base forms 11.5% of the time (N=39). In general, all morphological

types in the Ex-Slave Recordings demonstrate approximately the same percent occurrence of adverbials with the exception of forms with *have* which show a greatly enhanced propensity for adverbs, 38.3% (N=18) possibly due to the small number of tokens in this cell.

In Tables (16a) and (16b) below we explore this in more detail and examine the different *types* of adverbs with respect to the different morphological types with which they occur. An examination of this kind is particularly important in order to determine whether the collocation restrictions for Creole or English grammar are adhered to by these data.

The foregoing tables depict the distribution of adverb types according to the different tense types we have been considering. In Samaná English we observe that the largest category of adverb is the subsequence marker *then*, representing 44.6% of all adverbs in the sample (N=778). In these data this adverb shows the highest concentrations in contexts where the verbal form is V-ed1, 61% (N=212), or V-base 30%, (N=105). These contexts are illustrated in example (176a-b) below. In the Ex-Slave Recordings these adverbs are also quite frequent and are concentrated in the same contexts: V-ed1, 32% (N=14) and V-base 39%, (N=17). Recall that time-sequence was one of the primary functions of the simple PAST tense in Std E (Leech 1985). The two morphological types in question here (i.e. V-ed1 and V-base) are exactly parallel, both in form and in distribution, in their collocation with this adverb, which is what we would expect of Std E simple PAST tense forms. This is not, however, what would be expected from a Creole system in which the marked form would be expected to occur in contexts undisambiguated for temporal reference, orientation or relationship. In fact, contexts temporally marked for sequence, would presumably not be a propitious environment for overt temporal marking at all since there is no change in temporal reference or relationship in these contexts. Moreover, they represent the least "marked" (functionally) of all temporal sequences.

(176a) ... Well **then** her son told him, "listen here, no, don't mess with my mama". ... Well **then** he paid a fellow. He paid a man from down the coast to kill the boy. Yes. He paid to kill the boy. Well **then** they killed the boy. After they killed the boy, well **then**, the old lady, the mother, she begin to rot him from his toe. (001/945-50)

(176b) Well **then**, they sent Son back with me. ... 'Cause my mother was waiting on me here in Norwest. Well **then** I came till when we reach there. Well **then** he went back to meet the troops. (002/386-88)

Time/frequency adverbs are also quite frequent in both corpora, representing 12.7% (N=99) of all adverbs in Samaná and 25.8% (N=49) in the Ex-Slave Recordings. In both corpora, many of these are restricted to contexts that are specifically marked for habitual: in

Samaná 60% and in the Ex-Slave Recordings 41% of all time/frequency adverbs occur with habitual markers. This is illustrated in example (177a-c) below:

- (177a) They had a very nice house in the country but every winter they'd go ... in the town. (014/699)
- (177b) And sometimes they *would attack* and the enemies *would counterattack* in the country sometime. (016/160-1)
- (177c) And after that I always *did work* and like, my comrades was old people. (002/641)

According to traditional grammarians, sentences which contain adverbs that point to a specific past time, i.e. *yesterday*, *at that time*, *in 1901*, etc. require the simple PAST tense. Amalgamating all time-specific adverbs in the Samaná English data, represented in the Tables as "lexicalized (specific) adverbs, we find that virtually all of them occur either with V-ed1 or V-base forms — 61% with V-ed1 and 21% with V-base forms. The same is true of the Ex-Slave recordings where 73% of all these adverbs occur with V-ed1 forms and 12% occur with V-base.

A number of adverbs have a specialized semantic interpretation of "present relevance", e.g. *already*, *now*, *since* etc. as well as those which indicate that the time is not yet completed, i.e. *today*, *at present*, *lately*, *not yet* etc. These adverbs are represented as "present reference" in the Tables. It is revealing to note in this regard that adverbs of this type co-occur with verbal morphological types entirely consistent with those expected in Std E for this category. In Samaná English 44% of all adverbs that occur with *have* + V, V-ed2, *be* + V and *done* + V are of this type, as can be seen in example (178a-c).

- (178a) They knocked that out. Everything *now have* changeØ. (003/827-8)
- (178b) I'm sorry some of them *haven't reach* yet that you'd see them. (009/346)
- (178c) 'Cause them, *now, since the war is got civilize*Ø. (018/747)

Unfortunately the Ex-Slave Recordings contain only two adverbs of this type so a similar comparison is impossible despite the fact that one of these adverbs does occur with a *have* form. The high percentage of other adverb types occurring with this morphological form in the Ex-Slave Recordings is due to a large number of continuous adverbials, as in

example (179a-c), which are also consistent with the Std E PRESENT PERFECT category.

- (179a) I ain't had no clothes to buy since I *been* on the project and I've
been on it, I think, 'bout nine- 'bout eight or nine years I
 believe. (ESR/00Z/98)
 (179b) Then he died. He *been* dead forty some odd year. (00Z/75)
 (179c) We *been* slaves all our lives. (008/188)

Similarly, there is said to be an absolute restriction against the PRESENT PERFECT category with time-position adverbials in Std E. Not surprisingly, in Samaná English verb forms of this type *never* occur with time position adverbs. Related to this, is the claim that in BEV there is a restriction against the use of stressed *BIN* with certain adverbs, which in Std E, would generally appear with the PRESENT PERFECT, e.g. *for a long time, up 'til now* etc. Although stressed *BIN* does not occur at all in our data, nor do any of the *been* forms occur in auxiliary position, as they do in Rickford's example, we nonetheless examine the *bin* forms in our data according to these parameters in order to determine if they are in any way comparable to this BEV morpheme. In direct contrast to what has been suggested for the BEV form, all of the adverbs that occur with *bin* in these data are exactly the type that are said to be restricted from occurring with the stressed *BIN* form in BEV. That is, the "absolute restriction" against continuous adverbs such as *for a long time*, as in *I BIN know you for a long time* (Rickford 1977). This can be clearly seen in example (179b) and (179c) above from the Ex-Slave Recordings and in (180a-b) below from Samaná English. In contrast, forms with *have* never occur with adverbs referring to specific time, i.e. *last night*.

- (180a) ... *been raining* a good bit all these days pass. (021/581)
 (180b) I can't hardly tell you 'cause it *been* so long. (020/18)

Although co-occurrence patterns such as these cannot be entirely conclusive in determining tense/aspect categories (cf. Comrie 1985) they demonstrate nonetheless that in both data sets the correspondences between morphological form and specific adverb type is entirely consistent with what has been reported for Std E.

Furthermore, examining the percent co-occurrences of adverbs out of all adverbs of the type under consideration with the individual morphological forms we have been examining reveals that individual adverb types across these categories are very specifically patterned, not according to the presence or absence of verbal morphology, as might be expected in a Creole system, but with respect to *morphological type*, as would be expected in English.

This is clearly evident in Figures (11) and (12) which illustrate which adverb types co-occur with each tense category in Samaná English. The same type of breakdown was impossible for the Ex-Slaves as there was insufficient representation from many of the adverb types.

Figure (11) shows that the adverbs that occur most frequently with PAST PERFECT morphological structures are subsequent "then", dependent adverbs and "perfect" adverbs. Figure (12) shows that the PRESENT PERFECT category is restricted to "perfect" or continuous adverbs, and Figure (13) shows that Habitual tense categories are restricted to time/frequency adverbs. The different adverbs types and their symbols are listed below (repeated from section 4.5.14.1 above).

T	-	time/frequency adverb, i.e. <i>'always, Saturdays, every time'</i>
E	-	"then" (subsequence, i.e. "and then ...")
2	-	"a day", "one day", "that day"
1	-	"at that time", "one time", "in that time"
R	-	Dependent (time established within the texts by means of anaphora) i.e. <i>the next day, the day before, later</i>
S	-	Lexicalized time period, i.e. <i>in 1640, in years gone by</i>
D	-	Deictic adverb (past temporal reference), i.e. <i>yesterday, today, last week</i>
P	-	Deictic adverb (PRESENT PERFECT), i.e. <i>today, now, yet, already</i>
C	-	Lexicalized time period, continuous or unspecified, i.e. <i>a time, 82 years</i>

Figure (11) and Figure (12): Frequency of different adverb types with *had* + V and *have* + V

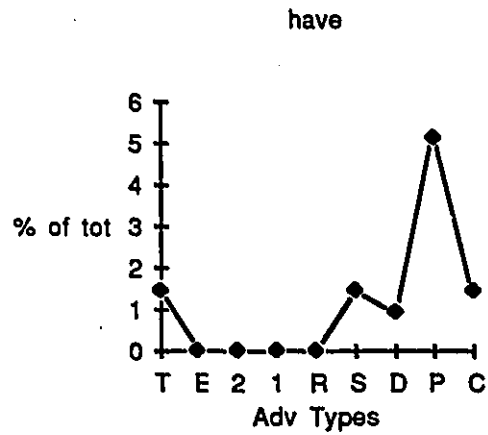
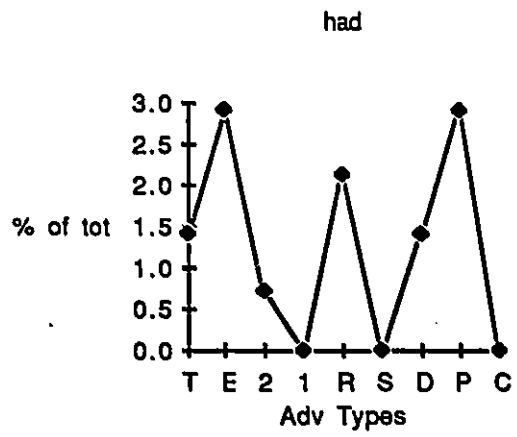
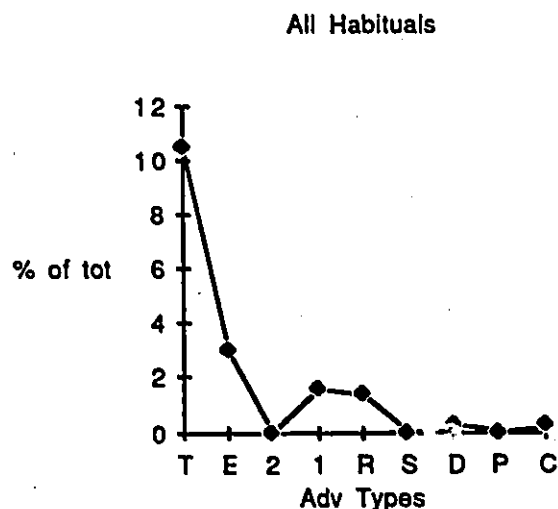


Figure (13): Frequency of different adverb types with Habitual morphology



Turning now to an examination of the two most frequent verbal morphologies, V-ed1 and V-base, illustrated in Figure (14a) and (14b) we find that in Samaná English these are restricted to time/frequency adverbs (6.9%) and the subsequence adverb *then* at (7.6%). All other types are fairly infrequent. Additional evidence for the fact that the V-base forms are functioning as simple PAST tense forms come from the fact that their distribution across adverb types in Samaná English is identical to that found for V-ed1 verbal morphology! Despite much smaller numbers, the same patterning is visible in the Ex-Slave Recordings. A similar analysis for V-ing and *had/have* morphologies is impossible due to the rarity of adverbs in these morphological forms.

Figure (14a): Frequency of different adverb types for V-ed1 and V-base morphologies — Samaná English.

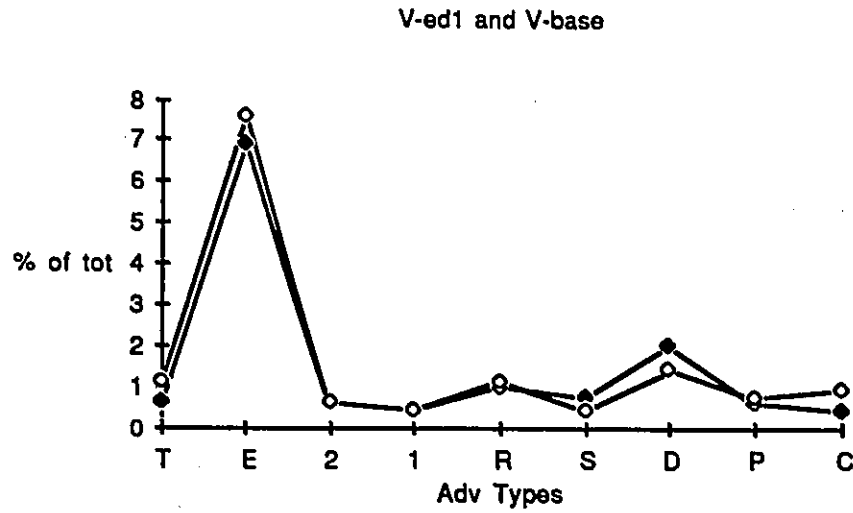
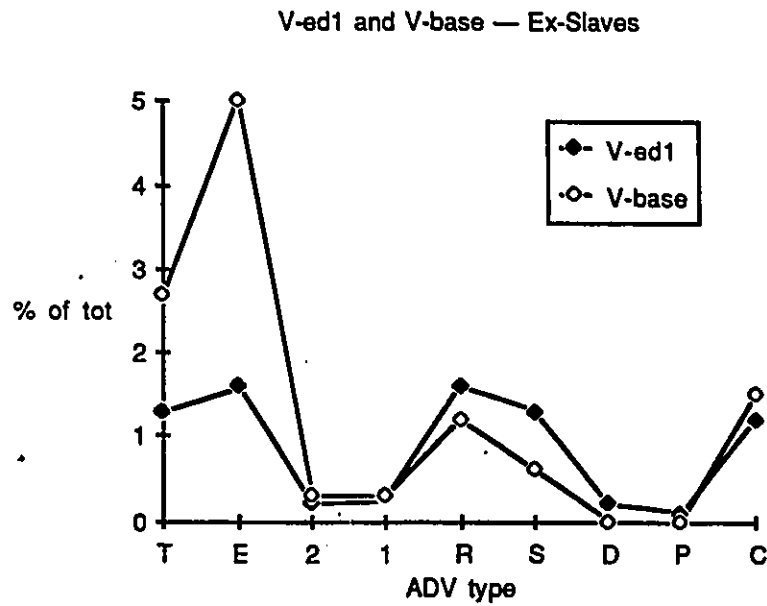


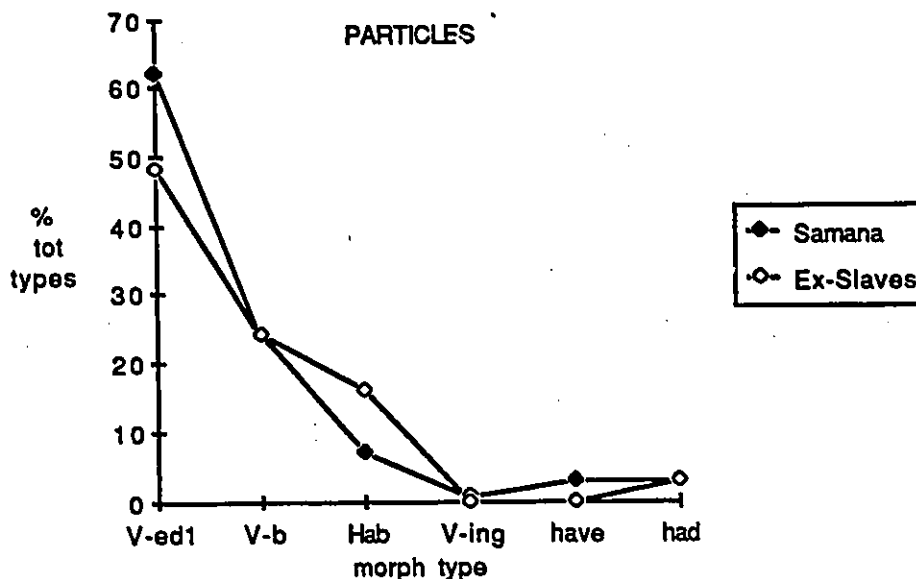
Figure (14b): Frequency of different adverb types for V-ed1 and V-base morphologies — Ex-Slave Recordings.



5.7.2. Particles

We turn now to an examination of the co-occurrence patterns of particles across the various different morphological types. Figure (15) below illustrates the frequency with which particles occur for each type.

Figure (15): Percent frequency of particles by morphological type.



Just as with adverbs, the two corpora exhibit similar patterning. The most obvious result is that the majority of all particles are concentrated in contexts represented by V-ed1, 62% (N=374) in Samaná English and 48% in the Ex-Slave Recordings. While they can occur with other morphological types, as in example (181a-b) below, their primary usage, as can be inferred from their restricted occurrence with these verb forms, is entirely consistent with what has been found for English — as partially grammaticalized markers of punctual, (182a-c) and sometimes durative (182d), aspect (Brinton 1988).

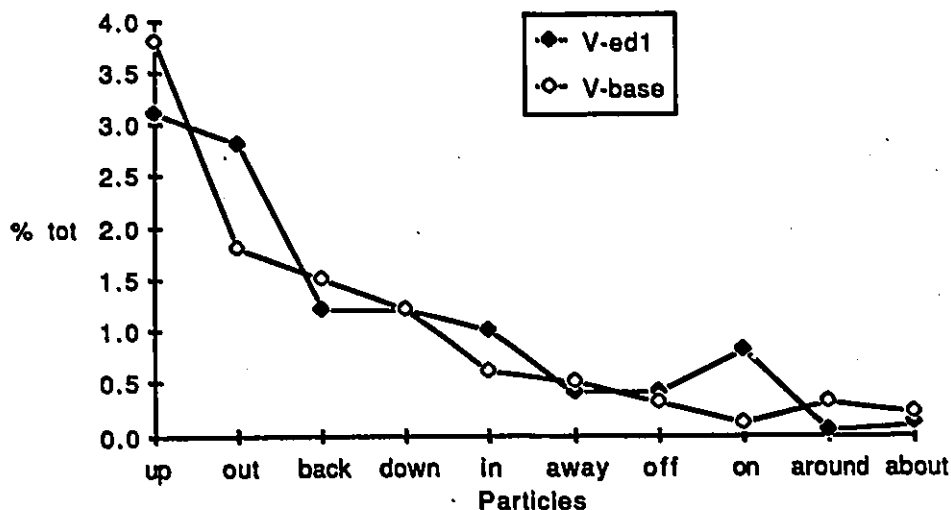
- (181a) And he told me that he had done passed through them English books and he knows just as much Spanish as any other. (006/316-7)
- (181b) Because we knew about *zavoka* 'avocado' when we- when we was coming up. (006/1212)

- (182a) They went and they broke down his tomb, you hear, They
mashed it up. (002/924)
- (182b) But next morning I get up all pretty. I kneel down and I pray.
(003/197-8)
- (182c) I was climbing that hill and she was climbing up behind me.
When I looked down I suddenly said, "Leah, this is the way to
heaven." She climb up and we kept on. (003/ 675-6)
- (182d) So after that everything went on alright. (006/396)

Of the sixteen different lexical forms found in Samaná English, the most frequent particles are *up*, representing 29% (N=188), *out* representing 22% (N=143), and *down*, representing 11%, N=73. In the Ex-Slave Recordings thirteen different lexical forms appear, and, in general, the same particles are most frequent, i.e. *up* represents 15% (N=23), *down* 11% (N=19), *off* 11%.

The Samaná data base is large enough to warrant an examination of the frequency of particles for V-ed1 and V-base morphologies across the more frequently-occurring individual lexemes. In Figure (16) below we view the same data set as in Figure (15) above, but here we focus on the percent frequency of each particle with V-base and V-ed1 forms only. Here, we find a similar result to that found for adverbs: the distribution of individual particles for V-ed1 and V-base forms is quite similar.

Figure (16): Frequency of different particles for V-ed1 and V-base morphologies — Samaná English



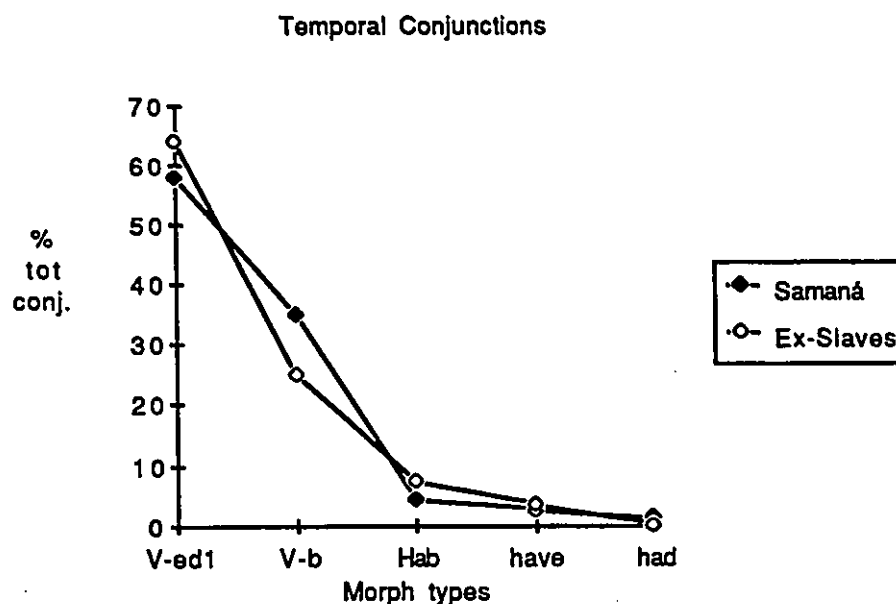
The parallelism between the results for adverbs and particles is striking considering the wide range of lexical forms for particles, the different types of adverbs, as well as the many different environments where V-ed1 and V-base can occur. If V-base and V-ed1 had completely different functions we would not expect such parallelism with respect to the co-occurrence patterns we observe here. Moreover, the elements of the linguistic environment which appear to pattern similarly with respect to these forms are temporal disambiguation features (i.e. adverbs, particles). In a Creole grammar overt temporal disambiguation such as this might be expected to influence the surface mark of the verb. In these analyses we have demonstrated quite conclusively that the two forms, despite the fact that they differ substantially in terms of their surface mark, i.e. one is marked and one is not, pattern identically with respect to two important features of the linguistic context — features which should distinguish the two forms within a Creole grammar. This provides corroborating

evidence for the similar underlying semantic identity of V-ed1 and V-base verb morphologies.

5.7.3. Temporal conjunctions

In this section we examine the co-occurrence patterns of temporal conjunctions across the various different morphological types. These forms are said to influence the tense/aspect category of the secondary event with which they co-occur as well as delimit their temporal relationship with that event (v. section 4.5.14.2). Figure (17) illustrates the percent frequency of temporal conjunctions out of all conjunctions for each morphological type.

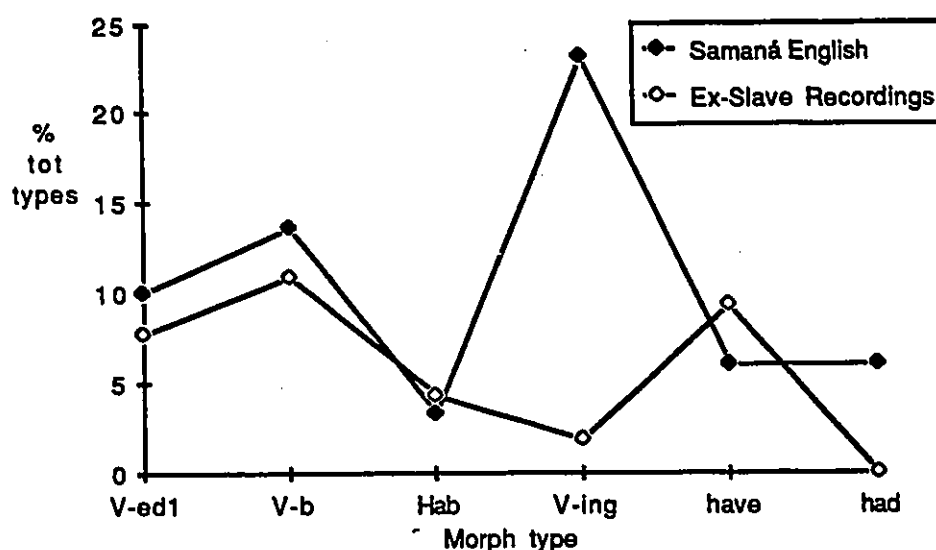
Figure (17): Percent frequency of temporal conjunctions by morphological type



This figure shows that, like particles, temporal conjunctions occur most frequently with V-ed1 and V-base forms. Our alternative view of this distribution in Figure (18) illustrates what percentage of each morphological type occurs with a temporal conjunction. Here, we find that V-ed1, V-base, have + V and Habitual markers show a similar

propensity to occur with temporal conjunctions. In both data sets V-base forms occur only slightly more frequently with temporal conjunctions than V-ed1 forms. Samaná English differs from the Ex-Slaves in that V-ing forms are used far more frequently with temporal conjunctions: 23% of all V-ing forms occur with temporal conjunctions in Samaná English while only 1.8% of these forms occur with a temporal conjunction in the Ex-Slave Recordings. This suggests, however, that at least for the Samaná speakers V-ing forms tend to occur with temporal conjunctions.

Figure (18): Percent frequency of each morphological types with conjunctions.



In Figures (19a), (19b) and (19c) below we explore this in more detail and examine the different types of temporal conjunctions with respect to the different morphological types with which they occur. The figures represent how the temporal conjunctions are distributed across morphological types⁵⁹ For example, in Figure (19a), 20% (N=257) of

⁵⁹ Recall that overt temporal disambiguation, in general, is quite rare in naturally-occurring discourse. This is the reason for the small percentages in some cases.

all present participles preceding by a past temporal reference auxiliary (*was/were*) occurred with *when*. Like the procedure we followed for the other temporal indicators, this type of examination is particularly important in order to determine whether the collocation restrictions for Creole or English grammar are adhered to by these data. In Std E the temporal conjunction *since* is said to require the PRESENT PERFECT, *when* implies coincidence and *after* can be used with either simple PAST tense or PAST PERFECT. In Samaná English there are sufficient occurrences of these temporal conjunctions to determine which morphological types they tend to occur with. As can be clearly seen in Figure (19a) below, *when* exhibits a propensity to appear with present participles whether marked with a past temporal reference auxiliary, *was/were*, a present temporal reference auxiliary, *is/am* V-ing, or no auxiliary, $\emptyset$ V-ing, over and above all others. This finding provides an initial suggestion that these three forms function in a similar way. In Figure (19b) *since*, which implies anteriority, can be seen to occur with *have* + V and *had* + V, although more frequently with *have* + V, the form which most closely approximates the Std E PRESENT PERFECT. *After*, illustrated in (19c), which is said to occur either with the simple PAST or the PAST PERFECT, is found with V-ed1 and V-base forms, Habituals and *had* + V.

All these figures illustrate that the temporal conjunctions in these data pattern exactly as has been attested for Std E grammar. Note also that the percent occurrence of these linguistic elements for V-ed1 and V-base forms is virtually identical across all of the conjunctions we consider here.

Figure (19a): Percent occurrence of *when* with each morphological type.

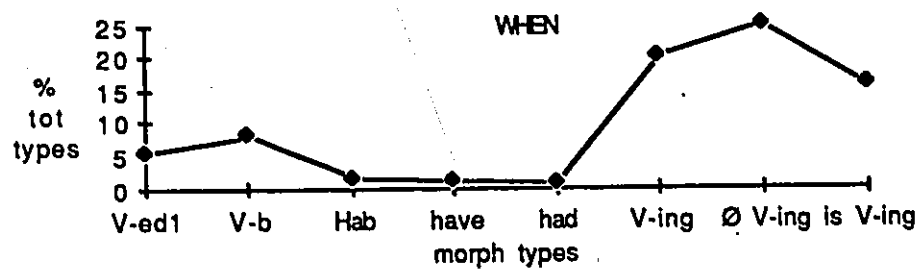


Figure (19b): Percent occurrence of *since* with each morphological type.

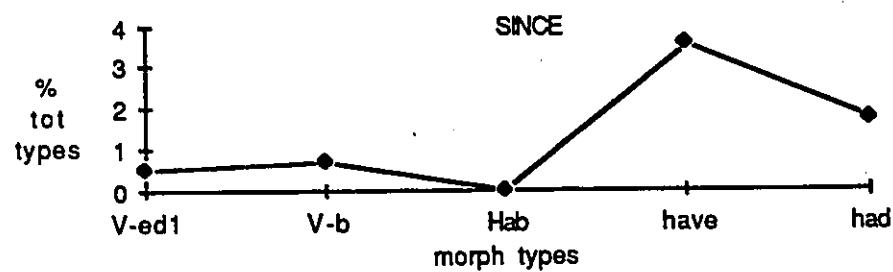
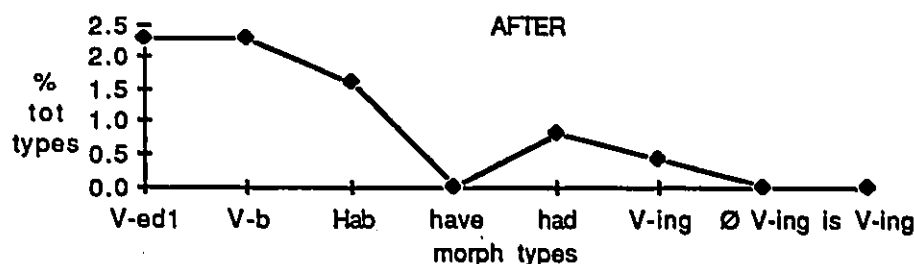


Figure (19c): Percent occurrence of *after* with each morphological type.



5.8. Summary of examination of tense types

The preceding distributional analyses of tense types by various features of the linguistic environment have revealed a number of interesting correspondences. The morphological types found in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings seem to behave, either in much the same way as the same forms do in Std E, or in the case of nonstandard variants, along lines similar to the tense/aspect categories found in Std E. We found that there is no differentiation based on verbal morphology of any type to distinguish the relative 'remoteness' of past time as has been claimed for English-based creoles and BEV. The only time period that is differentiated in terms of verbal morphology is that of 'continuing' past time, where the perfective auxiliary *have* + V-ed1/V-base occurs. This behaviour is identical to the Std E PRESENT PERFECT. The major difference is that Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings utilized some forms that have long since disappeared from contemporary usage, e.g. non-affirmative declarative *did*, a three verb cluster with *done*, but which have been attested from earlier stages of the English language. With respect to the presumed habitual markers, *did* and *'ll*, we found that these forms pattern with the standard markers *used to* and *would* respectively and appear to be variants of these. With respect to the tense overlaps prevalent in Std E, we found that

contexts which would permit either the simple PAST or PRESENT PERFECT or the simple PAST and PAST PERFECT also exhibit identical surface morphologies to what would be expected in Std E. The correspondence of morphological types to temporal relationship also demonstrated that particular tense categories are specialized to mark specific temporal associations. Subsequence relationships are marked by morphological forms which are comparable to the Std E simple PAST TENSE morphology, i.e. V-base, V-ed1. Coincidence relationships are marked by morphological forms comparable to Std E habitual markers, i.e. *used to*, *would*. Anterior relationships are marked by forms comparable to those used for this temporal relationship in Std E, i.e. the perfect tenses, e.g. *had/have* + V. These collocation restrictions are entirely consistent with Std E grammar rather than what has been suggested for Creole-like morphology in BEV. An interesting result in this regard was the striking parallelism between V-ed1 and V-base forms with respect to their behaviour with such disambiguating forms as adverbs, particles and temporal conjunctions. This result lends further support to the hypothesis that in past temporal environments V-ed1 and V-base forms represent one and the same category rather than two distinct forms of one underlying relative tense category characterized by distinct linguistic patterning based on contextual disambiguation. These data were also found to retain the same associative relationships as those of Std E with respect to temporal conjunctions which tend to occur with certain morphological forms and tense/aspect categories: *when*, which indicates temporal inclusion, occurs with V-ing forms, *since* with *had/had* + V and *after* with V-ed1, V-base, habituais or *had* + V. Moreover, we have found that there are striking parallels between Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings.

In examining the prominent patterns found in these data we have discovered that one difference between the two corpora is in their content: the Samaná English Corpus is replete with narratives of personal experience while the Ex-Slave Recordings contains more de-personalized accounts of past events. We have found that this difference significantly affects the surface morphological types found in the data. These differences, however, do

not detract from the fact that there are amazing parallels in the frequency and distribution of their respective verbal morphologies, nor from the fact that the behaviour of these, according to the analyses we have performed are generally unlike what has been attested for Creole-like grammars, and instead follow patterns that replicate those of the English language.

5.9. Preceding reference verb

While the majority of verbs in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings are marked in a general sense, a non-negligible percentage are marked with morphology that is nonstandard. This means that verbs are nonstandard both because of their lack of morphology and because of the type of morphology they have, if they have any. However, regardless of the type, such nonstandard morphologies cannot be unambiguously attributed to either Creole or English grammar, simply based on their occurrence since, as we have explained, the majority of their surface forms are identical to verbal structures occurring in both languages.

For example, some researchers (e.g. Bickerton 1975, Mufwene 1983) have pointed out that morphological variation on verbs in Creole or Creole-related varieties *does* sometimes correspond to that expected in Std E, however, in these citations there is no accountability as to the frequency of these forms, nor the relative frequency of those that follow a Creole system. Recall that example (67a-e) in section 3.4 illustrated a number of different potential marking patterns. In the tables that follow we illustrate the frequency of each one of these patterns in our data. Note, that in the comparisons between Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings there is a high degree of similarity in the frequency and distribution of these forms across the two data sets.

Table (17), which includes *all* verb forms in the data, depicts the frequency of marking patterns across all morphological types. Here, we observe that the Creole patterning (cf. Mufwene (1984:216)) of marked + unmarked verb represents only 13.8%

and 16.7% of all verbal morphologies in Samaná English and the Ex-Slaves respectively, while patterns that are atypical of creoles, namely marked + marked, or generally unattested for them, namely unmarked + marked forms, represent a combined frequency of 80.8% and 79.4% of all verbal morphologies. The remaining pattern consisting of an unmarked + unmarked form, represents only 5.4% and 3.9% of the data, and could be either Creole or Std-E, depending on context. In contrast, the marked + marked verbal patterning, which is the most frequent, 73.1% and 71.6%, is exactly what would be expected in standard (prescriptive) English.

Table (17): Frequency of marking patterns in all morphological types

	Samaná English		Ex-Slaves	
	%	N	%	N
Marked + Marked	73.1	5883	71.6	1514
Marked + Unmarked	13.8	1109	16.7	353
Unmarked + Unmarked	5.4	433	3.9	83
Unmarked + Marked	7.7	621	7.8	164
Total		8046		2114

Table (18) considers only single main verbs, i.e. V-ed1 or V-base forms. Here, once again, the Creole pattern of marked + unmarked verb represents only 15% and 17.1% of the total in the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings respectively, whereas the Std-E pattern of marked + marked forms are the most frequent at 67.8% and 69.1% respectively..

Table (18): Frequency of marking patterns in all V-ed1 and V-base verb forms

	Samaná	English	Ex-Slaves	
	%	N	%	N
Marked + Marked	67.8	3584	69.1	951
Marked + Unmarked	15.0	792	17.1	235
Unmarked + Unmarked	7.5	396	5.1	70
Unmarked + Marked	9.8	516	8.8	121
		5288		1377

While these tables verify that a certain percentage of the data demonstrate patterning typical of what is expected in a Creole temporal reference system, by far the majority of marking patterns are identical to English. While most work on creole temporal reference systems overlooks surface morphological variation, such as that illustrated above, the analysis presented here regards it as crucial evidence with which to determine the organization of the underlying system. Despite the fact that only a relatively small number of contexts are in question, i.e. are potentially Creole *or* English morphemes, it remains to be seen what causes the unmarked forms to surface and we return to this question in section 6.0 below. We assume that conditions influencing the distribution of such alternating morphological markers will help to decipher the mechanisms inherent in the underlying grammar.

5.10. Syntactic structure

Another factor which might be considered relevant to the surface representation of tense/aspect morphology in these data has to do with the syntactic structure in which the forms are contained. In general, research into the temporal structure and organization of English tense forms in discourse suggests that particular categories will appear in specific syntactic structures. Simplex morphological forms such as the simple PAST tense are claimed to appear more frequently in main clauses while complex morphological forms such as the perfect tenses and progressive occur more frequently in subordinate clauses. More specifically, there has been at least some suggestion from the Creolist literature that

certain types of clauses favour the absence of markers. Bickerton (1975) suggests that temporal clauses will inhibit overt tense marking. Quite consistent with this claim, although not by any means reflective of a Creole grammar, is our observation of a similar pattern in the dialectal literature. Although not explicitly stated in this work, the data presented in Hughes & Trudgill (1979) indicate that V-base *come* appears quite consistently within temporal clauses.

In this section we use our factor group identifying the syntactic clause type in which the verb form is located to assess such suggestions. Figures (20abc) and (21abc) below depict the distribution of our morphological types across different clause types in the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings respectively. This can be accomplished most felicitously with V-ed1 and V-base forms which occur with sufficient frequency in both corpora and across the different clause types to permit an assessment of their distribution. The actual numbers and percentages for each of these bar graphs can be found in Appendix D.

Figure (20a): Percent frequency of V-ed1 and V-base forms across clause types.— Samaná English.

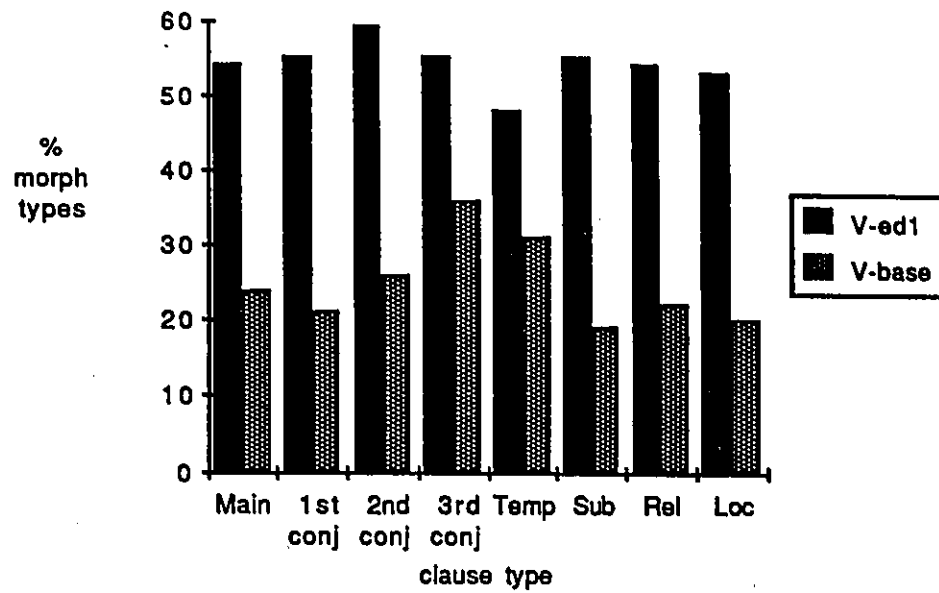
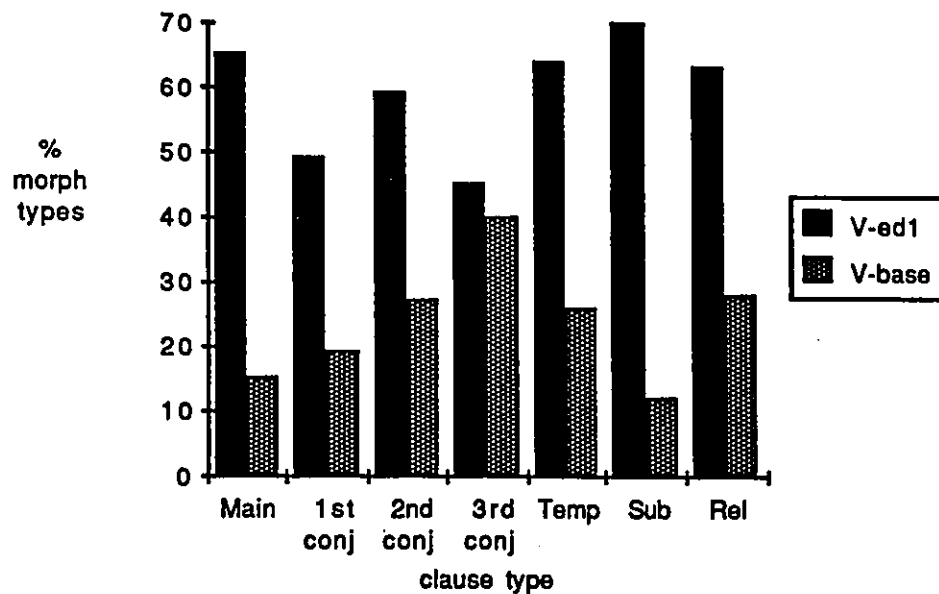


Figure (21a): Percent frequency of V-ed1 and V-base forms across clause types — Ex-Slave Recordings.



The first two figures illustrate the distribution of the most frequent morphological types, V-ed1 and V-base. It is quite clear in Samaná English, that these forms are used in virtually the same proportions across all clause types. In the Ex-Slave Recordings this is far less evident but still fairly consistent across the board if we consider that 3rd conjuncts, either with V-ed1 or V-base, have very sparse data (N=9 and N=8) and thus the percentages in these contexts are undoubtedly skewed.

The next two Figures (22a) and (22b) clearly indicate that forms with *had* are associated with subordinate, as opposed to main clauses types (either conjoined or temporal) in Samaná English while the forms with *have* appear to be most frequent in subordinate, relative and main clauses. Although the numbers are quite small for the Ex-Slave Recordings we can still observe much the same tendency. The actual numbers and percentages for each of these bar graphs can be found in Appendix D.

Figure (22a): Percent frequency of *have* and *had* forms across clause types — Samaná English.

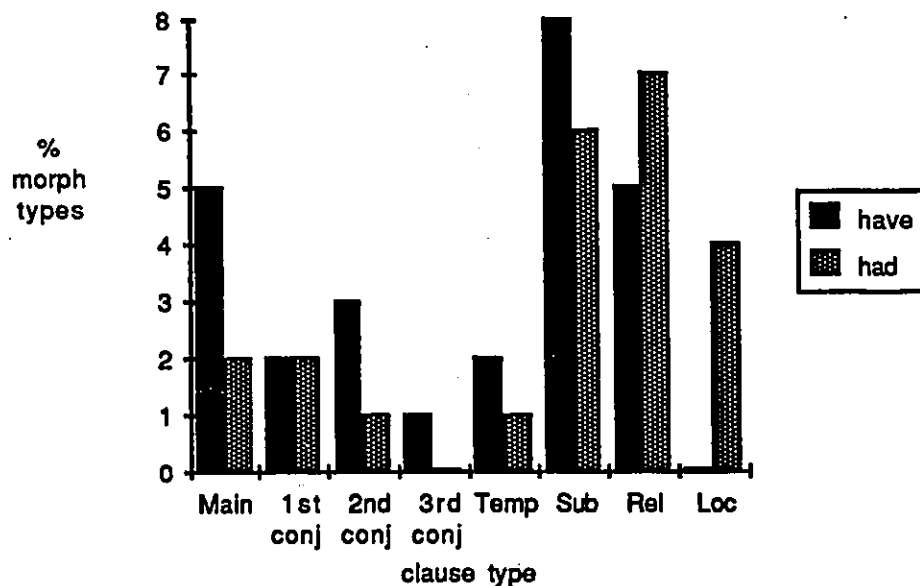
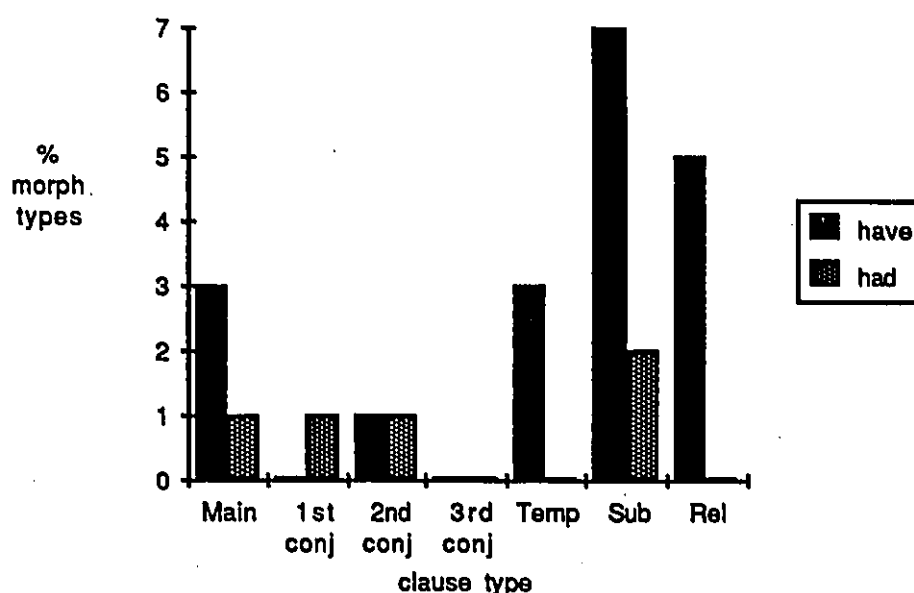


Figure (22b): Percent frequency of *have* and *had* forms across clause types — Ex-Slave Recordings.



Thus, our overview of the distribution of tense/aspect forms across clause types shows that V-ed1 and V-base are once again virtually undifferentiated with respect to yet another linguistic dimension, that of clause type in the Samaná English Corpus. One result that does seem clear from this analysis is that simple, i.e. V-ed1 and V-base, as opposed to compound, tense/aspect forms are used similarly across all clause types, while compound forms, as represented by *have/had* + V, tend to be more specialized to subordinate clauses. This result is entirely consistent with previous research in the English language. The strongest result with respect to the relationship between syntactic structure and morphological type, however, is that V-base forms are favoured in temporal clauses. This result is exactly what Bickerton suggests for Creole grammars, but it must be kept in mind that it has never been shown to *not* be the case in Std E or any WEV for that matter. The appearance of unmarked forms in this context from examples we have noted from the dialectal English literature suggests that English may also have this patterning. Such

evidence counterbalances the Creolist claim that this tendency is further evidence for an underlying Creole grammar.

5.11. Subject noun

The last syntactic factor group we consider is one which we have defined as "type of subject". Previous analyses of tense/aspect morphology have alluded to the fact that certain types of subjects, i.e. pronominals, can be correlated with the unmarked variant of certain verbal forms, e.g. *I been*. In our coding of the Samaná English data we found there to be many different types of subjects (see section 4.5.5. above). Separate consideration of all these forms proved unnecessary as the majority of these patterned either in the same way as personal pronouns or alternatively, as full noun phrases. Moreover, the fact that very little difference was found in marking rates, as can be seen in Table (19) below, even between these two general categories, led us to discard this factor group from the coding procedure for the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Table (19): Frequency of unmarked forms across subject nouns

	%	N
Pronoun	20	1193
Full noun	14	1494

5.12. Discursive environment

In this section we examine the distribution of tense/aspect morphology across different discursive contexts. This allows us to investigate a number of claims made in the literature which suggest that the distinction between narrative vs. non-narrative discourse is relevant to the appearance of specific morphological types. For example surface morphological forms corresponding to the PAST PERFECT category in Std E are said to be used "freely in narrative" in BEV (Labov et al. 1968:225), while in Std E these are only expected in non-narrative discourse or non-complicating action clauses within narratives. Furthermore, Dahl (1983) points out that Creoles, if they are, as some researchers have

distinctions, as some researchers have suggested, they should not make any distinction between narrative vs. non-narrative contexts, since this temporal feature would override any differences between discursive environments. In Figures (23a) and (23b) below we compare the morphological types found in three different discourse environments: 1) narrative complicating action clauses, 2) narrative non-complicating action clauses, and 3) non-narrative discourse contexts in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. The actual numbers and percentages for each of these bar graphs can be found in Appendix D.

Figure (23a): Distribution of morphological types across discourse contexts — Samaná English

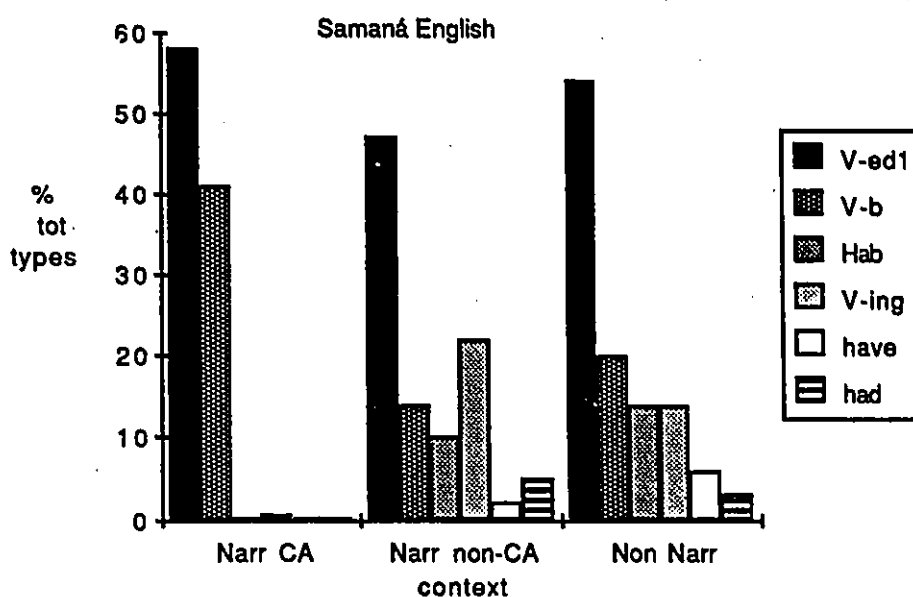
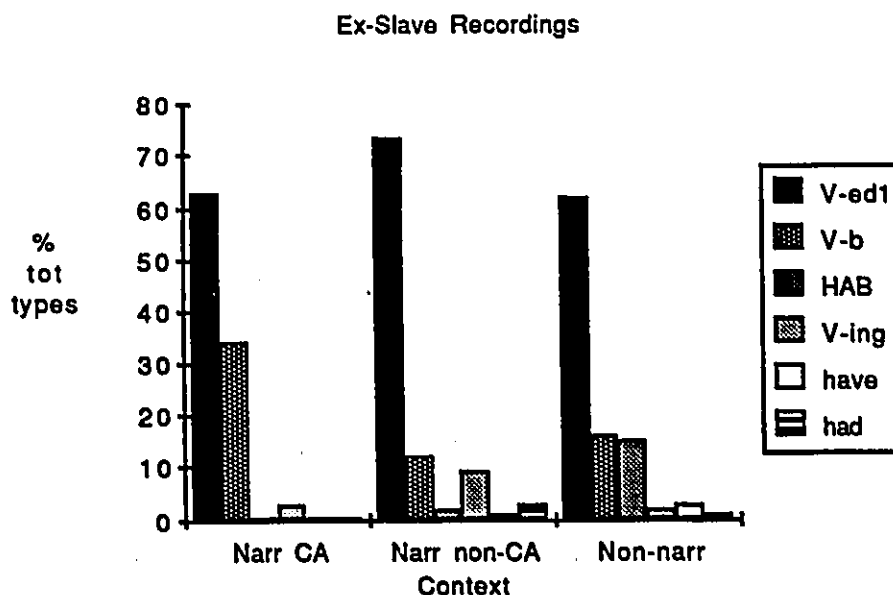


Figure (23b): Distribution of morphological types across discourse contexts — Ex-Slave Recordings.



The two corpora are once again very similar. Clearly, narrative and non-narrative contexts are highly differentiated with respect to morphological type. While narrative complicating action clauses are almost completely restricted to V-ed1 and V-base forms, non-narrative discourse and narrative non-complicating action clauses contain a wide spectrum of different morphological types. Contrary to claims made by researchers working from both a Creolist and quantitative perspective, there is absolutely no evidence in these data for forms corresponding to the Std E PAST PERFECT being used frequently in narratives⁶⁰. In fact, even within non-complicating action sections of narrative the frequency of *had/had done* + V forms is quite low for both corpora, another interesting similarity between the two. In Samaná English these forms make up only 5% of all the morphological forms used in this context and 4% in the Ex-Slave Recordings. It is also interesting to note that the ranking of different morphological types in narrative non-

⁶⁰ One instance of *had* + V out of 1336 cases of complicating action narrative clauses was found in the Samaná corpus, represented only .07% of the forms used there.

complicating action clauses and non-narrative clauses in general, is virtually identical in the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings. We also note the localization of *had* + V forms to non-complicating action contexts. This is exactly the location where the Std-E PAST PERFECT is expected to appear.

The obvious parallelism between narrative non-complicating action and non-narrative contexts that can be observed in these figures, suggests that they be treated as the same category in subsequent analyses creating a bipartite division between "narrative"⁶¹ clauses and non-narrative clauses (either non-complicating action narrative clauses or non-narrative clauses in general). The fact that these are so different with respect to surface verbal morphology demonstrates that the temporal reference system of Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings makes a significant distinction between these two discourse contexts. We return this fact in our analyses below.

5.13. Extra-linguistic factors

In this section we explore the influence of extra-linguistic factors on the occurrence of verbal morphology in our two corpora. In the previous analyses of morphological types we have found that both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings contain instances of nonstandard morphological forms. Obviously, the fact that these are linguistic elements which are not part of contemporary Std E, nor, we might hypothesize, part of the prestige variety of the English of that time period, their appearance may be influenced by social, economic, and cultural factors. Because our data cannot be examined for most of these indicators, we restrict ourselves to two obvious non-linguistic facts, the sex of the informant, and, for our Samaná English speakers, exposure to church and/or school activities. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the data base, the Ex-Slaves could not be differentiated according to the latter as this information was unavailable.

⁶¹ We use the term "narrative clause" here following Labov & Waletzky (1967:21) who characterize these clauses in terms of temporal sequence, i.e. "their order cannot be changed without changing the inferred sequence of events in the original semantic interpretation".

5.13.1. Sex

Figures (24a), (24b) and (24c) below illustrate the percent frequency of each morphological type out of all forms used by men and women in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. For purposes of clarity we provide separate figures for standard and nonstandard morphological types for the Samaná English Corpus. This was not possible for the Ex-Slave Recordings as there were very few instances of these rarer variants, i.e. *V-ed2*, $\emptyset$ *V-ing*, *is/are V-ing*, *he done + V*, *had done + V*, *done + V*, *be + V*. Figure (24c) includes all the morphological types that occurred with sufficient numbers to illustrate distributional patterning.

Figure (24a): Percent frequency of morphological types by sex (standard forms) — Samaná English

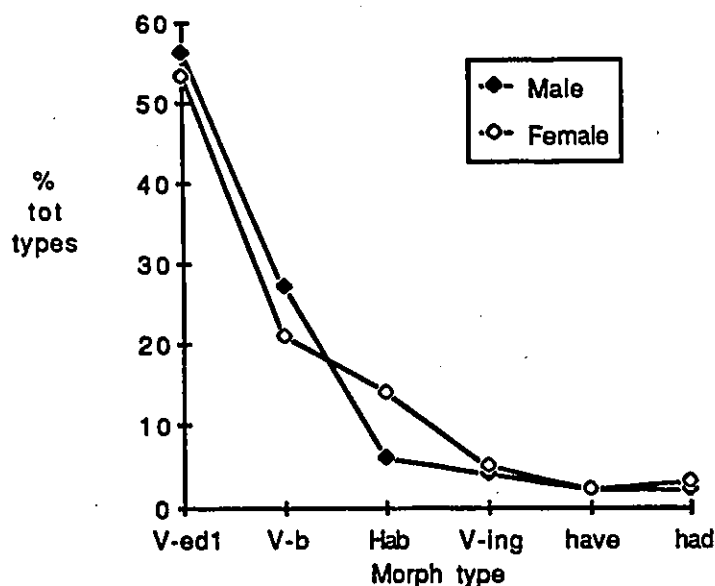


Figure (24b): Percent frequency of morphological types by sex (nonstandard forms) — Samaná English

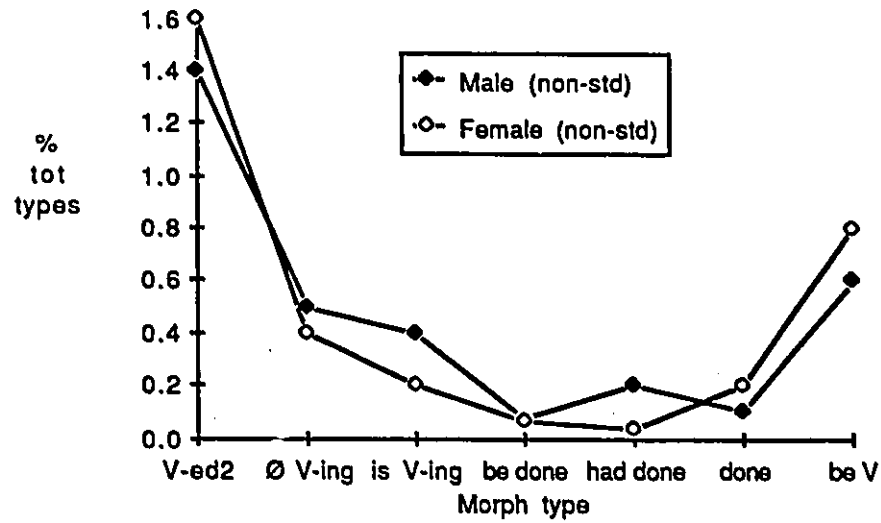
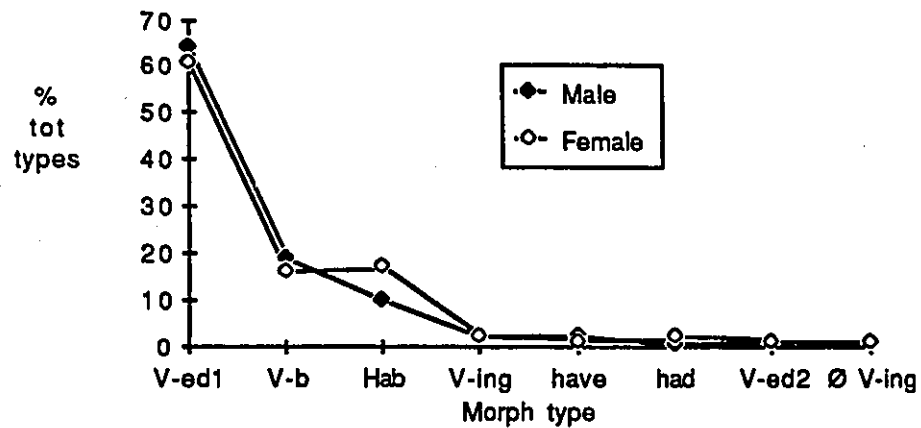


Figure (24c): Percent frequency of morphological types by sex (more than 15 tokens each) — Ex-Slave Recordings



These figures clearly demonstrate that there is very little difference in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings between the sexes with respect to the morphological types that appear in our data. The only small distinction seems to be that in both corpora

females use more habitual markers than males. In the Samaná English Corpus we also note a very slight increase in the use of V-base by males.

5.13.2. Exposure to church/school

Figures (25a) and (25b) below illustrate the percent frequency of each morphological type out of all forms used according to the individual's exposure to church and/or school in the Samaná English Corpus.

Figure (25a): Distribution of standard past temporal reference morphologies by education — Samaná English.

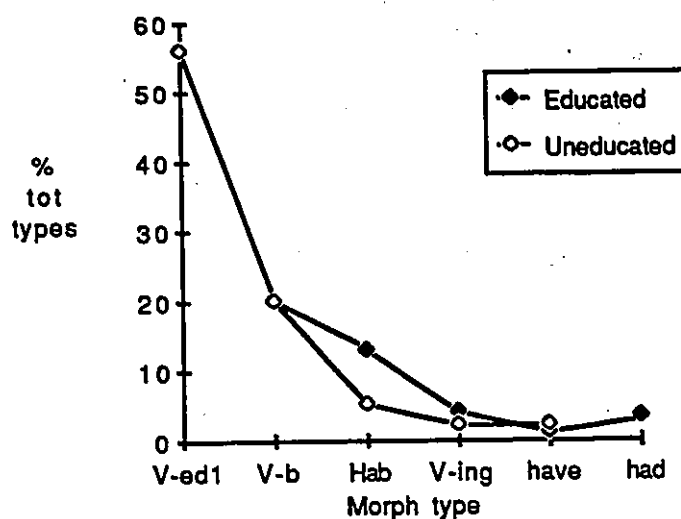
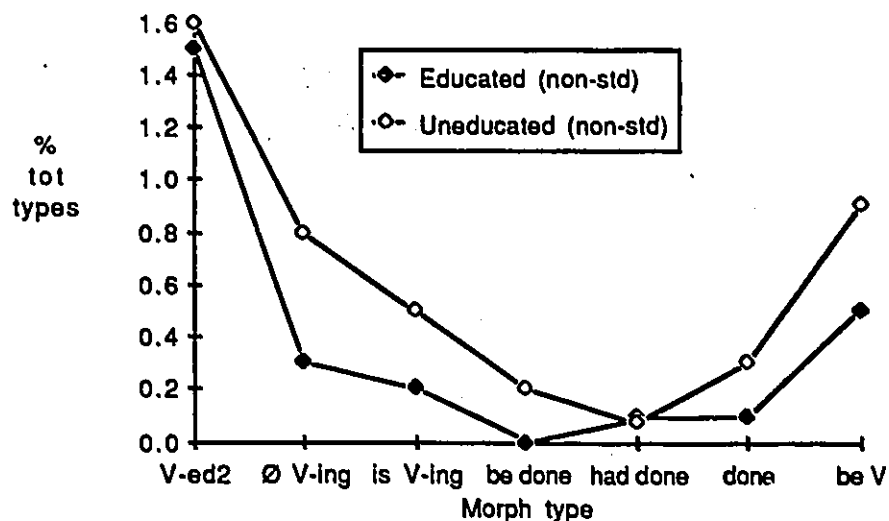


Figure (25b): Distribution of nonstandard past temporal reference morphologies by education — Samaná English.



The figures clearly demonstrate that education level makes very little difference to the distribution of standard morphological types in Samaná English. The frequently-used, standard morphological forms represented in Figure (25a) are actually used identically save for a slight increase in the use of HABITUAL markers by speakers with some education. The more rarely-used nonstandard morphological forms represented in Figure (25b) are also used in the same way by both uneducated and educated speakers. The slight differences in the chart are not particularly relevant given that these percentages only range from 0-1.6%. This suggests that exposure to education has a negligible effect on the past temporal reference morphology in these data.

It should also be mentioned that all of the Samaná speakers, save for one, use at least one of the rarely-occurring nonstandard forms. While not every speaker uses *every* one, it is not the case that any one form is restricted to a particular individual nor can they be attributed to unknowable circumstances in one or several specific individuals. The one exception to this is the disproportionate usage of the *is/are* + V-ing form by speaker (001).

This may very well be due to the fact that this speaker has by far the greater percentage of narrative discourse in his speech and thus more contexts in which the Historical Present Progressive could be used. In general, all the morphological forms we have tabulated appear to be used sparingly, though productively throughout our sample, as can be seen in Table (20) below. The numbers represent the actual number of occurrences of each form, while the total number represents the total number of tokens recorded per speaker.

Table (20): Distribution by speaker of rarely-occurring non-standard forms

Speaker	V-ed2	Ø V-ing	is V-ing	be done	had done	done	be + V	TOT
001	11	14	12	Ø	2	1	8	1226
002	4	4	4	Ø	Ø	1	4	1034
003	13	2	2	Ø	Ø	1	3	706
004	Ø	2	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	252
005	4	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	3	4	313
006	11	Ø	Ø	Ø	2	Ø	2	631
007	4	2	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	369
008	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	1	Ø	230
009	1	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	224
010	2	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	140
011	9	1	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	3	506
013	2	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	3	111
014	4	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	365
015	6	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	59
016	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	1	316
017	3	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	241
018	2	1	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	4	515
019	4	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	475
020	5	1	Ø	1	Ø	1	2	198
021	3	Ø	Ø	1	Ø	Ø	2	135

5.14. Creole marking vs. English marking

From this overview of the many morphological structures in these data, it is clear that the task of circumscribing the variable context(s) and determining the variants for a quantitative examination of past temporal reference morphology is an exceptionally complex task. The primary reason for this is, of course, due to the fact that there is such a wide variety of different forms used for past temporal reference. *A priori* it is impossible to

determine which of these are actually representative of different tense/aspect categories and which of them are variants of one tense/aspect category. Although our methodological restriction of all temporal reference environments to those described in section 4.2 has provided an already well-defined data sample encompassing ample contexts for examination of either a Creole or English type of organizational system, i.e. absolute and relative forms, further delimitation was necessary in order separate the different morphological types into their relevant categories.

In general, all of the different morphological types included in this analysis are variants in a theoretical sense since they all refer to past time. Their differences reflect the varying notions that are relevant to the system they elucidate *within* the general realm of past time. What notions actually govern the morphological makeup of the surfacing forms are the subject of our inquiry. As we have seen from our review of both the historical and synchronic studies of English and Creoles, two distinct types of variation can occur: 1) different tense/aspect *categories* within the general realm of past time can be used alternatively within the same context to refer to the same time, (i.e. Std E: simple PAST vs. PAST PERFECT; Creole: polyvalence of unmarked form) and 2) variants within the confines of one individual tense/aspect category (i.e. Std E: marked simple PAST vs. unmarked simple past) can also be used alternatively within the same context to refer to the same time. The former are said to contain different semantic values. For example, some prescriptive grammars claim that the difference between the simple PAST and PAST PERFECT has to do with the degree of relevance attributed to the order of the states of affairs being described. The PAST PERFECT is used in the case that the ordering is the focal point of the utterance while the simple PAST is used in the case that order is not the foremost consideration. The latter type of variation, on the other hand, is of the type typically studied in the variationist framework. Here, variants refer to exactly the same thing with no difference in meaning. We were able to demonstrate this for the alternation between V-ed1 and V-base verbs in the foregoing analyses where we found that parallel

patterning of these forms across a number of different linguistic features of the contextual environment suggested that they have the identical function. Furthermore, the restriction of certain rare variant such as *done* + V, *had done* + V, *be done* + V to specific contexts led us to suggest that they are variants of the other forms, i.e. *have* + V and *had* + V, with which they co-occur. Nevertheless, analyses of both types of variability, i.e. variation across tense/aspect categories as well as variation within tense/aspect categories, in these data can aid us in determining what factors condition the variable occurrence of different past temporal reference morphologies and thereby, their function. While our analyses in this section of the prominent patterns in the data has attempted to provide an overview and characterization of the former — the various tense/aspect categories represented in these corpora as represented by the different morphological types that appear in the data, we turn now to a consideration of morphological variants within the confines of the individual categories. For example, the variation between V-ed1 and V-base forms mentioned above. These patterns are more appropriately subsumed under the strict definition of the linguistic variable (see section 1.6.1)

This analysis proceeds in such a way as to provide for divisions and categories in the data that adhere to the underlying organization of whatever system is hypothesized — in some cases *both* the Creole and English grammatical systems.

5.14.1. Unmarked single verbs

The most obvious and largest overlap between the Creole and Std E temporal reference systems are the single V-base verbs. In Creole, these are considered the "absolutely unmarked form" exhibiting both the covert tense and covert aspect marker on the surface. As a functionally "unmarked" variant of the underlying tense category, ANTERIOR, the appearance of the Creole V-base verb is said to be heavily constrained by disambiguating features from the surrounding context as per the relative tense system. However, as in Creoles, English verbs can also occur with no visible tense and/or aspect

mark(s), i.e. the same V-base form. Within a Std E paradigm these forms would, in most instances below, be considered variants of verb forms representing the simple PAST tense category whose unmarked surface form is due to a number of different linguistic processes which remove the underlying tense morpheme. Unmarked weak verbs would be considered PAST tense verbs whose final consonants, i.e. the simple PAST tense morpheme, are variably removed by the operation of phonologically constrained surface rules. Unmarked strong verbs, on the other hand, would be considered PAST tense verbs as well, but in this case other features, such as the lexical form of the verb itself, verb class, etc., would condition the occurrence of the V-base form.

Of all the morphological types found in these data which could potentially represent an English or Creole function, the single V-base form is the most frequent. Thus, interpretation, analysis and assessment of these will be a crucial part of the ensuing analyses.

5.14.2. Marked aspect/unmarked tense

Another overlap between the Creole and English temporal reference systems is in verbal environments which exhibit either a bare *V-ing*, (183a-b) or a bare *V-ed2*, (183c-f).

- (183a) ... they had to throw back, back, back
because, you know they Ø shooting 'em from two side of the
road. (001/476-7)
- (183b) And when I got like from here over there to Miss Lizah, there
the troops Ø coming down to go to town again. (002/361-2)
- (183c) I know when I Ø born, 1898. (003/132)
- (183d) After I Ø born, well I came. My mother brought me here on the
beach side. (017/113)
- (183e) I can't remember, Ø been so long that I've forgotten. (014/87)
- (183f) This year Ø been raining plenty. (021/584)

These have fundamentally different interpretations depending on whether an underlying English or Creole grammar is posited. In both systems the sentences are considered to lack a surface marker, however, the explanation for why the marker is missing differs. In the former, the unmarked surface morphology is regarded as resulting from reduction of the auxiliary (i.e. *have/has*); in the latter it would be explained as the surface appearance of the covert tense marker, $\emptyset$, rather than the overt marker (e.g. *albin* etc.) or, alternatively, as in (183e-f), as an analytic pre-verbal marker of remote aspect.

5.14.3. Pre-verbal markers

In Std English, forms such as *used to + V*, *begin to + V* etc. are expected to be marked for tense in the auxiliary. In a Std E analysis then, they would be treated as representing a case of marked or unmarked tense depending on the morphology of the auxiliary, e.g. *began to* vs. *begin to*. In a Creole analysis, on the other hand, an unmarked pre-verbal particle indicates aspect, not tense. These would presumably be considered covertly marked for tense, unless one of the overt ANTERIOR tense markers occurred along with them, i.e. *did used to + V*, *had begin + V*.

Thus, it is clear that the observed combinations of marked and unmarked single verbs and marked and unmarked combinations of auxiliary/pre-verbal particle + main verb are often interpreted differently and grouped differently depending on which underlying system is posited for the analysis — Creole or English. The following tables are based on re-combinations of Table (8) above. Table (21) shows which morphological forms could potentially be grouped if an analysis were to be undertaken following a hypothesized Creole system whereas Table (22) shows how these forms could potentially be grouped if an analysis were to be undertaken following a hypothesized English system.

Table (21): Distribution of types of surface morphological marking (CREOLE)

	Example	N Samaná	N Ex-Slaves
Marked Tense/Unmarked Aspect:			
Suffixal mark	I walked	6504	1631
Suppletive mark	I came		
Pre-verbal mark	I had walkØ I did walk		
Unmarked Tense/Unmarked Aspect:	I walkØ	1438	425
Unmarked Tense/Marked Aspect:	I Ø walking I been ⁶² V	111	33
Marked Tense/Marked Aspect:	I did used to sing I had done been ⁶³ I'm done been	14	3

Table (22): Distribution of types of surface morphological marking (ENGLISH)

	Example	N Samaná	N Ex-Slaves
Marked Tense:			
Weak verb (suffix mark)	I walked	6269	1599
Strong verb (suppletive mark)	I came		
Unmarked Tense:			
Weak verb (suffixal deletion)	I walkØ	1438	425
Strong verb (V-base)	I come		
Semi-marked tense: (suffixal deletion in complex verbal unit)	I had walkØ	153	32
Unmarked Tense: (auxiliary deletion)			
V-ing	I Ø walking	111	33
V-ed2	I Ø been		

⁶² The form *been/bin/ben* is problematic in the sense that it is considered by some to be the overt relational (ANTERIOR) tense marker and by others as a remote aspect marker. Subdivided examinations of our data in section 6.0 indicate whether or not these are included or excluded in the analysis.

⁶³ Although these three-verb structures are not attested in the Creole literature, their morphology could be interpreted as having both a preverbal tense and aspect marker. For this reason they are included in this category.

Furthermore, the variants included in a given variable context differ according to the system posited. For example, within a Std E paradigm, strong and weak verbs could not both be included in an analysis of phonological deletion since strong verbs are irrelevant to this process. Alternatively, within a decreolizing Creole paradigm marked verbs, e.g. *walked, came, had walk, been walking* would all be considered in the same category, i.e. marked tense, however, within a Std E paradigm these forms, specifically the difference between *walked* vs. *had walked* vs. *been walking*, would be critically distinct as they are representative of distinct tense/aspect categories.

5.15. Summary

Our overview of the morphological types included in this study has demonstrated consistent, patterned similarities between our diachronic data and Std E. Corroborating evidence for the systematicity with which these forms are used comes from the consistent parallelism we have found between the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings. Such correspondences can hardly be coincidental.

In general, the most obvious *dissimilarities* between these data and contemporary English are the infrequent occurrence of nonstandard variants which have been previously attested in the English language, e.g. the three verb cluster, pre-verbal affirmative *did* etc. However, we can isolate three specific areas of variation within the data which can more profitably meet the requirement for the "linguistic issue" discussed in section 2.4: they are frequent, (see Tables (21) and (22)), relatively non-salient and their surface level patterns are reflective of the underlying temporal reference system of the grammar.

- 1) unmarked single main verbs (V-base)
- 2) verbs which are marked for aspect but not for tense (V-ing or V-ed2)
- 3) pre-verbal *had, done, been, did* and possibly *have* + V-base/V-ed1

The surface morphological forms of all three types occur within *both* Creole and English and/or dialectal English paradigms. The problem, then, is to determine whether these are being used with an underlying Creole semantic function or whether they reflect

Std E and/or dialectal white English functions. That is, are these, essentially English lexical items, "being manipulated to conform to an underlying non-English semantic system" or do they indeed correspond to the English one? In the following examination of our data we employ a series of analyses which utilize the variable rule program in order to examine the variable conditioning on these three types of past temporal reference verbal structures.

Chapter 6: Variable Rule Analysis

6. Variable Rule Analysis

Basing our analysis on the distributional patterning found in these data, we posit five variables which we explore quantitatively in the next sections of this dissertation. The first analysis examines the data from the perspective of a Creole grammar alone, and addresses the dichotomy between marked and unmarked forms long held to be result of the surface patterning of a relative tense system. The second takes up, once again, the deletion hypothesis and examines the distribution and conditioning on the (putative) inflectional morphology on weak verbs. The third isolates strong verbs in order to examine the variable presence of their suppletive marks. The last two variables take up the auxiliary deletion hypothesis and examine the conditioning and distribution of bare and auxiliary-marked V-ed forms as well as the variation among three variants we have observed occurring with V-ing participles with past temporal reference, namely $\emptyset$, *was/were* or *is/am/are*.

We hypothesize that the conditioning effects that will be relevant to these processes will help to elucidate the issues we have outlined previously and help to synthesize and evaluate the patterns we have uncovered in our distributional analysis. In order to maintain consistency, and thus comparability between the first three analyses, covert vs. overt marking, suffixal inflection and suppletive inflection, we utilize the same basic factor groups which take into account various conditioning effects mentioned in the literature⁶⁴.

⁶⁴ Of course, under a Std E interpretation of the grammar this 'comparability' would be irrelevant since the three variables are quite distinct; however, if the systems we are examining are *not* English grammars and instead follow a relative tense system we might expect the conditioning on marked and unmarked verbal patterns to behave similarly across these contexts.

6.1. Relevant factor groups

The following list encompasses all relevant and quantifiable characteristics culled from the literature on creole temporal reference features which can be quantifiably verified in a variable rule analysis. Other features mentioned in the literature, such as temporal distance, specific adverbial correlations etc. which we have explored previously, require access to a number of different individual morphological types and cannot be examined in the basic division between marked and unmarked forms pursued in the individual analyses. From the categorical statements detailed in section 3.6 we hypothesize that the following tendencies may be found:

- 1) more covert marking, [Ø], in non-punctual verbs
- 2) more covert marking, [Ø], in temporally disambiguated contexts as indicated by:
 - a) preceding overt TENSE or ASPECT morpheme from the same temporal sector, (i.e. past temporal reference)
 - b) clause internal adverb
 - c) adjoining particle to verb
 - d) temporal conjunction
- 3) more overt marking in the environment of a new temporal reference, (i.e. preceding present temporal reference, anterior or reorientation temporal relationship)

These potential conditioning effects are examined in the seven different factor groups listed below. Each factor group is followed by relevant illustrative examples from the data base. The verb is indicated in italics, while the relevant linguistic feature is indicated in bold face. For purposes of elucidation, we illustrate these contexts with one lexical verb, *come*.

1. The verb is punctual:

- (184) Right away I called the children to send a car and they *came* with it and then they went. (019/584)

Non-punctual:

- (185a) They *used to come* and sit down there. They had a big mango tree where we stayed. (001/485-7)

- (185b) When I *was coming up*, my mother didn't 'llow me to go anywhere. (009/359)
 (185c) Well then she *come to be* just like our older sister. (002/1134)

2. The verb has a particle

- (186a) Them, the immigrants, you know, they *came out*

The verb has no particle

- (186b) He was here, *came* here to pay me a visit. (001/156).

3. The morphological status of the preceding reference verb is⁶⁵:

a) overtly marked; Event Time (ET) = past

- (187) I was going down street and he *was coming up*. (007/1892)

b) covertly marked; ET = past

- (188) They only fix something- something there and they give her and so she *came* home. (014/380)

c) overtly marked; ET = speech time

- (189) I have four ministers *have come out* from my preaching. (006/1999)

4. The temporal relationship of the verb to its preceding reference verb is:

a) posterior [ET 1 < ET 2]

- (190) Yes, she bought this. Well then, she *come* and she built her home. (002, 565)

b) coincident [ET1 = ET2]⁶⁶

- (191a) I had an old chair. I used to sit and the people *used to come* from the street. (003/975-6)

- (191b) They had two womens *was coming* to the hospital. (005/576-7)

⁶⁵ The fourth logical possibility, i.e. a preceding covertly marked verb whose reference time is speech time is impossible as there is no convenient way of distinguishing such a context.

⁶⁶ The coincidence relationship refers to events, processes or states which overlap, either completely or partially.

c) anterior [ET1 > ET2]

- (192a) My grandfather and my grandmother ... **give**[ET=past] me 'ccount that them people *come*[ET=past before past] from yonder. (007/1034-5)
(My grandfather and my grandmother *told* me that those people *had come* from yonder.)
- (192b) It had all the family that *came* from yonder. (018/233)

d) repetition:

- (193) I **come** back here in the sixty. When I *come* in the sixty, well, I made this house. (004/151-2)

e) reorientation/discontinuous [ET1 ET2]

- (194) They **think** that old people ya, is not good so ... the daughter *came* and she seen about her. (003/443)

f) response [Question + ET1]

- (195) Interviewer: And do you go to visit her sometimes?
Informant: I *came* from the capital today. (002/493-4)

5. The verb is in a clause marked by a temporal conjunction:

- (196) But then after I *came*, my mother and father didn't like for me to go back. (014/118)

The verb is in a clause with no temporal conjunction:

- (197) But when he came from America, he *came* with them two boy. (002/25)

6. There is an adverb in the clause:

- (198a) I *came* last Saturday. (002/523)

There is no adverb in the clause:

- (198b) They *came* from yonder. (002/77)

We are interested then, in which of these features affect the occurrence of the absolutely unmarked past temporal reference verbs (i.e. V-base forms) in these data, and how. Do they follow the pattern postulated for the underlying Creole prototype?

6.2. Covert vs. overt marking

The first variable rule analysis addresses the insertion hypothesis for the distribution of overt (marked) and covert ($\emptyset$ -marked) verbs. One of the problems of this particular analysis is that we could not include any attested factors which are specifically 'English'. This prevented us from constructing an examination which could examine both Creole and English-like factors simultaneously. There are two reasons for this: 1) the nature of the variable itself, i.e. covert vs. overt marking, as described within the Creolist literature subsumes a large number of *different* tense/aspect categories in English within the overtly-marked category (cf. Table 21) which cannot, within a Std E perspective, be given a unitary interpretation, and thus none of the conditioning effects noted for English varieties are applicable here, 2) there are no conditioning factors attested in the literature or which could be extracted from the literature in English varieties, either past or present, which are relevant to the covert vs. overt distinction we posit here. This, of course, is not surprising since the distinction is entirely counter-intuitive to an English-like system. Thus, the value in this particular examination of our BE data comes from its quantitative assessment of attested *Creole-like* patterns only and the relevance of our results to English varieties can only be drawn through inference. In order to approach the data in this way we assume following Bickerton (1975) that in the decreolization process, English morphology begins to infiltrate the Creole grammar and a number of English-like verbal forms, pre-verbal *had* (Rickford 1977), *did* and/or the Std E simple PAST tense morphology (i.e. *-ed* and suppletion) are added to this system. For the purposes of this analysis we assume that such forms, although quite disparate in morphology and Std E in origin, could potentially distribute according to a creole function, i.e. relative tense, rather than as in English where they represent a combination of tense/aspect forms from both absolute *and* relative tense categories.

In order to understand the way tense functions in a Creole, it is necessary to abandon the idea that verbs are required to be marked for different tenses to represent the concepts of time — past, present and possibly future — that are implicit in the English language. In (prescriptive) English grammar every verb requires a temporal mark and that mark is determined by the temporal reference intended: if present temporal reference, then present morphology; if past, then past morphology etc. regardless of varying features of the linguistic, discourse or pragmatic context. In the Creole paradigm all the different types of *tense* marking that we find within a Std E paradigm would be irrelevant, since in essence there is really only one tense in a Creole system — anterior — and that tense has two different forms, overt and covert. Therefore, all tense-marked verbs can be placed in one category opposed to all non tense-marked forms in another. In this system, the overt tense mark is not required on every verb. Instead, it is said to surface when a new reference time is introduced. Once that reference has been established, however, there is no further requirement for tense to be indicated overtly until there is a change in the temporal reference. Aspect markers are claimed to follow this patterning as well. That is, an overt aspect marker surfaces when a new aspectual distinction is made. Subsequent to its appearance, however, further overt aspectual marking is not required. Thus, creole tense and aspect markers may be expected to function in exactly the same way with regard to the patterned appearance of their covert forms.

These statements appear to make strong claims about the surface distribution of tense/aspect morphology in Creole-like grammars; however, none of these hypotheses are straightforward. They simply describe a theoretical ideal that, at best, has been arrived at through introspection, selective attestation or subjective evaluation either on the part of the researcher or of native speakers. They have not yet been examined quantitatively within the context of discourse, nor been subject to the rigors of data accountability. Important to our analysis here, however, is that this type of distributional patterning and conditioning *can* be verified.

Due to the putative parallelism between tense and aspect marking described above, the entire data base of past temporal reference structures can be examined in light of whether or not each token is marked overtly or covertly, regardless of the marker type, i.e. temporal or aspectual. Following this basic opposition between overtly marked vs. covertly marked verbs we divide the entire sample of both the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings into two categories:

- 1) overt marking of any kind, either TENSE and/or ASPECT
- 2) covert TENSE, [Ø] (V-base)

This allows the most encompassing treatment of the past temporal reference forms in these corpora since each and every form can be included in the analysis, regardless of the varying morphological types that are present on the surface. In other words, all overtly marked forms will be included in one category and all covertly marked forms will be included in another, i.e. all V-base forms with no other morphology. This will enable us to determine whether covertly marked verbs occur in the linguistic environments suggested above. If the grammar is Creole in nature, the distribution of the overtly marked verbs and the covertly marked verbs should pattern according to what has been described for a relative tense system in the literature.

For this particular analysis of the data then, the different *types* of tense/aspect marking that make important semantic distinctions in Std-E, i.e. habituais, (*used to, would*) and verb structures which are potential PERFECT tenses, i.e. those that contain *has/have/had* pre-verbally) and any other morphological forms, are taken to be irrelevant; instead their unanimous characteristic of being "marked" is considered the relevant factor. In this way, the analysis focuses entirely on surface morphological patterns of overall morpheme presence (i.e. overt marking) or absence (i.e. covert marking) which are said to pattern relative to one another — the foremost feature of a Creole tense and aspect system.

6.2.1. Factor-by-factor distribution

6.2.1.1. Punctuality

Bickerton (1975:149) claims that verbal aspect is the most important non-stylistic factor involved in the acquisition of Std E past tense morphology in Guyanese creole. At the basilect to mesolect stage past temporal reference stative verbs begin to be treated as non-punctuals and non-punctuals after *doz*-loss retain their stem form even when their reference is clearly past. According to Bickerton, the effects of these developments "completely inhibit the acquisition of past forms in non-punctual environments" (p. 149). In Bickerton's analysis, verbs considered non-punctual are those which are stative, iterative, or continuous, creating a fundamental opposition between punctual and non-punctual environments.

When we examine this binary dichotomy in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings we find that there is a distinction between overtly marked punctuals vs. non-punctuals, but *not* in the direction predicted by Bickerton. In Table (23) below punctuals receive overt marking less frequently than non-punctuals in both corpora. Why should this be so?

Table (23): Distribution of all overtly marked verbs in punctual and non-punctual environments

	Punctual		Non-punctual	
	%	tot N	%	tot N
Samaná English	72	3567	88	4479
Ex-Slave Recordings	74	638	82	1476

Recall, from our examination of the distribution of morphological types of past temporal reference in these data sets that the vast majority of verbs were marked in some way — 77.9% in Samaná English and 75.6% in the Ex-Slave Recordings (cf. Table (8) above). The most frequent unmarked verb forms, i.e. single main verbs with no tense or

aspect marking (V-base), in both these data bases represent surface morphologies which under a Std E interpretation could be construed, in the vast majority of cases, as simple PAST tense forms. In Std-E, these sites encompass, both the foremost context for suffixal deletion *and* the predominately [+punctual] locale for unmarked verbs — narrative complicating action clauses. In the latter context, verb forms can also surface as HISTORICAL PRESENT, in which case, except for 3rd personal singular, the surface morphology is uninflected. A preponderance of verbs in this context, where unmarked punctual verbs are the norm coupled with the phonological propensity within this category for the reduction of overt inflection, gives a plausible explanation for why there is less marking in punctual environments here. On the other hand, non-punctual verbs in the corpora tend to be marked with auxiliaries, either iterative (*used to, would* etc.) or continuous (*be + V-ing*) although there is no relationship between the morphemes themselves. Given a Creole analysis where non-punctual verbs would be expected to receive the $\emptyset$ mark, the fact that these forms are so frequently *marked*, especially in contrast with punctual verbs in the data, is particularly un-Creole-like.

6.2.1.2. Temporal relationship

According to Mufwene's (1984) analysis of time reference in Creoles, the covert verb appears once the frame of reference has been *established*. Extrapolating from this suggestion, we coded each verb for its temporal relationship to the preceding reference verb (see section 4.5.10 above). We hypothesize that one of the foremost locales for overt marking in Creole and Creole-like varieties will be in contexts where there is a change in temporal reference since it is here that the overt mark is said to be required to reestablish the temporal orientation.

The effect of temporal relationship, however, cannot be so neatly defined. In actuality there are many more factors than simple "time" considerations which operate on the surface morphologies of temporally-related verbs. For example, although the case of

repetition entails no change in temporal reference and therefore might be expected to receive a covert mark under a relative tense interpretation, this context could also be interpreted as containing a quality of emphasis and thus pragmatically pre-disposed for a propensity towards marking. Such an effect could arguably be the case in any linguistic system. Since it is unclear what motivates the surface morphology in these cases, overt marking in repetitions cannot be used as evidence for a uniquely creole grammar. Furthermore, there is at least some indication from the theoretical literature that the case of posterior temporal relationship is unique. It is said to be the "unmarked" case (functionally) in languages in general and thus, it, as well, may be more frequently unmarked since the temporal relationship itself (i.e. posterior) implicates the tense (Mühlhäusler 1980). Taking these considerations into account we hypothesize that sequentially-ordered posterior verbs, either those following an overt or covert marker and verbs indicating coincident temporal relation will have the least amount of marking since there is no change in temporal reference in these cases; they are all past temporal reference. The context which can most effectively elucidate the creole hypothesis with respect to temporal relation, however, is the case of temporal coincidence. This simply refers to contexts where no change in temporal reference takes place. Here, we would expect a creole system to exhibit a tendency towards *less* marking since it is an environment where the temporal reference is established and unchanged. In the anterior case, past-before-past, or in the case of temporal discontinuity or reorientation, e.g. *No, I have never been yonder. They had a captain.* (004/277-8), i.e. re-establishing the reference time, there is a change in the temporal frame of reference and thus we expect more marking in these environments. Finally, the case of speaker change is an anomalous situation to assess temporally. We might assume that in the course of discourse, an interlocutor shift could also be interpreted as an instance of time change, requiring a surface temporal mark. If so, it is not clear that this is a purely creole-like tendency and the appearance of an overt mark subsequent to an interlocutor interruption or question could very well reflect independent factors, i.e. universal marking tendencies

across languages and/or pan-grammatical discourse phenomena. For these reasons we exclude this context in the analyses that follow.

The general hypothesis, i.e. that an overt mark will tend to appear at the point of new temporal reference over and above one that is sustained is not borne out by the Samaná English data. Only one category follows this hypothesis in the Ex-Slave Recordings. This can be seen in Table (&56). Here, anterior relation, which represents a change in temporal reference, is the most highly *marked* context of all. There are a number of parallelisms between the two corpora. Verbs that are posterior are marked the least and those that are coincident with their preceding reference verbs are marked just as frequently as temporal relationships in which there is a change in the temporal frame of reference, i.e. in anterior or reorientation environments in the Samaná corpus and in reorientation contexts in the Ex-Slaves. Thus, with the exception of anterior temporal relationship in the Ex-Slave Recordings, these results go directly against the Creole expectation.

However, recall that in our analysis, verbs coded under anterior temporal relationship include states of affairs which are both: 1) anterior to another event in the past *and* 2) anterior to speech time. In Std-E, the former context is often the environment for the PAST PERFECT and the latter is often the environment for the PRESENT PERFECT. In the Ex-Slave Recordings both of these contexts tend to be marked. This may explain the high marking rate for this context in comparison to the others.

Table (24): Distribution of overtly marked verbs according to the temporal relation of the given verb to its reference verb

	Reorientation		Coincidence		Anterior		Repetition		Posterior	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Samaná English	86	886	86	2601	86	495	77	559	65	1966
Ex-Slaves	80	131	79	1309	90	72	81	137	70	265

The case of the anterior temporal relationship is especially interesting since it is in this environment that we expect the classic creole patterning to be overtly visible, and this is in fact what appears to be the case for the Ex-Slave Recordings. However, in order to truly

observe whether the effect of anterior temporal relationship is patterned as in a Creole system, we must examine this particular temporal relationship in greater detail. Recall that for Bickerton's creole prototype, when the reference time (RT) is in the past, the overt anterior marker is predicted to occur to mark events that took place previous to that past time, i.e. past-before-past, as in examples (199a-e), however, when the reference point is speech time (ST), as in examples (200a-e), the creole prototype can use the covertly marked verb which is itself, understood as simple past. This is because past time is the appropriate 'anterior' interpretation for a verb whose reference time is speech time and in Bickerton's system non-stative past temporal reference verbs surface morphologically as V-base. Thus, what is relevant to our argument is whether there is any difference in the marking rates in anterior temporal relationships in which the reference time is present as opposed to those in which the reference time is past, rather than the overall marking rate. In an English system there would be no reason to expect a difference, whereas in the Creole prototype, as we have explained, these would be distinct.

Past Reference Point:

- (199a) I remember they *asked* my sister a day when she *came out* from America. (001/80-1)
- (199b) Well, my daddy, he *took* to what the lawyer *told* him. (001/233)
- (199c) And we *gave* him a bit of medicine what the doctor *had sent*. (002/735)
- (199d) I don't know if you all *heard* some years back about a boat they *had put* bomb in? (003/1095-6)
- (199e) Because they *have* some of the preachers in there what *did preach* Spanish. (006/354-5)

Speech Time Reference Point:

- (200a) I *thanks* him because that *prevented* me from doing it again. (006/1263)
- (200b) She *make* forty-nine now, uh-huh. In May, she *made* forty-nine.

- (200c) I *have* it there. He *gave* it to me.
- (200d) That uncle, I *don't know* him. I *knew* him when he *was* here,
but after he *went* ... (004/414)
- (200e) I *have* four ministers have *come out* from my preaching.
(006/1999)

When we examine the Samaná and Ex-Slave data across these two contexts, however, we find that there is no difference in terms of marking on verbs which indicate events anterior to the moment of speech compared to those which indicate events anterior to an event in the past. As can be clearly seen in Table (25) below anterior temporal relation shows no propensity to be covertly marked in the context of being anterior to speech time. Note also the striking parallelism between the marking rates in each corpus. This result goes directly against what would be expected in a relative tense system.

Table (25): Percent Marking of ANTERIOR reference verbs
by preceding reference point⁶⁷

REFERENCE POINT	Samaná English		Ex-Slaves	
	% marked	N	%marked	N
EVENT TIME = PAST	85.5	200	90	20
EVENT TIME = SPEECH TIME	86.0	295	91	47

6.2.1.3. Morphological Mark of the Preceding Reference verb

In a creole system, surface verbal morphology is said to be highly dependent on the preceding verbal mark. According to Mufwene's (1984) "least-effort" principle, if a given verb is preceded by an overtly marked verb, it won't be marked itself. Thus, in a Creole system morphologically marked verbs are said to provide a clear temporal context which

⁶⁷ Discrepancies between the total N's in Table (25) compared with those in Table (24) are the result of excluding all contexts which represented a shift in interlocutor in the case of Table (25). These were irrelevant to our consideration of preceding reference time.

allows the covertly marked forms to occur. Hence, often-quoted examples from the literature such as (201) below:

- (201) He *stood* there and he *thinking*' (Dillard 1972:43)
 [overt tense] [covert tense]

Such an effect is easily examined by our factor group recording the surface morphological mark of the reference verb preceding the verb under study, as can be seen in Table (26). These figures represent the percent of overt marking on the verb in question across the three different possibilities that exist in our circumscribed contexts — a preceding reference verb with an overt mark indicating past temporal reference, a preceding reference verb with an overt mark indicating present temporal reference, and a preceding reference verb with no overt morphology, i.e. a covert mark.

Table (26): Percentage of overtly marked verbs according to the mark of the preceding reference verb

Preceding reference verb has:	Overt Mark (past temp ref.)		Overt Mark (present temp ref.)		Covert Mark	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Samaná English	82	5005	85	538	59	1054
Ex-Slave Recordings	81	1784	88	83	66	247

Here, we can observe that there is no tendency for a preceding temporal morphological mark to promote the covert tense marker. Neither morphology indicating speech time (overt mark: present temp ref.) nor morphology indicating an event time in the past (overt mark: past temporal ref.) promote a following covert mark. Indeed, the tendency is in the *opposite* direction, with preceding marked verbs favouring the occurrence of overt inflection rather than disfavouring it. This is especially relevant in the case of a preceding verb anchored to speech time. According to the posited creole system, a past temporal reference verb following a preceding present temporal reference verb should be expected to be marked because there is a change in temporal orientation, i.e. to past time. However, as evident from Table (26), there very little propensity for a past temporal

reference verb following a present temporal verb to be marked any more frequently than if a past temporal reference verb precedes. Indeed, the only effect that can be observed is the influence of a preceding covert mark. In this environment, verbs are overtly marked only 59% of the time in Samaná and 66% in the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Without consideration of the discourse at large as virtually all previous analyses, this result is straightforward. However, looking at a relative tense system in more detail reveals that the patterns of marked and unmarked forms cannot be completely understood from the marking patterns between two related verbs only. Since Table (26) is limited to the first preceding reference verb, a complete perspective of the marking patterns across more than two verbs is impossible. Furthermore, the patterns that have been attested for a relative tense system suggest that the effect of preceding mark overlaps completely with that of temporal relationship: once an overt mark has occurred, it allows for the possibility of covertly marked forms (if they refer to the same temporal sector), these covertly marked forms continue until the temporal reference changes, at which point another overt tense and/or aspect form occurs, and so on. Thus, the prediction would be that when temporal references changes, a mark surfaces and another one does not occur until a new change in temporal reference. That same mark, according to the claim made above, is the same one which promotes no following mark. Thus, in the case of no temporal reference change, i.e. coincidence temporal relationship, in which the verb in question is unmarked, the lack of mark may be due to the fact that it is one, in a sequence, of coincidence temporal relationships — exactly the pattern which would be predicted in a relative tense system. Thus, this cannot be used as counter evidence for a Creole-like grammar.

In order to conclusively determine whether the patterning evidenced here with respect to preceding reference mark can be used as evidence, either for or against the Creole hypothesis, it is necessary to do a cross-tabulation between preceding verbal mark and temporal relationship, i.e. whether there is there a change in temporal orientation or not. Table (27) below examines contexts in the Samaná English Corpus which clearly

differentiate these two possibilities: anterior and reorientation temporal relationships which represent a temporal change and coincidence and posterior temporal relationships which represent no temporal change. The figures refer to the percentage of overt marking that occurs in the environment of the three potential morphologies on the preceding reference verb. In contrast to what would be expected in a relative tense system, both contexts of temporal shift and contexts of temporal consistency are similarly marked with respect to the mark on the preceding reference verb — verbs following overtly marked verbs, either past or present temporal reference are marked similarly and more than verbs following covertly marked verbs. This result directly contradicts our hypothesis for a creole relative tense system.

Table (27) Percentage of overtly marked verbs according to the mark of the preceding reference verb and temporal relationship — Samaná English

Prec. ref. verb has:	Overt Mark (past temp ref)		Overt Mark (present temp ref)		Covert Mark	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Temporal change:						
ANTERIOR	89	142	86	254	73	29
REORIENTATION	88	533	88	138	77	94
No temporal change:						
COINCIDENCE	87	2015	86	49	76	173
POSTERIOR	71	976	[44	18]*	52	299

* Small number.

Furthermore, the effect of a preceding unmarked verb form, found to be quite strong in Table (26) which considers all temporal relationships, appears to diminish in anterior, reorientation and coincidence relationships. Here, the difference between marking rates on verbs which are preceding by a marked form and those preceded by a covert form is only approximately 10%. Where is the strong effect seen previously? Separate consideration of posterior temporal relationships shows that the effects of a preceding covert form appear quite strongly here — 71% vs. 52% (excluding consideration of

preceding present marked verbs which have a small number of tokens), distinguishing them from all other temporal relationship categories. The fact that this temporal relationship is attested to be functionally unique in languages in general is entirely consistent with this result. As such, these findings cannot be taken to reflect a Creole system as opposed to any other. Rather, they provide at least an initial suggestion that the effect of preceding reference mark is a universal counter-functional constraint operating on surface morphological forms. If so, then it directly contradicts functionalist explanations for relative tense marking patterns posited for a Creole system. Here, an overt mark produces an environment in which further marking does not occur since it is functionally redundant. The patterning we observe in these data, on the other hand demonstrates the opposite effect, a type of local concord (cf. (Poplack 1979)) which replicates marking within sequential verb phrases redundantly — marked forms lead to more marked forms and unmarked forms lead to more unmarked forms.

6.2.1.4. Contextual disambiguation

In Creoles, tense/aspect forms that are overtly marked on the surface are said to occur when there is no other disambiguating information in the immediate context, whereas the covertly marked forms are predicted to occur when there is some other time indication. Based on these claims, we hypothesize that if a Creole system is highly dependent on contextual features, then any disambiguating information in the immediate linguistic context should influence the marking on verbs, i.e. less marking if more temporal disambiguation; more marking if less temporal disambiguation. Given these claims, all linguistic features that could provide disambiguating information for the verb structures in our samples were tabulated. We considered a number of different features within the immediate linguistic environment: subordinating conjunctions, adverbs and verb particles.

6.2.1.5. Temporal conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions with temporal value are clauses which introduce a certain amount of time specification to the context, e.g. *when, before, since, after, as soon as*, etc. According to Bickerton (1975:150) temporal clauses are considered to be favourable to the deletion of aspect markers. As illustrated in Table (28) below, overt marking occurs slightly more frequently in an environment without a temporal conjunction, while contexts with temporal conjunctions demonstrate *less* marking. Thus, despite the fact that this result is consistent with Bickerton's claims and goes along with the Creole hypothesis, it is not very strong. The difference between the two contexts is virtually the same in the Ex-Slave Recordings and differs by only 10% in the Samaná English Corpus.

Table (28): Percentage of overtly marked verbs according to their occurrence in a clause containing a subordinating conjunction with temporal value

	[+conj.]		[-conj.]	
	%	tot N	%	tot N
Samaná English	73	730	82	7316
Ex-Slave Recordings	76	152	79	1962

The combined effects of temporal conjunction, which Bickerton (1975) defines as "temporal clause", and verbal aspect within the creole system lead him to predict that the environment most favourable to overt marking would be [+punctual, -temporal] environments, then [+punctual, +temporal] environments and finally [-punctual, -temporal] environments, presumably due to the disambiguating effects of these markers and hence the redundancy of the overt marker. A cross tabulation of these effects in the Samaná and Ex-Slave data indicate that this hypothesis is not entirely borne out. As can be seen in Table (29) below, (cf. also Table (23) above) non-punctual verbs are marked more than punctuals in both corpora. In Samaná English it is clearly the case that non-temporally marked clauses are marked more frequently than temporally marked ones. In the Ex-Slave Recordings this is true for [+punctual] verbs; [-punctuals] on the other hand show very little difference

between contexts with and without temporal conjunctions. Also note the striking similarity in marking rates between in the two corpora.

Thus, as we have seen previously, the behaviour of punctual and non-punctual verbs in this particular analysis of the data is not consistent with the Creole hypothesis. Marking patterns in temporal clauses; however, do function in accordance with what Bickerton predicts for both corpora — temporal conjunctions inhibit marking. Since this has never been tested in any English variety it cannot be strictly discounted as a non-English pattern, especially in light of the fact that data from dialectal English varieties show at least some tendency towards less marking in temporal clauses. If it is the case that marking in general is disfavored when there are other types of disambiguation, then this could be a generalized "functional" effect. We return to this question below in further analyses of these data.

Table (29): Distribution of marking in according to punctuality and temporal conjunction

	Samaná % marked	English tot N	Ex-Slave % marked	Recordings tot N
[-punctual, -temporal]	88	4211	81	1135
[-punctual, +temporal]	83	268	83	68
[+punctual, -temporal]	73	3105	75	424
[+punctual, +temporal]	67	462	67	47

6.2.1.6. Adverbs

In the Creole literature there are at least two opposing points of view with regard to the relationship of tense marking to the presence of adverbs. Mufwene (1984) suggests that covertly marked verbs in a Creole system are expected to occur more frequently with adverbials, e.g. *yesterday, then, three days ago*. Bickerton (1975:160), on the other hand, claims that the presence of an adverbial seems to have the effect of *reinforcing* the [+punctual] marking of the verb, and thus its overt mark — two essentially contradictory

claims. In contrast to both of them, however, the presence of an adverb in our data has very little effect on the marking of verbs. Although contexts with adverbs are marked slightly less often than those that aren't, the differences are very slight.

Table (26): Distribution of overtly marked verbs according to their occurrence in the environment of an adverb

	[+Adverb]		[-Adverb]	
	%	tot N	%	tot N
Samaná English	79	1020	81	7026
Ex-Slave Recordings	76	208	79	1906

6.2.1.7. Particles

Although not specifically mentioned in the creole literature, an additional feature of the linguistic environment which provides information about the verb's interpretation is the particle attached to the main verb. As such they can be construed as another item which might have a disambiguating effect on tense/aspect morphology and thus on whether the overt or covert marker will appear. In this case, Samaná English demonstrates that overall marking on verbs is not influenced by whether or not a particle occurs with the main verb, as can be seen in Table (30) below. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, however, the presence of a verbal particle does exert an effect. Here, 81% of all contexts without particles are overtly marked, but only 63% of those that appear with particles are marked.

Table (30): Percentage of overtly marked verbs according to their occurrence in the environment of a particle

	[+particle]		[-particle]	
	%	tot N	%	tot N
Samaná English	77	667	81	7379
Ex-Slave Recordings	63	172	81	1942

6.2.1.8. Discourse context

Some of the work on past temporal reference morphology in Creoles has found that discourse context is an important factor in verbal marking patterns. For example, in Rickford's (1977) analyses, he found that the Creole punctual/non-punctual distinction was not operational in narrative discourse in his Guyanese data; however, he apparently combines both narrative complicating action and non-complicating action clauses in his category for 'narratives'. In the earlier distributional analysis of our data, we discovered significant parallels between non-narrative discourse and non-complicating action narrative discourse but significant *differences* between these two as opposed to narrative complicating action clauses. For this reason, unless otherwise stated, our analyses here divide the discourse factor group into narrative *complicating action* clauses as opposed to all other clauses.

In Table (31) below it is clear that both of our corpora make a distinction between these two contexts with respect to overt vs. covert marking. This effect is particularly strong in Samaná English where overt marking appears only 59% of the time in narrative complicating action clauses and 85% of the time in the non-narrative contexts.

Table (31): Percentage of overtly marked verbs according to discourse context.

	Narrative Complicating Action		Non-narrative	
	%	tot N	%	tot N
Samaná English	59	1365	85	6681
Ex-Slave Recordings	69	170	80	1944

According to (Dahl 1984) languages which make a distinction between different degrees of past time, as Creoles have been claimed to do, should have no special marking patterns due to narration since verbs are segregated according to their relative remoteness in time, not according to discourse type (see section 4.6.16. above). Clearly, this is not the case in Samaná English and although less obvious in the Ex-Slave Recordings, the

differences in marking rates between narrative complicating action clauses and non-complicating action clauses and other non-narrative discourse are still apparent.

6.2.2. Summary of factor-by-factor analysis - overt inflection

The factor-by-factor analysis presented above suggests that a number of factors condition the occurrence of the covertly marked verb, most of which operate in the opposite direction from what has been attested in previous analyses of the creole temporal reference system. First, contrary to any previous suggestions from the Creole literature, we observe *no* tendency for a covertly marked verb to be preceded by an overtly marked one. Rather, there is concord effect whereby overt marking leads to more marking and covert marking lead to more covert marking. Punctual verbs are not marked more frequently than non-punctuals. In fact, the opposite is true: non-punctuals receive more marking overall in both corpora. There is also no tendency for verbs to surface in their covert form in contexts in which they refer to the same temporal sector. Instead, we note a specialized effect in which posterior temporal relationships tend to be unmarked in both corpora. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, however, anterior temporal relationships are distinguished from all others by their tendency to be marked. Temporal disambiguation from adverbs, particles and temporal conjunctions across the two data sets is not clear cut. Although adverbs appear to exert little effect on surface morphology in either corpus, temporal conjunctions show a slight tendency to promote covert forms in both corpora. Particles, on the other hand, tend to promote covert forms in the Ex-Slave Recordings only. The largest effect on overt vs. covert inflection appears to come from the discourse context, where in narrative complicating action clauses verbs tend to be unmarked as opposed to all other contexts.

What is the relevance of these findings to the Creole hypothesis we outlined in section 6.1? First of all, the punctual/non-punctual distinction does not appear to go in the same direction as predicted by the Creolist literature. Second, temporally disambiguated contexts are not necessarily less likely to be marked. Third, and perhaps most important to

a creole system, there does not appear to be a generalized effect such that overt marking occurs when a new reference time is introduced, instead we note a somewhat specialized effect for posterior temporal relationships to be covertly marked in the context of a preceding covertly-marked form. Fourth, there appears to be a large effect exerted by the discourse context. All these findings, except for the fact that temporal conjunctions and particles promote covert marking in some cases, go against the generalizations suggestive of a Creole grammar. These results are depicted in Table (32) below:

Table (32). Feature-by-feature assessment of studied patterns — covert vs. overt marking

	Samaná Creole	English non-Creole	Ex-Slave Creole	Recordings non-Creole
Aspect		✓		✓
Temporal Relationship		✓		✓
Preceding Mark		✓		✓
Contextual Disambiguation:				
Temporal conjunctions	✓			n/a
Adverbs		n/a		n/a
Particles		n/a	✓	
Discourse context		✓		✓

Although tabulations of effects taken one at a time, such as those reported above, are informative, they do not reveal the *relative* importance of factor effects to each other, nor which of them are significant, particularly when all of them are considered simultaneously. This is especially important for those cases where there were only slight percentage differences. In order to assess which of these factors are actually significant to the marking process we analyze this data using the logistic regression procedures implemented in the variable rule program (Rand & Sankoff 1990). This estimates the true effects of each factor and removes artifacts of poor data distribution, correlated factors, or statistical fluctuations. This process will enable us to determine which of all these environmental factors contribute significantly to covert inflection when all are considered together, as well as to estimate the magnitude of individual factor effects.

6.2.3. Multivariate analysis of the contribution of factors to covert marking

Table (33a-b) displays the results of a variable rule analysis of the factors contributing to the probability that covert marking will be present in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. Higher numbers can be interpreted as favouring covert inflection, while lower ones disfavour it. The higher the figure, the greater the contribution of that factor to covert inflection.

Table (33a). Contribution of factors selected as significant to the presence of covert marking — Samaná English

(1) Discourse Context		(2) Preceding Mark	
Narrative Complicating Action	.62	Unmarked verb	.69
Non-narrative	.48	Marked verb (present temporal ref)	.56
		Marked verb (past temporal ref)	.46
(3) Punctuality		(4) Temporal Relationship	
Punctual	.59	Posterior	.57
Non-punctual	.43	Repetition	.53
		Coincidence	.49
		Reorientation	.40
		Anterior	.39
(5) Temporal Conjunction			
[+conj]	.57		
[-conj]	.49		
Factors not selected: Adverb, Particle.			

Table (33b). Contribution of factors selected as significant to the presence of covert marking — Ex-Slave Recordings

(1) Preceding Mark		(2) Particle	
Unmarked verb	.65	[+particle]	.67
Marked verb (past temporal ref)	.48	[-particle]	.49
Marked verb (present temporal ref)	.43		
(3) Punctuality		(4) Temporal Relationship	
Punctual	.56	Posterior	.52
Non-punctual	.47	Coincidence	.51
		Reorientation	.46
		Repetition	.45
		Anterior	.30
Factors not selected: Temporal conjunction, Adverb, Discourse context.			

Despite some differences, three features of the contextual environment selected as significant to overt vs. covert inflection are common to the two corpora — the preceding mark, the punctuality of the verb and the temporal relationship of the verb to its referent. The most significant of these is the preceding mark. Contrary to what is predicted by the creole system, and as we found in the marginals, a preceding marked verb does *not* promote the covert marker at all, in fact it shows a slight tendency *towards* marking. While this particular effect is consistent across both corpora, the ranking with respect to the other factors within the category differs. Samaná English has the ranking: unmarked > marked present > marked past and the Ex-Slave Recordings have the ranking: unmarked > marked past > marked present. The effect of verbal aspect is identical in both corpora exhibiting a tendency toward covert inflection with punctuals and overt inflection with non-punctuals, although this effect is more significant in Samaná English where it varies between .59 and .43. Finally, temporal relationship, is chosen as significant in both analyses. Although there is a slight difference within this category with respect to one temporal relationship (i.e. repetition), certain general patterns are revealed. In both data sets, posterior verbal relationships promote covert forms the most and anterior relationship inhibits them the most. Inbetween these two, relationships of coincidence are ranked after posterior, followed by reorientation. Relationships of repetition vary: in Samaná these contexts are ranked between posterior and repetition at the high end of the scale while in the Ex-Slave Recordings they are ranked at the low end of the scale between reorientation and anterior. Thus, the ranking posterior > coincidence > reorientation > anterior is parallel for both corpora.

In Table (33a) the discourse context in which the verb is located is chosen first by the multiple regression procedure. Here, narrative complicating action clauses contribute to covert inflection with a probability of .62. Although the marginals indicated that a similar effect was present in the Ex-Slave Recordings, in the variable rule analysis this factor is not chosen as significant to covert forms for this data set. Another difference between the two

corpora is that in Samaná English, covert inflection is promoted by the presence of a temporal conjunction, at a probability of .57, however, in the Ex-Slave data it is not significant. On the other hand, the Ex-Slave data exhibit a significant and fairly strong effect on covert forms from the presence of a verbal particle, at a probability of .67 compared to .49 with no particle, while in Samaná English this particular feature is not significant. This result is consistent with the marginals for this factor group.

An important observation that can be made with respect to this analysis is that the only results which point to a Creole-like grammar differ between the two corpora, i.e. the effects of temporal disambiguation (conjunctions, particles) and narrative discourse. These discrepancies in the data lead us to pursue the covert vs. overt analysis further. Recall that this analysis was constructed in order to examine features of the verbal environment that had been previously attested in the literature on Creole varieties. In so doing, we were required to combine verbal morphologies into groupings which were actually quite counter-intuitive for an English interpretation of this grammar. Because our analysis has not produced any consistent result which parallels a Creole interpretation for our BE data, we speculate whether the conflation of different *English* tense/aspect categories has produced the results we have noted above.

From our previous distributional analyses in section 5.0 we found that narrative and non-narrative contexts were highly differentiated with respect to morphological type (cf. Figure (23a-b)), in both corpora, with non-narrative contexts demonstrating a far greater range and overall frequency of marked forms and narrative complicating action contexts exhibiting the highest percentage of unmarked forms. This is entirely consistent with an English interpretation since it is in non-narrative contexts that the verb phrase has the potential to be quite elaborated while in complicating action clauses simplex forms, either simple PAST tense or HISTORICAL PRESENT occur, and occasionally PRESENT PROGRESSIVE. If the bipartite division between all marked and all unmarked verbs in this analysis crosscuts this possible narrative effect, then the fact that temporal

disambiguators function differently may be the result of the differential temporal disambiguation requirements of these contexts and not a general functional constraint on temporal disambiguation operating on surface verb morphology that we would expect in a creole-like system.

In order to examine this possibility we reanalyzed the data on covert vs. overt marking into two distinct analyses: 1) narrative contexts and 2) non-narrative contexts. Unfortunately the Ex-Slave Recordings have insufficient tokens to do a variable rule analysis in narrative complicating action contexts. Thus this analysis of the data includes complicating action and non-narrative contexts in Samaná English and non-narrative contexts only in the Ex-Slave Recordings. In the following section we outline the results of a factor-by-factor analysis. Certain factor groups, i.e. preceding temporal mark, punctuality, temporal relationship, were found to behave similarly across each of these contexts, as in the amalgamated analysis of covert vs. overt marking, and are not repeated here. We report each of the factor groups which were differentiated with respect to these different discourse contexts.

6.2.3.1. Temporal conjunctions

We found in our amalgamated analysis of all discourse contexts that temporal conjunctions contributed to covert marking in Samaná English; however, in separating the data into different discourse contexts (cf. section 4.2.5.16.) we find that this appears due to the effect of non-narrative discourse alone, as can be seen in Table (34). An opposite, although slight, effect can be seen in narrative complicating action contexts where more *overtly* marked forms occur in the environment of a temporal conjunction (64%) compared to environments with no conjunction (59%). In the Ex-Slave Recordings, on the other hand, (as in the previous analysis) temporal conjunctions seem to have little effect on marking at all.

Table (34): Percentage of overtly marked verbs according to their occurrence in a clause containing a subordinating conjunction with temporal value

	[+conj.]		[-conj.]	
	%	N	%	N
Samaná English				
Narrative CA	64	170	59	1195
Non-narrative	75	560	86	6121
Ex-Slaves				
Non-narrative	77	148	80	1796

6.2.3.2. Adverbs

The effect of an adverb on marking is also found to be restricted to one discourse environment. In Samaná English, narrative complicating action contexts are the sole location where the effect of an adverb can be observed. Here, we find that clauses with adverbs are marked more frequently (67%) than those without (58%). In non-narrative discourse, both in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings there is very little difference between marking based on the presence of an adverb.

Table (26): Distribution of overtly marked verbs according to their occurrence in the environment of an adverb

	[+Adverb]		[-Adverb]	
	%	N	%	N
Samaná English				
Narrative (CA only)	67	202	58	1163
Non-narrative	82	817	86	5864
Ex-Slaves	77	198	80	1746

6.2.3.3. Particles

The effects of a particle also appear to be a product of discourse context, although this is exhibited in different ways in our two corpora, see Table (35). In Samaná English a particle can be seen to exert a greater effect in narrative complicating action contexts than in non-narrative discourse, although in general, particles tend to promote marking. The

opposite is true for the Ex-Slave Recordings where, in non-narrative contexts verbs with particles tend not to be marked.

Table (35): Percentage of overtly marked verbs according to their occurrence in the environment of a particle

	[+particle]		[-particle]	
	%	tot N	%	tot N
Samaná English				
Narrative CA	76	200	56	1165
Non-narrative	86	467	78	6214
Ex-Slaves				
Non-narrative	62	147	82	1797

6.2.4. Summary of factor by factor comparisons

Our separation of different discourse contexts has uncovered a noteworthy finding: marking characteristics of narrative complicating action clauses as opposed to non-narrative discourse (both non-complicating action and non-narrative contexts) are distinct for some factor groups. In Samaná English, as far as the contribution of temporal indicators are concerned, in narrative discourse we observe no tendency towards covert marking when either adverbs or particles occur. In fact, the opposite is true — they tend to promote overt marking. In non-narrative discourse, on the other hand temporal conjunctions tend to promote the covert form. Thus although the ranking of some factor effects was generally parallel in narrative and non-narrative environments, i.e. preceding temporal mark, certain factors assumed particular importance in some contexts and not in others. This suggests that linguistic features such as punctuality and the effect of preceding surface morphology are more generally applicable to verbal structures in comparison with specifically temporal features such as ordering relationships and (different types of) disambiguation which appear to take on a more important role in specific contexts, i.e. narrative complicating action. Amalgamating all discourse contexts together then, caused an averaging out of these particular effects. We take these findings into account in our reanalysis of this factor-by-factor distribution by the multiple regression procedure of the variable rule program in

providing two views of the data based on discourse context: 1) narrative complicating action clauses, 2) non-narrative contexts.

Table (36) below displays the factor weights associated with covert marking in Samaná English. While considering the same variable as Table (33a) above, it is a subset containing only those verb forms which appear in complicating action clauses.

Table (36). Contribution of factors selected as significant to the presence of covert marking in narrative (complicating action) contexts — Samaná English

(1) Preceding Mark		(2) Particle		(3) Adverb	
Unmarked Verb	.65	[- particle]	.53	[- adverb]	.51
Marked Verb (present temporal ref)	.50	[+ particle]	.34	[+ adverb]	.43
Marked Verb (past temporal refer)	.43				

Factors not selected: Temporal conjunction, Temporal relationship to preceding reference verb, punctuality.

Table (36) shows that the greatest and most significant contribution to the presence of the covert mark is made by the mark on the preceding reference verbs. Here, we find the same ranking as we found in the amalgamated run: unmarked verb (.65) > marked present reference (.50) > marked past reference (.43). Clearly, a preceding unmarked verb favours the occurrence of another unmarked verb as might be expected in a Creole system, yet the opposite counter-functional effect is also true — a preceding marked verb, particularly one with a distinct *past* temporal inflection favours the occurrence of yet another *marked* verb. The presence of a clausal adverb disfavors covert marking at .43 while a verbal particle also disfavors covert marking at a probability of .34. These temporal disambiguating features work in the opposite direction to that expected in the creole system, promoting an overtly marked verb rather than a covertly marked one. All in all, these results show the antithesis to what would be expected in the described creole system: in the most heavily disambiguated context, namely narrative discourse, and the complicating action at that, the

presence of even further disambiguation of the verb either aspectually (e.g. particles) or temporally (e.g. adverbs, and preceding marked verbs) promotes overt marking rather than the expected covert form. In a more general linguistic sense these facts emphasize the redundancy of language, particularly in contexts where accurate temporal/spatial interpretation is crucial to the transmission of accurate information.

Table (37a) and (37b) display the factor weights associated with covert inflection in non-narrative discourse for Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. First of all, the effect of preceding mark is identical in both corpora with the ordered relationship: unmarked verb (.73) > marked present reference (.55) > marked past reference (.49). This is slightly different from the previous analyses of the Ex-Slave Recordings where marked past temporal reference verbs were ordered before marked present temporal reference verbs. The ranking of verbal probability is identical, however, with punctual verbs having a propensity to be covertly marked at a probability of .60 in Samaná English and .60 in the Ex-Slave Recordings compared to non-punctual verbs which show the opposite effect, tending to be covertly marked at a probability of only .44 and .48 respectively. A distinction between punctual and non-punctual verbs is expected in a Creole system, however, the patterning we observe here is in the opposite direction to that predicted. Moreover, by subcategorizing the data into different discourse environments, as we have done here, we demonstrate that this effect is also localized to non-narrative contexts since it is not selected in the run considering complicating action clauses only. Given the numerous non-punctual verbal morphologies in these data which correspond in form to Std E tense/aspect categories (e.g. habituals, perfects, progressives), these results are not surprising. These are likely marked more, purely because of the fact that there are no (or relatively less) simplification processes operating on their surface forms. The propensity toward overt forms in the non-punctual category is undoubtedly due to the combined pre-verbal (i.e. used to/would, have/had, was/were) and suffixal markers (i.e. V-ed1, V-ed2, V-ing) which make up these categories. In contrast, punctual verbs demonstrate a

propensity to be manifested as simple PAST tense in English, which as we know, undergo processes of consonant cluster simplification. If this is the case in these data, then it is not surprising that there is more covert morphology in punctual contexts. Temporal relationship is also found to be significant to the appearance of covert marking on verbs in non-narrative contexts in both corpora. The ranking of temporal relationship is also comparable to the results found for our amalgamated analysis. The general order of posterior > coincidence > reorientation > anterior is maintained. Finally, the two data sets are differentiated by the effects of temporal conjunctions and particles. In the Ex-Slave Recordings particles strongly promote covert inflection at a factor weight of .70, compared to .48 without, while in Samaná English this factor group is not selected as significant. In Samaná English, on the other hand, temporal conjunctions tend to promote covert inflection at a probability of .60 while in the Ex-Slave Recordings this factor group is not significant. This is the one factor in Samaná English which is consistent with a Creole hypothesis. It parallels Bickerton's (1975) suggestion that the temporal disambiguating effect of the conjunction promotes the covert form. Note however, that both temporal relationship and temporal conjunction, both syntactically generated means of temporal disambiguation, are only significant in non-narrative discourse in Samaná English, which, not coincidentally, is the context which relies on temporal disambiguation of this type.

Table (37a): Contribution of factors selected as significant to the presence of covert marking in non-narrative discourse — Samaná English.

(1) Preceding mark		(2) Punctuality	
Unmarked Verb	.73	[+punctual]	.60
Marked Verb (present temporal reference)	.55	[-punctual]	.44
Marked Verb (past temporal reference)	.49		
(3) Temporal relationship		(4) Conjunction	
Posterior	.59	[+conjunction]	.60
Repetition	.55	[- conjunction]	.49
Coincidence	.49		
Reorientation	.43		
Anterior	.43		

Factors not selected: Particle, Adverb.

Table (37b): Contribution of factors selected as significant to the presence of covert marking in non-narrative discourse — Ex-Slave Recordings.

(1) Particle		(2) Preceding mark	
[+particle]	.70	Unmarked Verb	.67
[-particle]	.48	Marked Verb (present temporal reference)	.46
		Marked Verb (past temporal reference)	.48
(3) Temporal relationship		(4) Punctuality	
Posterior	.50	[+punctual]	.60
Repetition	.46	[-punctual]	.48
Coincidence	.52		
Reorientation	.44		
Anterior	.29		

Factors not selected: Temporal conjunction, Adverb.

Our analysis of Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings according to covert vs. overt marking has demonstrated that only one constraint is consistent across both narrative and non-narrative discourse: the effect of the preceding mark where the propensity

for covert inflection is greatly enhanced when the preceding mark is also covert. This result has appeared consistently in all our analyses up to now. While the rank ordering of preceding present temporal reference marks compared to past temporal reference marks has varied from the first analysis to the second, in the Ex-Slave Recordings this may be due the relatively small number of tokens in the present temporal reference cell (N=83 vs. N=1784 for past temporal reference and N=247 for preceding covert mark overall; cf. Table (26)). Aside from the regularity of this effect, narrative complicating action in comparison to non-narrative contexts differentiated themselves on all other counts in Samaná English where the two contexts could be examined separately. Here, factors found to be significant for narrative discourse (particles, adverbs) were not found to be significant for non-narrative discourse and vice-versa, (temporal relationship, temporal conjunction) suggesting that the covert/overt dichotomy, at least in Samaná English, may well be related to differing temporal organization strategies in different discursive modes rather than a syntactic conditioning effect. Why would this effect only be visible in Samaná English?

Recall that from our previous distributional analyses of these data we know that one of the differences between our two data sets is that a large percentage of the Samaná English Corpus consists of structured narratives, while the Ex-Slave Recordings are comparatively lacking in this area. Instead, they contain a proportionately large percentage of non-personal description of past events. We have seen previously this difference has a significant impact on the distribution of verbal morphology. In conjunction with the results we have just described, it may well make a difference to the conditioning effects of linguistic features such as adverbs, conjunctions, particles and local verbal morphology and the marking of temporal relationship as well. What we are suggesting here is that just as the organization of time and events differ between iconically-ordered complicating action narrative clauses and non-narrative descriptive, explanatory or other types of clauses, so do the other linguistic elements associated with temporal reference. If this is true, then the discrepancies between the two data sets that we observe here, have less to do with essential

underlying differences in the temporal reference systems of these varieties than they do of the different contextual scenarios present in the data. We hypothesize that these require varying linguistic means, both in terms of the tense/aspect morphologies used to represent them as well as the different non-verbal elements used to differentiate their temporal reference and inter-relationships.

This is, of course, exactly what we would expect from an English-like system. In fact, as we have explained, the basic dichotomy between marked and unmarked verbs that this analysis posited is actually counter-intuitive for an English system since it disregards the very different marking patterns that are known to be characteristic of the various English tense/aspect categories. Our aim in structuring the analysis in this way, however, was to approach the data, not from an English perspective, but from a Creole one.

With respect to a Creole interpretation of these data, this analysis demonstrated that the contextual effects claimed to be operative in a relational tense system show regular conditioning, but in the direction opposite to that predicted. Covert marking promotes covert marking, while overt marking promotes overt marking. Disambiguating features from context also play a role, but often in the direction counter to the creole hypothesis. In Samaná English, temporal relationship and conjunction are relevant to non-narrative discourse, while those of contextual disambiguation (adverbs and particles) are relevant to narrative complicating action discourse. For example, the presence of adverbs and particles in Samaná English narrative clauses led to more marked verbs. This is clearly opposite to what would be expected in a Creole. In narrative complicating action contexts temporal disambiguation is at its maximum, yet overt marking occurs most frequently, even within the confines of this highly disambiguated context, in environments which are still further disambiguated with adverbs. In other words contexts with adverbs contain more overt verbal morphology than those that don't contain adverbs. This result is even more impressive when we consider that in narrative complicating action clauses, *all* the verbs have the same time reference; in fact, the defining characteristic of this discourse context is

that the events are sequentially ordered iconically in time. Therefore there is no obvious call for changes of tense forms in relation to the reference time which would be predicted in a Creole hypothesis to be the foremost location for the appearance of overt forms. The fact that overt tense forms do occur here, especially in contexts that are heavily disambiguated, suggests that their appearance is not conditioned by factors predicted by a relative tense system.

What our results *do* suggest is that an English interpretation of the covert vs. overt marking patterns is more explanatory than a Creole relative tense hypothesis. Given an English interpretation of the grammar, our results confirm that grouping together in one category all the verbal forms which are marked opposed to those that are not marked will interact with the narrative/non-narrative distinction. Moreover, this effect will be distinct from purely linguistic factors operating surface tense/aspect morphology. On a more general level, this implies that the factors we have examined reflect both general temporal organization influences *and* the essentially different temporal/aspectual requirements of these two discourse contexts suggesting, in fact, the varying mechanisms by which these phenomena operate within different discursive domains.

We turn now, to a variety of other analyses which, although smaller in sample size, provide for the distribution of different morphological types that occur in these data, which have, up to now, been subsumed under the category of overt marking. These types, as we have shown in our distributional analysis, appear to represent different tense/aspect categories which are specialized to particular temporal relationships and occur with particular temporal indicators. These factors are not apparent in an analysis which does not subcategorize them according to type. For example, viewed from a Std-E perspective, including forms such as V-ed1 and *have/had* + V-ed2 in one analysis belies the historical and contemporary attestations of the distinctness of these two categories. Despite the fact that they are interchangeable in some contexts, as we have seen above, contextual factors such as adverbs, temporal conjunctions, particles etc. serve to differentiate the two.

Amalgamating them into the same category confounds these differences. Thus, our subsequent analyses will separate the overt morphological types in our data into different variable processes which will elucidate variation between marked and unmarked forms according to four different hypotheses: 1) the suffix deletion hypothesis, which includes only those weak verbs which end or have the potential to end in a consonant cluster, and examines the alternation between V-base and V-ed1 morphology, 2) the invariant base hypothesis⁶⁸, which includes only strong verbs and examines the alternation between V-base and V-ed1 morphology, and finally the auxiliary deletion hypothesis, which includes two different variables, 3) the alternation between was/were V-ing, am/is/are and Ø V-ing and 4) the alternation between Ø V-ed2 and have/had V-ed2. We turn to these analyses in the following sections.

6.3. Suffix deletion

A variable involving suffix deletion is necessarily restricted to the variation between weak V-base and V-ed1 forms as well as that between weak V-base and V-ed2 forms preceded by an auxiliary. This examination of the data addresses the deletion hypothesis for suffixal inflections by extending the procedure utilized in previous analyses of this variable to include the putative conditioning factors of a creole grammar *and* the primordial phonological factors attested in the literature on BEV and Std E in the same analysis⁶⁹. This involves a much smaller subsample of the data than the previous examination as the delimitation of the variable context is restricted to verbs whose tense morpheme is indicated by a final consonant.

⁶⁸ The assumption underlying this hypothesis is that some strong verbs regularize their morphological paradigm so that their V-base form is extended to three principal parts of the verb — present tense, preterit, and past participle under certain conditions. This hypothesis maintains, however, that the past tense morpheme is present on an underlying level.

⁶⁹ Treating both types of conditioning factors was impossible in the previous analysis due to the nature of the variable, which crosscuts a wide range of English tense/aspect categories.

Many researchers have examined the variation in marked (V-ed1) and unmarked (V-base) weak verbs used for past temporal reference in BEV in terms of deletion. Perhaps one of the most important suggestions to be addressed with respect to the deletion hypothesis and its relationship to Creole or English grammar, however, is one made by Bickerton in 1975. In this classic work on Guyanese Creole Bickerton examined a subset of his total data sample in which deletion phenomena could potentially occur. Despite the fact that he found the influence of following phonological environment to be similar to that found for BEV (as attested for example by (Fasold 1972; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969)) — he questioned whether phonological factors are really the *primary* ones in the acquisition of (simple) PAST tense morphology in a decreolizing Creole. Instead, he proposed that research which focuses on purely phonological factors fails to unmask the deeper syntactic effects characteristic of the underlying Creole grammar. In fact, he presents evidence which he claims shows "quite clearly that grammatical constraints outweigh phonological ones" (Bickerton 1975:154-5) and suggests that BEV should be re-examined along these lines. While both aspectual and phonological factors have been considered in some studies (e.g. (Tagliamonte & Poplack 1988)) an examination which treats them simultaneously within the same analysis so that their relative importance may be assessed has not yet, to our knowledge, been done.

In order to address this important point, we add to the factor groups outlined in section 6.1 above, two phonological groups, preceding and following phonological context⁷⁰ (cf. section 4.5.3 above). Following the argumentation presented in Bickerton (1975), we hypothesize that if the underlying system of Samaná English or the Ex-Slave Recordings is Creole-like, the phonological factor groups may exert some effect, but this would not be primary. Either they would not be selected as significant, or they would be

⁷⁰ This is the only variable process we examine which has the potential for phonological effects such as these. The fact that the variable involves presence or absence of an additional consonant in word final position has ramifications for the verb's internal phonological structure. Other past temporal reference morphologies, i.e. auxiliaries and/or suppletion, are inherently exempt from such conditioning.

significant, but less so than aspectual factors. While no research has ever shown that phonological factors are comparatively more significant for BEV, WEV or Std-E than other linguistic effects, the widespread attestation of these factors, suggests, at least implicitly, that they will be highly implicated in any variable conditioning on this variable in an English-like variety.

The context of variation in this analysis is defined rigorously as all and *only* those environments where a Std E suffixal inflection is unambiguously expected and consonant cluster simplification is possible. This excludes all negatives, all [+syllabic]⁷¹ verbs, and all neutralized contexts⁷². Strong verbs, verbs marked for habitual (e.g. *would/used to*) etc., are also excluded. None of these allow for the possibility of deletion.

A problem which has important ramifications for circumscribing this variable context arises from verb forms which, in Std E, are ambiguous as to whether their surface form is the result of suffixal inflection or auxiliary deletion/reduction, as with the verb *recommend* in example (202a) below. In these environments it is possible for either form to be underlying. As we have seen in section 5.2 above such verbs occur in Samaná English and they are quite prevalent in the Ex-Slave Recordings. Their presence poses a problem for this particular analysis since it is unclear whether they should be included in a variable context for suffixal deletion or not, particularly in light of the fact that historical attestations as well as contemporary dialectal patterns allow for the reduction of habitual auxiliary markers in the same contexts, as can be seen in the example in (202b) (repeated from example (41a) in section 3.2.1.3 above (Ihalašinen 1976)). The fact that these are all

⁷¹ Fasold and Wolfram (1975:64-64) however, describe a process by which the *-ed* of a V-base verb ending in *-t* or *-d* can be reduced to *-d* alone both in BEV and in standard English. They describe complex but regular rules which reduce the verbs *wanted* and *started* to *want[d]* and *star[d]*. These forms, however "are common in all varieties of American English and are not considered nonstandard" (ibid. p. 63). There is no attestation of phonological effects however. Thus these verbs are excluded from the analysis of suffixal deletion.

⁷² Note that the neutralized contexts described here has never been mentioned in any creole-based analysis of morphology, although it must surely occur. Thus, it is unknown whether such contexts were treated as meaningful covertly marked verbs or excluded from the analyses.

unmarked *non-punctual* verbs, identical in surface form and context to those Bickerton claims illustrate the classic Creole distinction between marked punctuals and unmarked non-punctuals, only confounds this problem. Thus, we have another case of one surface form and two potential sources.

- (202a) Sometime ones *would meet* over here, others *would meet* yonder. Well, they'll *get* together, they'll *pray* and the book [*Ø or would ?*] *recommend* [*Ø or Id ?*] them to God and thing. And that *was* the way.
- (202b) It was like this in them days, years ago, you see. A lot of the villagers *did rent* this land, this peat land, *did rent* a plot, you see, half an acre, you see, for ten years, perhaps *take* a lease on this land for ten years, you see, for to excavate it, you see. (Ihalainen 1976:618)

Since there is no way to unambiguously separate potential auxiliary sites from the other contexts, we include them in this analysis. If they had been excluded the actual percentages of marked forms would have been higher. As we will see below, however the phonological patterning is still strong, despite these inclusions.

6.3.1. Factor by factor distributional analysis

6.3.1.1. Phonological effects

One of the most widely accepted views concerning the deletion of suffixal inflections in BEV and in all varieties of Std and dialectal English for that matter, is that its occurrence is conditioned by the surrounding phonological environment. This finding constitutes the crux of the argument that PAST tense is part of the underlying grammar of BEV. This conclusion is based on a view of language in which a set of syntactic rules generate forms on which phonological rules may subsequently operate. Thus, if insertion of a PAST tense morpheme according to aspectual and discursive considerations were entirely responsible for the *-ed* forms, there should be no way of differentiating the phonological environments surrounding them. If, on the other hand, the deleted variants result from the application of phonological rules to syntactically generated *-ed*, the

distribution of these alternate forms may be expected to be influenced by the adjacent phonological segments. In such an analysis underlying marked verbs are assumed to give rise to weaker (or deleted) variants.

6.3.1.1.1. Following phonological environment

Tagliamonte and Poplack (1988) showed that a following consonant promoted deletion of the suffixal inflection more than a following vowel in Samaná English. In the present analysis, which takes into account a far greater number of verbs, a similar result is obtained and these findings are corroborated both in direction and proportion across our two data sets as can be seen in Table (38) below. This is a far greater effect than that found by Schneider (1989) for the Ex-Slave Narratives. It is comparable, however, to Bickerton's (1975) figures at 13% overt marking in consonantal environments and 33% overt marking in vocalic environments.

Table (38): Effect of following phonological environment on the deletion of final inflectional suffixes

	Following segment			
	Vowel %Ø	N	Consonant %Ø	N
Samaná English	38	675	61	765
Ex-Slave Recordings	19	144	48	147

6.3.1.1.2. Preceding phonological effect

Preceding phonological environment, as illustrated by the phonological characteristics of the stem form of the verbs, also contributes a considerable effect, as can be seen in Table (39). Verbs that end in a vowel retain their inflections more than verbs that end in a consonant, which in turn retain their inflections more than verbs that end in two consonants.

Table (39): Effect of verb type on the deletion of final suffixes

	V##		C##		CC##	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	21	415	61	937	74	92
Ex-Slaves	21	84	37	194	62	13

In addition to the phonological factor groups, we include in this analysis of suffixal deletion all those factors relevant to a creole grammar that were included in the Creole hypothesis analysis. Keep in mind, however, that the present analysis, although a subset of the same data presented in section 6.2, are qualitatively different with respect to morphology. The preceding analysis was not limited to a particularly *type* of past temporal reference morphology. Since we focussed on marker presence or absence overall, all markers for past time, e.g. *used to*, *would*, *was/were* + V-ing, *had* + V, *have* + V, V-ed1 etc, were included in the analysis. The present analysis treats *only* weak verbs either as single main verbs, e.g. *I walked* or *I walkØ*, or as part of a compound tense preceded by *have/had*, e.g. *I have/had walked*. or *I have/had walkØ*. In other words, only contexts which contain or might potentially have contained a suffixal inflection.

6.3.1.2. Aspect

Our results from the analysis of covert vs. overt marking indicated that punctuality had some effect on marking in our data. We found this to be the result of the fact that the majority of unmarked forms in the data were single main verbs, which are also used to mark punctual contexts. In contrast, a wide spectrum of different tense/aspect marking combinations were used to indicate various non-punctual contexts, e.g. *used to*, *would*, *was/were* + V-ing etc. In this analysis of V-ed1 or V-ed2 vs. V-base verbs we observe that there is very little difference between punctual and non-punctual contexts in either data set, as can be seen in Table (40), although the proportions are similar in Samaná and the Ex-

Slave Recordings. This suggests that the punctual/non-punctual distinction does not regulate the appearance of V-base weak verbs in either data base. This is exactly the prediction that would be made if these forms represented the Std E simple PAST tense, which crosscuts a wide variety of different aspectual readings, with no particular propensity to concentrate in any one of those contexts. The fact that punctuals tend to be marked slightly more than non-punctuals is likely indicative of the presence of ambiguous verbs of the type described in example (202a-b) in section (6.3).

Table (40): Rates of V-base morphology on verbs as a function of verbal aspect

	Punctual		Non-punctual	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	49	970	53	474
Ex-Slave Recordings	31	159	36	132

6.3.1.3. Temporal relationship

Table (41) depicts the rates of V-base morphology as a function of temporal relationship.

Table (41): Rates of V-base morphology as a function of temporal relationship to the reference verb

	Reorientation		Coincidence		Anterior		Repetition		Posterior	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Samaná English	53	540	50	286	52	110	50	181	53	540
Ex-Slave Recordings	59	27	40	143	25	8	19	31	18	57

If a creole analysis best explains these data we would expect a regular, systematic effect whereby marked V-ed1 verbs appear in environments in which there is a change in temporal relationship. However, in Table (41) we find there is no difference in marking

rates across any of the temporal relationships in Samaná English; the rates of V-base morphology for all temporal relationships hover around 50%. This is exactly what we would expect in a Std E paradigm where simple PAST tense is undifferentiated with respect to this feature of the contextual environment. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, on the other hand, marking rates differ substantially according to this particular feature. Like the results for overall marked/unmarked patterning, posterior and repetition temporal relationship shows the least deletion, at 18% and 19% respectively, while reorientation and coincidence relationships show the most, at 59% and 40%. While this is *partially* consistent with the Creole expectation, it is not entirely so. Reorientation relationships would be expected to exhibit high rates of overt marking since they serve to reestablish the reference time, yet here they are the most frequently unmarked. While posterior temporal relationships would be expected to exhibit low rates of overt marking, here they are the most frequently *marked*. Thus, it is not clear why these effects would appear, although the relatively small number of tokens per cell, e.g. N=8 for anterior temporal relationship and N=31 for repetition, may be insufficient to produce a regular marking rate.

6.3.1.4. Preceding mark

Table (42) depicts the rates of V-base forms as a function of the morphological mark on the preceding reference verb. Consistent with our previous results for all morphologically marked forms, in both corpora, preceding unmarked verbs promote the unmarked form. While the difference between preceding unmarked verbs and marked verbs (either past (V-ed1) or unambiguous present reference (V-s or V-base)) is quite pronounced in Samaná English, i.e. 70%, 46% and 55% respectively, this difference is not nearly as obvious in the Ex-Slave Recordings where marking rates between preceding unmarked verbs, i.e. V-base (37%) and preceding marked verbs, V-ed1, (34%) are very close. Again, the relatively small number of total tokens in the unmarked (N=38) and marked (present temp-reference) (N=12) categories may account for this.

Table (42): Rates of V-base morphology as a function of the preceding reference mark⁷³

	Unmarked verb		Marked verb (past temp. ref.)		Marked verb (present temp. ref.)	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Samaná	70	233	46	1122	55	109
Ex-Slaves.	37	38	34	241	25	12

6.3.1.5. Contextual disambiguation

6.3.1.5.1. Temporal conjunctions

Table (43) depicts the effect of temporal conjunctions on V-base forms. Samaná English V-base forms are more frequent in the environment of a temporal conjunction, although in the Ex-Slave Recordings this effect is in the opposite direction.

Table (43): Rates of V-base morphology as a function of temporal conjunction

	[+conjunction]		[-conjunction]	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	60	168	51	1239
Ex-Slave Recordings	30	33	34	258

6.3.1.5.2. Adverbs

As can be seen in Table (44) below, adverbs have little effect on marking in Samaná English, but in the Ex-Slave Recordings contexts with adverbs tend to be marked less frequently. This may be due to the small number of tokens in the [+adverb] category, i.e. N=19.

⁷³ The total number of tokens in this table exclude those that were coded as "speaker change" since this context is not relevant to the process under consideration.

Table (44): Rates of V-base morphology in clauses containing an adverb

	[+adverb]		[-adverb]	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	50	225	51	1239
Ex-Slave Recordings	26	19	34	272

6.3.1.5.3. Particles

Table (45) depicts the percentages of V-base forms with and without particles. Like the results found for adverbs, Samaná English shows no tendency towards a decrease in marking in the environment of a particle. In the Ex-Slave Recordings there is an effect towards less marking in these contexts. This is consistent with a Creole hypothesis which would predict that such disambiguating features would lead to less marking. Once again this may be due to the sparse tokens in the [+particle] category, i.e. N=16.

Table (45): Rates of V-base verbs as a function of adjoining particle

	[+particle]		[-particle]	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	47	139	51	1325
Ex-Slave Recordings	19	16	35	275

6.3.1.6. Discourse context

Discourse context was found to exert a strong effect on covert inflection in our first analysis of verbal morphology. In this analysis we find that our two corpora are quite different — narrative contexts in Samaná English have a much greater propensity towards deletion than non-narrative contexts while in the Ex-Slave Recordings, non-narrative contexts have a greater degree of deletion. This can be seen in Table (46) below. As with previous factor-by-factor examinations, small numbers may affect this result. This is

particularly the case in this context where the Ex-Slave Recordings has only 31 verb tokens in narrative complicating action clauses.

Table (46): Rates of V-base verbs as a function of discourse context

	Narrative		Non-narrative	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	60	349	48	1115
Ex-Slave Recordings	26	31	35	260

6.3.2. Summary of factor-by-factor analysis: V-base vs. V-ed1

The factor-by-factor analysis presented above for the hypothesized deletion of suffixal inflections indicates a number of tendencies. First, and foremost, we have shown that there is consistent phonological conditioning on the appearance of V-base morphology in weak verbs manifested as a tendency toward preservation of suffixal inflection in the environment of a preceding and/or following vowel and a tendency toward deletion in the environment of a preceding and/or following consonant. This effect has been widely attested in other studies of consonant deletion and cluster simplification and is consistent across both the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings. As far as verbal aspect is concerned, we observe that in both corpora there is a slight tendency towards more deletion in non-punctual environments which we have attributed to the inclusion of V-base verbs which could potentially be due to reduced habitual auxiliaries (i.e. *would* and/or *used to*). As for the contribution of other conditioning features, the two corpora can be distinguished on all other counts. Different disambiguating features from context play a role depending on the data base. In Samaná English, temporal conjunctions demonstrate more deletion, as do preceding unmarked verbs, whereas adverbs, particles and the different temporal relationships show no effect. In the Ex-Slave Recordings on the other hand,

temporal conjunctions exhibit little effect while adverbs and particles tend to promote deletion. These differences suggest a varying reliance on contextual disambiguation for the realization of surface morphology. While verbs in Samaná English do not appear to be affected by temporal disambiguation (except temporal conjunctions), those in the Ex-Slave Recordings do. In general this would point to a more Creole-like grammar in the latter. In other factor groups, i.e. preceding mark, temporal relationship and discourse context, some of the factors contain very few tokens which may skew the relevant patterning for these factors. Table (47) summarizes these results in a feature-by-feature assessment of Creole and/or English-like patterning. The variable rule analysis that follows will permit a clarification of these tendencies.

Table (47). Feature-by-feature assessment of studied patterns — suffix deletion

	Samaná Creole	English English	Ex-Slave Creole	Recordings English
Phonological Effects:				
Prec. phono. envir.		✓		✓
Fol. phono. envir.		✓		✓
Aspect		✓		✓
Temporal Relationship		✓	?	?
Preceding Mark	?	?	?	?
Contextual Disambiguation:				
Temporal conjunctions	✓	?	small	N's
Adverbs		✓	small	N's
Particles		✓	small	N's
Discourse context		✓	small	N's

6.3.3. Multivariate analysis of the contribution of factors to suffix deletion

As we explained previously, the factor-by-factor analysis does not assess the statistical significance of individual factors. It cannot determine whether all are in fact significant especially in light of the small differences in some factor groups and disproportionate cell sizes, nor which will turn out to be significant when they are all

considered simultaneously. Perhaps most importantly we will be able to address Bickerton's suggestion for a reanalysis of BEV along the lines of the creole hypothesis was that, although phonological factors were in operation in weak verbs, they were not the most *significant* conditioning effect on verbal marking in (Guyanese) creole. His claim was that verbal aspect would be the most relevant conditioning effect, pointing to the underlying creole grammar. The logistic regression procedure outlined above can effectively address this important issue since it is specifically designed to assess the *relative* importance of different factors which operate simultaneously on linguistic processes. This will enable us to determine which factors, phonological or aspectual, have the most significant influence on the appearance of V-base forms in these data.

The results of our variable rule analysis for Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings are depicted in Table (48a) and (48b) respectively. The tables show that the greatest, most significant and most internally consistent factors conditioning suffixal deletion in both corpora are phonological! In both data sets preceding phonological environment is chosen first and following phonological environment is chosen second: deletion is favoured in contexts preceded and followed by a consonant and disfavoured in contexts preceding and following a vowel. The additional conditioning features found to be significant diverge with respect to the two corpora. Clearly Bickerton's prediction is not borne out by this BE data.

Table (48a). Contribution of factors selected as significant to the deletion of suffixal inflection of weak verbs in all discourse contexts — Samaná English

(1) Preceding phonological environment		(2) Following phonological environment	
Two consonants	.75	Consonant	.62
Consonant	.61	Vowel	.37
Vowel	.22		
(3) Preceding mark		(4) Temporal conjunction	
Unmarked verb	.69	Temporal conjunction	.63
Marked verb: (present temporal reference)	.51	No temporal conjunction	.48
Marked verb: (past temporal reference)	.46		
Factors not selected: Particle, Punctuality, Temporal relationship, Adverb, Discourse context.			

Table (48b). Contribution of factors selected as significant to the deletion of suffixal inflection of weak verbs in all discourse contexts — Ex-Slave Recordings

(1) Preceding phonological environment		(2) Following phonological environment	
Two consonants	.76	Consonant	.69
Consonant	.55	Vowel	.31
Vowel	.35		
(3) Temporal relationship			
Reorientation	.79		
Coincidence	.55		
Repetition	.42		
Anterior	.34		
Posterior	.31		
Factors not selected: Discourse context, Particle, Punctuality, Preceding Mark, Temporal conjunction, Adverb.			

In Samaná English a preceding unmarked verb contributes significantly to deletion with a probability of .69 while a preceding present-marked verb exerts very little effect at .51. A preceding marked form with past temporal reference promotes the retention of

inflection with a relative weight of .46. This is the same order as we saw previously for our analysis of covert vs. overt inflection overall. The last significant factor contributing to suffixal deletion in Samaná English is the presence of a temporal conjunction. Here, deletion is favoured at .63 in environments containing a temporal conjunction while those without favour retention of the inflection at .48. There are, to our knowledge, no (white) English attestations of this type of effect either historic or contemporary; however, we have previously alluded to the fact that data from Hughes & Trudgill (1979) suggest its presence. The results from the Ex-Slave Recordings, on the other hand, indicate that the only conditioning feature contributing to variable suffixal inflection above and beyond the phonological effects is temporal relationship. Here, posterior and anterior contexts distinguish themselves by inhibiting deletion with a relative weights of .31 and .34 respectively, while coincidence and reorientation contexts promote the absence of verbal inflection at .55 and .79 respectively. Again, such effects have never been attested in any English-like variety. As for the Creole hypothesis, these results crosscut the expected tendency. Under a Creole analysis, marking would be expected in the environment of a temporal change, e.g. anterior or reorientation contexts; however, here anterior favours marking, while reorientation favours deletion.

The Samaná English data have also been coded for extra-linguistic factors, i.e. sex and education. When these are included in this variable rule run, education is added to the list of chosen significant factor groups, ranked fourth after preceding mark with relative weights of .56 for uneducated and .45 for educated speakers.

All in all the results for the suffix deletion analysis make it readily apparent that there is no underlying Creole patterning on the distribution of marked (V-ed1) and unmarked (V-base) forms in either of these varieties. In fact verbal aspect is not chosen as being significant at all in either corpus! The unmarked variants in these cases are clearly the result of phonological simplification and not the delayed acquisition of past tense morphology in non-punctual environments. The multiple regression procedure discards all

of the temporal disambiguation factor groups except for preceding mark and temporal conjunction in Samaná English and temporal relationship in the Ex-Slave Recordings. These, however, as we have seen in the marginals, operate in ways which deviate substantially from what would be expected in a Creole. The only factor which is clearly consistent with previously-attested patterns for a Creole system is the effect of temporal conjunctions towards V-base forms — the one factor, which, as we noted before, appears to function similarly in dialectal varieties of English. This fact tends to diminish the plausibility that it is a purely Creole-like pattern. The addition of extra-linguistic factors to the Samaná English Corpus run indicate that exposure to education has a significant effect on suffixal deletion, although smaller than the pervasive phonological effects, nor the general constraint on marking patterns from the preceding reference verb. Most importantly, these results show that phonological effects are *not* masking any deeper grammatical distinctions in these data. Thus, we can reasonably assume that Std E simple PAST tense is in fact the underlying category represented by both V-ed1 and V-base forms in these data.

6.4. Suppletion vs. V-base

Our next analysis treats the variation between V-ed1 verbs by suppletion vs. their V-base forms. The present analysis, like our analysis of suffix deletion, involves only a subset of the same data presented in section 6.2. The present analysis treats *only* strong single main verbs, e.g. *I come* or *I came*. In other words, only contexts which contain or might potentially have contained a suppletive inflection.

This variable has never, to our knowledge, been studied quantitatively with the purpose of exploring whether or not syntactic and grammatical factors such as those outlined here would have an effect on their V-base form. Aside from the obvious lack of phonological conditioning on strong verbs, the factors we include here are identical to those for weak verbs. We hypothesize that if the appearance of V-base morphology in either

weak or strong verbs is conditioned by an underlying Creole system, which presumably does not place a great deal of importance on phonological conditioning of verbal morphology, then there is no reason to expect that whatever process governs marking patterns should not apply equally to weak *and* strong verbs. Thus, including the same factor groups and factor groupings (with the exception of the phonological effects which are irrelevant for strong verbs) in our suffix deletion and suppletion vs. V-base analyses permits almost complete comparability between the two.

6.4.1. Factor by factor distributional analysis

6.3.1.1. Aspect

Our previous views of the data, both for covert vs. overt inflection and for suffixal deletion have found that the punctual/non-punctual distinction, as defined by Bickerton, is statistically irrelevant for surface marking patterns. In the variation between suppletively-marked verbs and V-base forms, however, we observe that for both data bases there is a difference in frequency between punctuals and non-punctuals, see Table (49) with punctuals having more V-base forms than non-punctuals. In Samaná English this difference is more pronounced than in the Ex-Slave Recordings.

Table (49): Rates of V-base morphology on strong verbs as a function of verbal aspect

	Punctual		Non-punctual	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	24	2055	15	462
Ex-Slave Recordings	24	350	20	175

6.3.1.2. Temporal relationship

While marking rates across temporal relationship contexts differed very little for weak verbs in Samaná English, Table (50) clearly shows that they exert an effect on strong

verb morphology. Here, posterior and reorientation contexts have the most frequent rates of V-base forms, while coincidence and anterior relationships are most frequently marked by V-ed1. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, on the other hand posterior and coincidence contexts are marked most frequently by V-base, while repetition and reorientation contexts are marked more with V-ed1. The similarities between the two corpora can be identified as a general tendency toward V-base forms for posterior temporal relationship and toward V-ed1 forms for anterior temporal relationship.

Table (50): Rates of V-base morphology as a function of temporal relationship to the reference verb

	Reorientation		Coincidence		Anterior		Repetition		Posterior	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Samaná English	21	290	19	418	14	160	21	290	31	1108
Ex-Slaves	18	40	24	223	10	21	19	47	26	162

6.3.1.3. Preceding mark

The influence of preceding mark on strong verb morphology appears to be consistent with our previous results, both for our analysis of overt vs. covert morphology overall, and for suffixal deletion on weak verbs only, as can be seen in Table (51). Preceding unmarked verbs lead to a tendency toward unmarked verbs, while marked verbs lead to more marked verbs. Cases of marked temporal reference from a different temporal frame, i.e. present, inhibit the V-base form the most. These results are very similar both in patterning and frequency in both corpora.

Table (51): Rates of V-base morphology as a function of the preceding reference mark

	Unmarked verb (past temp. ref.)		Marked verb (past temp. ref.)		Marked verb (present temp. ref.)	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Samaná English	43	461	19	1909	11	147
Ex-Slaves.	39	67	21	424	12	34

6.3.1.4. Contextual disambiguation

6.3.1.4.1. Temporal conjunctions

While the effect of temporal conjunctions was found to be most readily apparent in Samaná English for weak verbs, here it seems to disappear. There is little difference between marking rates for V-base or V-ed1 forms in Samaná English and although there is a tendency towards V-base morphology with temporal conjunctions in the Ex-Slave Recordings, the difference is slight, see Table (52). This suggests that the influence of a temporal conjunction interacts with phonological reduction processes but not with whatever process functions to permit a strong verb to appear in its V-base form.

Table (52): Rates of V-base morphology as a function of temporal conjunction

	[+conjunction]		[-conjunction]	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	21	301	23	2216
Ex-Slave Recordings	28	57	22	468

6.3.1.4.2. Adverbs

As with weak verbs, adverbs exert virtually no effect on the occurrence of V-base morphology in Samaná English. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, however, there is a slight tendency towards V-base with accompanying adverbs, see Table (53). The opposite tendency was found for weak verbs in this data for this context.

Table (53): Rates of V-base morphology in clauses containing an adverb

	[+adverb]		[-adverb]	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	20	327	23	2190
Ex-Slave Recordings	30	47	22	478

6.3.1.4.3. Particles

The effect of particles is similar to that found for adverbs. Samaná English demonstrates very little propensity for verbal morphology based on the presence of a particle. In the Ex-Slave Recordings however, particles appear to promote a far greater percentage of V-base forms than those without particles, see Table (54). Again, the opposite tendency was found for weak verbs in this data for this feature.

Table (54): Rates of V-base verbs as a function of adjoining particle

	[+particle]		[-particle]	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	18	353	23	2164
Ex-Slave Recordings	43	84	19	441

The results for temporal disambiguation as demonstrated by adverbs, particles and temporal conjunctions in the Ex-Slave Recordings contrasts quite strongly between weak and strong verbs. Disambiguated weak verbs tend to be marked while disambiguated strong verbs tend to be unmarked. In contrast, adverbs and particles in the Samaná English Corpus have little influence on the marking patterns of weak or strong verbs. Temporal conjunctions, however, do seem to exert an effect on weak verbs.

6.3.1.5. Discourse context

Here, as in our previous analyses, Samaná English distinguishes narrative and non-narrative discourse contexts while the Ex-Slave Recordings do not, see Table (55).

Table (55): Rates of V-base verbs as a function of discourse context

	Narrative		Non-narrative	
	%Ø	N	%Ø	N
Samaná English	34	955	16	1562
Ex-Slave Recordings	25	125	22	400

6.4.2. Summary of factor-by-factor analysis: Suppletion vs. V-base

The factor-by-factor analysis presented above for the appearance of V-base strong verb forms in past temporal environments provides quite a different view than did the marginals for suffixal deletion. Apparently, two very different processes are in operation across the two variables. This result, however, is quite reasonable given an English interpretation of the grammar in which the processes in operation for weak verbs, e.g. phonological reduction, would be completely distinct from the processes in operation on strong verbs, e.g. verb class distinctions, etc. If the unmarked verb forms were a product of a Creole relative tense system, on the other hand, they would be expected to behave similarly, i.e. marked or unmarked based, at least partially, on the relative tense system. Our results indicate that even if the effects of universal constraints on phonological configurations operate in either case (i.e. Creole and English grammars) for weak verbs, the different verb types (weak vs. strong) distinguish themselves on completely independent grounds in any case. In the variable process of marked (suppletion) vs. unmarked (invariant base) strong verbs there is no prominent phonological effect as for weak verbs, instead a number of smaller effects can be observed. Perhaps the most salient of these, especially in comparison to our other analyses of the data is the difference between punctual verbs which appear to promote V-base morphology and non-punctual verbs which more frequently occur with their V-ed1 forms. Results such as these consistently contradict the prediction made for this feature in a Creole-like variety, which is that non-punctuals will tend to be unmarked in comparison with punctuals. Furthermore, Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recording appear to follow different contextual conditioning for V-base

morphology in general, especially with respect to temporal disambiguators. As we have suggested previously, this points to a difference between the two corpora with respect to the influence of context on surface verbal morphology. Additionally, there are several similarities between the two corpora. First of all, posterior temporal relationships favour V-base forms, while anterior contexts favour V-ed1 morphology. Second, preceding mark once again exerts a strong effect on verbal morphology with the same ranking as we have seen previously: unmarked verb > marked verb with past temporal reference > marked verb with present temporal reference. Narrative context, which appears to be relevant for Samaná English, is not distinguished in the Ex-Slave Recordings. These results are summarized in Table (56) below:

Table (56). Feature-by-feature assessment of studied patterns — suppletion vs. V-base

	Samaná English Creole	non-Creole	Ex-Slave Recordings Creole	non-Creole
Aspect		✓		n/a
Temporal Relationship		✓		n/a
Preceding Mark		✓		✓
Contextual Disambiguation:				
Temporal conjunctions		n/a		n/a
Adverbs		n/a		n/a
Particles	✓		✓	
Discourse context		✓		n/a
Verb Class		✓		✓
(see Tables (58a-b) below)				

6.4.3. Multivariate analysis of the contribution of factors to invariant stem usage of strong verbs for past temporal reference

Tables (57a) and (57b) display the results of a variable rule analysis of the factors contributing to the probability that the V-base form of strong verbs will be used for past temporal reference in the Samaná English Corpus and the Ex-Slave Recordings. In both cases preceding reference and particle are chosen as significant. That some factors were not retained by the stepwise regression analysis for the Ex-Slave Recordings is undoubtedly

due to the relatively small numbers in many cells, as we saw in the marginals. It is noteworthy that the constraint ranking, or the order in which the factors constituting each group affect the process under consideration, is basically identical for the two corpora.

Table (57a): Contribution of factors selected as significant for V-base strong verbs for past temporal reference —Samaná English

(1) Preceding mark		(2) Discourse context	
Unmarked verb	.68	Narrative	.59
Marked verb (past temporal reference)	.46	Non-narrative	.44
Marked verb (present temporal reference)	.41		
(3) Temporal relationship		(4) Punctuality	
Posterior	.53	Punctual	.52
Coincidence	.53	Non-punctual	.42
Repetition	.49		
Anterior	.45		
Reorientation	.37		
(5) Particle			
[+particle]	.51		
[-particle]	.43		

Factors not selected: Temporal conjunction, Adverb.

Table (57b): Contribution of factors selected as significant for V-base strong verbs for past temporal reference —Ex-Slave Recordings

(1) Preceding mark		(2) Particle	
Unmarked verb	.69	[+particle]	.73
Marked verb (past temporal reference)	.48	[-particle]	.45
Marked verb (present temporal reference)	.33		
*Discourse context		*Temporal Relationship	
Narrative	.51	Coincidence	.54
Non-narrative	.49	Posterior	.52
		Repetition	.43
		Reorientation	.41
		Anterior	.30
*Punctuality			
Punctual	.503		
Non-punctual	.49		

*Factors not selected: Punctuality, Discourse context, Temporal conjunction, Temporal relationship, Adverb.

Maintaining the parallelism between the factor groups considered in our suffix deletion analysis and the present one has demonstrated that a different array of factor groups are selected as significant to each one. This provides support for the fact that a unitary linguistic phenomenon, such as relative tense for example, is not responsible for the marking patterns involved. Thus, we reanalyze suppletion vs. V-base with the addition of verb class, which we found to be important in our distributional analyses. This factor was not included initially in order to maintain consistency between this analysis and the suffix deletion one. When this factor group is included we find that it has a greater and more significance effect than any of the other factor groups. This can be seen in Table (58a) and (58b) below where the factor weights for this conditioning effect range between .75 for Class B verbs and .40 for class D verbs in Samaná English and .97 and .35 in the Ex-Slave Recordings. While the contribution of the other selected factor groups in Samaná English remains the same, this run differs from the former in that punctuality is not selected as significant and adverb is selected as significant. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, we note that although all factor groups besides preceding mark and verb class were not selected as significant, virtually the same ranking within factor groups is maintained across the two corpora.

Table (58a): Contribution of factors selected as significant for V-base strong verbs for past temporal reference —Samaná English

(1) Preceding reference		(2) Verb Class	
Unmarked verb	.68	Class B	.75
Marked verb	.46	(take/took/taken)	
(past temporal reference)		Class C	.45
Marked verb	.44	(bring/brought/brought)	
(present temporal reference)		Class D	.40
		(come/came/come)	
(3) Discourse context		(4) Particle	
Narrative	.62	[-particle]	.52
Non-narrative	.43	[+particle]	.39
(5) Temporal relationship		(6) Adverb	
Posterior	.56	[-adverb]	.51
Coincidence	.51	[+adverb]	.43
Repetition	.49		
Anterior	.41		
Reorientation	.34		

Factors not selected: Temporal conjunction, Punctuality.

Table (58b): Contribution of factors selected as significant for V-base strong verbs for past temporal reference —Ex-Slave Recordings

(2) Preceding reference		(1) Verb Class	
Unmarked verb	.74	Class B	.97
Marked verb	.48	(come/came/come)	
(past temporal reference)		Class D	.39
Marked verb	.28	(take/took/taken)	
(present temporal reference)		Class C	.38
		(bring/brought/brought)	
* Discourse context		*Particle	
Narrative	.60	[-particle]	.52
Non-narrative	.47	[+particle]	.41
* Temporal relationship		* Adverb	
Coincident	.52	[-adverb]	.51
Posterior	.51	[+adverb]	.43
Repetition	.49		
Reorientation	.40		
Anterior	.30		

*Factors not selected

As with the variable rule run for suffixal deletion, when extra-linguistic factors are included in the run for Samaná English, education is added to the list of chosen significant factor groups. In the case of strong verbs, it is ranked third after discourse context with relative weights of .55 for uneducated and .45 for educated speakers. The ranking of all other factors is identical and will not be repeated here.

6.5. The question of aspect

Our analysis of suffixal deletion has demonstrated that aspectual effects, as defined by the opposition between punctuals and non-punctuals, is not significant for either Samaná English or the Ex-Slave Recordings. However, our analysis of V-ed1 and V-base morphology in strong verbs has shown, in contrast, that punctuality is significant to this variable patterning, at least in the Samaná English Corpus for one of our runs. Does this in any way suggest that the underlying temporal system is governed by aspectual, and thus, Creole-like patterning?

We have previously alluded to the fact that the opposition between punctual as opposed to non-punctual verbs masks a distinction within the non-punctual verb category, which can, in fact, be meaningfully divided into three separate aspectual interpretations — stative, iterative and continuous — all of which can be rendered by V-ed1 or V-base surface forms. In Table (59) below we illustrate the marking patterns of weak and strong verbs across these aspectual interpretations in both corpora.

Table (59): Percent frequency of V-base morphology across aspectual interpretations

	Weak verbs		Strong verbs	
	%	tot N	%	tot N
Samaná				
Continuous	66	231	10	79
Iterative	58	50	45	139
Punctual	49	973	25	139
Stative	41	210	17	296
Ex-Slaves				
Continuous	49	37	35	23
Punctual	31	159	24	352
Stative	29	51	24	54
Iterative	19	36	42	166

From this view of our data it is obvious that the creole [+/-] punctual distinction is not relevant. Punctuals cannot be seen as functioning in opposition to non-punctuals. Instead non-punctuals are all quite distinct in terms of their marking rates. Moreover, there appears to be no systematicity to these patterns. There is no consistent hierarchy of effect across aspectual interpretations, neither strong nor weak verbs behave similarly, and there is no patterned similarity between Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings. The first question we might ask is do these differences in surface morphology across aspectual interpretations make a systematic contribution to the variable marking patterns we have observed? In order to determine this we re-analyzed the Samaná English data for both the suffixal deletion variable and the variation between V-ed1 and V-base for strong verbs with one important change. We included the aspectual factors group, but instead of collapsing it into a bipartite division based on punctuality, we left each aspectual category to stand on its own — punctual, iterative, stative, continuous. These results are depicted in Tables (60a) and (60b) below:

Table (60a): Contribution of factors selected as significant for Suffix deletion when aspect is divided into four separate categories.

(1) Preceding phonological environment		(2) Following phonological environment	
Two consonants	.76	Consonant	.62
One consonant	.61	Vowel	.37
Vowel	.22		
(3) Preceding mark		(4) Aspect	
Unmarked verb	.68	Continuous	.63
Marked verb:		Punctual	.50
(present temp. ref.)	.50	Stative	.41
Marked verb		Iterative	.34
(past temp. ref.)	.46		

Factors not selected: Adverb, Temporal relationship, Particle, Discourse context.

Table (60b): Contribution of factors selected as significant for V-base strong verbs when aspect is divided into four separate categories.

(1) Preceding mark		(2) Discourse context	
Unmarked verb	.68	Narrative	.60
Marked verb	.46	Non-narrative	.41
(past temp. ref.)			
Marked verb	.41		
(present temp. ref.)			
(3) Aspect		(4) Temporal relationship	
Iterative	.53	Posterior	.53
Punctual	.52	Coincident	.53
Stative	.43	Repetition	.49
Continuous	.26	Anterior	.45
		Reorientation	.37

Factors not selected: Temporal conjunction, Adverb, Particle.

The results of these analyses indicate that aspect is chosen as significant to suffixal deletion and V-base strong verbs in Samaná English, however, it is important to note that for both of these variables, the most significant contributions found in the previous runs are maintained. For suffix deletion, the phonological factor groups retain their position as the most significant effects on suffixal deletion as well as preceding mark. For V-base strong

verbs preceding mark and narrative discourse retain their position as the most significant effects on V-base morphology. This means that despite the fact that verbal aspect is chosen as significant, phonological factors are still paramount.

Looking at the aspectual results more closely, it appears that continuous weak verbs are the only aspectual category which promote suffix deletion, at a relative weight of .63. All other aspectual interpretations are either neutral, punctuals at .50, or disfavoured, statives at .41 and iteratives at .34. For V-base strong verbs the opposite is true, continuous strong verbs greatly contribute to the *marking* of strong verbs, at a relative weight of only .26. Punctuals and iterative on the other hand promote V-base morphology. The extreme differences in the continuous category are particularly counter-intuitive. What is creating these effects?

We have seen previously in our distributional analysis (section 5.3.2) that a marked effect in strong verb morphology is found across different verb classes that appear in our data. Within classes specific verbs often occur very frequently in their V-base form while others appear almost categorically as V-ed1. This leads us to speculate that the particular lexical verb itself, rather than any systematic linguistic effect, may be causing the differentiation in aspectual results. In order to explore this possibility we can look into what lexical verbs make up the aspectual categories in our data.

Tables (61a) and (61b) below depict the number of occurrences of each frequent verb, i.e. those with more than 15 tokens each, in each aspectual category contained in the suffix deletion run and the strong verb run of our Samaná English data.

Table (61a): Total number of lexical verbs eligible for suffix deletion across aspectual categories — Weak verbs — Samaná English

	Punctual	Stative	Continuous	Iterative
stayed	3	54	6	Ø
passed	25	6	18	Ø
told ⁷⁴	102	Ø	Ø	2
sold	18	Ø	Ø	Ø
reached	36	Ø	Ø	Ø
married	78	Ø	1	Ø
lived	Ø	57	Ø	Ø
killed	33	Ø	Ø	Ø
died	199	Ø	Ø	Ø
asked	29	Ø	Ø	1
called	20	1	Ø	2
stopped	21	Ø	1	Ø
left	52	Ø	Ø	Ø
kept	Ø	Ø	24	Ø
happened	19	Ø	Ø	Ø
raised	6	Ø	101	Ø
worked	10	Ø	1	5
learned	8	1	33	2
remained	Ø	39	1	Ø
moved	15	Ø	Ø	Ø

⁷⁴ Verbs which have both a final suffixal mark *and* a vowel change to indicate past tense were also included in the suffix deletion analysis since they represent a context in which a potential final *-t/-d* is eligible for deletion.

Table (61b): Total number of lexical verbs eligible for invariant V-base across aspectual categories — Strong Verbs — Samaná English

	Punctual	Stative	Continuous	Iterative
came	387	13	2	5
took	85	9	2	Ø
went	341	6	13	22
got	86	13	5	1
brought	60	Ø	1	Ø
saw	1	52	Ø	Ø
told	190	1	1	3
said	291	4	Ø	6
put	40	Ø	Ø	2
kept	Ø	Ø	27	Ø
brought	37	Ø	Ø	Ø
gave	52	1	5	1
made	58	9	3	Ø
sent	76	Ø	2	1
knew	Ø	99	Ø	Ø

The tables reveals some interesting results. Clearly lexical verbs behave quite idiosyncratically with respect to their respective aspectual interpretations *and* their propensity to receive an inflectional mark. First of all, many verbs are virtually confined to one aspectual reading, e.g. punctual, — for weak verbs, *die, sold, kill*, for strong verbs *kept, bought* — while deletion rates for individual verbs vary widely (from 6% to 90% overall in weak verbs and from Ø% to 42% for strong verbs). Such characteristics are undoubtedly the reason for the significance of the aspectual factor group. For example, our variable rule run for suffix deletion found that continuous aspect was highly favourable to deletion, however, when we look at why this is so, we find that 44% (N=101) of the continuous verb category is made up of one verb, *raise* which, coincidentally has an extremely high rate of suffixal deletion, 93% overall, 94% in its continuous aspectual interpretation. The remaining 54% of the continuous verb category are scattered amongst far less frequently-occurring verbs which range from 100% marked to 100% unmarked. In the strong verb category, by contrast, continuous verbs are highly favourable to retention

of the inflectional suffix. Again this is likely due to the skewing effect of one verb: 51% (N=27) of the continuous verb category for strong verbs is made up of the verb *kept* which is 93% marked in its continuous aspectual interpretation; 25% (N=13) is made up of the verb *went* which 99% marked in its continuous aspectual interpretation.

One way to solve this problem would be to run individual verbs separately; however, very few verbs have both sufficient tokens, sufficient representation across all factor groups, and variable marking rate frequencies which would make them good candidates for observation. The only viable verbs that can be examined in this way are four lexical items *say* and *come* in the strong verb category, which have overall deletion frequencies of 76% (N=291) and 35% (N=387) respectively and *die* and *told* in the consonant cluster simplification category, which have overall deletion frequencies of 20% (N=199) and 61% (N=104) respectively. A variable rule analysis of each of these verbs separately reveals the results in Tables (62a) and (62b) below⁷⁵. In addition to the factor groups included in our previous runs we also include sex and education in order to assess whether these extra-linguistic factors have any influence on verbal morphology.

Table (62a): Contribution of factors selected as significant for V-base
come and *say*

Come

(1) Temporal relationship

Posterior	.60
Coincident	.52
Repetition	.47
Anterior	.37
Reorientation	.37

Factors not selected: Preceding mark, Discourse context, Particle, Punctuality, Education, Temporal conjunction, Sex.

⁷⁵ Several factors groups were found to be unusable for the individual variable rule analyses due to knockouts in some factor groups, i.e. particles, adverbs etc., and extremely small cells in others, i.e. the anterior factor in the temporal relationship factor group. Factors appearing in Tables (62a) and (62b) reflect recoding due to data distribution.

Say

(1) Discourse context		(2) Preceding mark	
Narrative	.66	Unmarked verb	.67
Non-narrative	.15	Marked verb	.39

Factors not selected: Sex, Adverb, Temporal relationship, Education

Table (62b): Contribution of factors selected as significant for V-base *die* and *told*

Die**(1) Temporal conjunction**

Conjunction	.74
No conjunction	.45

Factors not selected: Adverb, Temporal relationship, Particle, Discourse context, Preceding mark, Following phonological context

Told**(1) Following phonological context**

Consonant	.64
Vowel	.31

Factors not selected: Discourse context, Adverb, Temporal relationship, Preceding mark.

Here, we find that there is absolutely no consistency and thus no visible systematicity between the four lexical types. Verbal morphology on *come* appears to be influenced only by the temporal relationship that obtains between it and its reference verb. The verb *say* — which is the quintessential narrative verb — is influenced both by the discursive context and the preceding verbal mark. With *die*, temporal conjunctions appear to exert a greater effect on the unmarked variant than phonological influences, while *told* appears to be influenced by its following phonological environment. These results point to the fact that different functions and/or idiosyncratic features of the lexical verb itself influence the way in which it will be marked for tense.

In sum, these observations demonstrate that aspect does not have a *systematic* effect on verbal morphology. Differences between aspectual interpretations exist, but these are a product of individual lexical items and not a productive grammatical or organizational traits of the underlying grammar. Thus, it is clear that the pervasive underlying Creole parameter differentiating punctual from non-punctual forms is not regulating the verbal patterns, either with weak or strong verbs, in these data.

6.6. Auxiliary deletion

The next analyses examine the auxiliary deletion hypothesis. This hypothesis has been suggested for two different contextual environments. One, in which the presence of a bare V-ing participle suggests the deletion of auxiliary *be* and another in which the presence of a bare V-ed2 participle suggests the deletion of auxiliary *have*. Thus, we examine these as two different variables and two different analyses. Each considers a different subset of the data in which a variable context is circumscribed relevant to the auxiliary and morphological type of verb structure in question as per Std-E grammar indicated below: in the first we include all V-ing participles and treat as variants the presence or absence of the preceding *be* auxiliary, in the second we include all V-ed2 participles that exhibit variable auxiliary presence and treat as variants the presence or absence of the preceding *have* auxiliary.

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1) | Marked progressive | [| was + V-ing |
| | Unmarked progressive | | is + V-ing
Ø + V-ing |
| 2) | Marked present perfect | [| have + V-ed2
have + done + V
[includes auxiliary "be"
i.e. I'm been sailØ etc.] |
| | Unmarked present perfect | | Ø + V-ed2 |

6.7. Present participle

6.7.1. Factor by factor distributional analysis

6.7.1.1. Discourse context

Out of the 8,046 past temporal reference verbal structures occurring in the Samaná English corpus, there are 304 tokens of (simple)⁷⁶ present participles, i.e. *V-ing*. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, out of 2,114 past temporal reference verbal structures, there are 55 tokens of these. Three variations occur, 1) the standard past progressive with an auxiliary marked with past tense morphology, i.e. *I was going*, 2) the present progressive, i.e. *I am going*, and 3) a bare present participle, i.e. *I Ø going*. Due to the fact that we have seen that different morphological forms tend to occur in specific discourse contexts we examine the distribution of these variants across discourse environments in our two corpora in Tables (63a) and (63b).

Table (63a): Distribution of present participle forms by discourse context
— Samaná English

	was/were V-ing		am/is/are V-ing		Ø V-ing	
	N	% tot	N	% tot	N	% tot
Narrative (complicating action)	3	1.1	Ø	—	2	7.1
Narrative (other than CA)	91	35	17	90	19	68
Non-narrative	163	63	2	11	7	25
TOTAL	257		19		28	

⁷⁶ Recall that complex verb structures, e.g. *I have been going*, which contain both a present progressive participle and a past participle are categorized according to their first occurring auxiliary.

Table (63b): Distribution of present participle forms by discourse context
 — Ex-Slave Recordings

	was/were	V-ing	am/is/are	V-ing	Ø	V-ing
	N	% tot	N	% tot	N	% tot
Narrative (complicating action)	3	6.8	1	100	1	10
Narrative (other than CA)	9	20.5	Ø	—	2	20
Non-narrative	32	72.7	Ø	—	7	70
TOTAL	44		1		10	

Due to the large amount of data in the Samaná English Corpus we can see distinctive patterns in the distribution of these forms across discourse contexts while the relative paucity of tokens from the Ex-Slave Recordings makes it difficult to assess whether the same observation is relevant for this corpus or not. In Samaná English we observe the virtual restriction of all present participles (90%) with present tense auxiliaries and all present participles with no auxiliaries (68%) to narrative *non*-complicating actions clauses. Past progressive forms, on the other hand, are concentrated in non-narrative discourse (63%). The restricted occurrence of *am/is/are* V-ing and Ø V-ing to narrative discourse leads us to speculate whether they are the same underlying form and can be subsumed within the same variable as *was/were* V-ing?

Consideration of the contexts where each of these forms occur, i.e. narratives, suggests that those with present temporal reference auxiliaries and those with a bare V-ing, i.e. (203a-b), can occur as "restricted narrative clauses" which define a specific and localized time period within a sequence of iconically-presented events in the complicating action (Labov & Waletzky 1967) but only present temporal reference auxiliaries occur in contexts of description as found in orientation clauses, (203c). These examples suggest that the distribution of the two forms is at least partially distinct. While morphological characteristics of the latter identify it as a variant of the Std E HISTORICAL PRESENT we cannot unambiguously equate the Ø variant with this function. The most important question

with respect to the issues we address in this dissertation is whether the Ø variant represents a structure with an underlying auxiliary, i.e. an English interpretation, or is a covertly-marked relative tense form, i.e. a Creole interpretation.

- (203a) I say, "no, don't say that."
 He say , "look at his ..."
 I say, "no, he ain't dying!"
 But my heart Ø going you know.
 He say, "mama ..." (007/1318)
- (203b) I beat that.
 But I'm watching her
 Beat. Beat.
 I'm watching her. (003/895-6)
- (203c) You know that was danger
 because there is coming
 and the other ones is waiting on
 and we's in the midst! (002/254-255)

Despite the sparse occurrence of this form, we attempt a factor-by-factor analysis of its distribution across the factor groups outlined in section 6.1 above. To these we add syntactic structure and subject noun which will be described below.

6.7.1.2. Preceding mark

As we have found with all other examinations of tense morphology, absence of PAST morphology, in this case reduction of the auxiliary, is more frequent when the preceding reference verb is unmarked than marked as can be seen in Table (64). Despite the very small numbers in the Ex-Slave data base, the same pattern obtains.

Table (64): Rates of auxiliary reduction as a function of preceding mark⁷⁷

	Unmarked verb		Marked verb	
	% reduced	tot N	% reduced	tot N
Samaná English	22	27	10	201
Ex-Slave Recordings	40	10	16	38

6.7.1.3. Syntactic structure

We have previously suggested that verbs in embedded syntactic structures will be more likely to be unmarked than those in main clauses. We explore this possibility through a tabulation of the occurrence of these forms and the syntactic structure in which they occur. Table (65) indicates that auxiliary reduction is more likely to occur in subordinate clauses than in main clauses as illustrated in Table (65).

Table (65): Rates of auxiliary reduction or present morphology as a function of syntactic structure

	Main clause		Subordinate clause	
	% reduced	tot N	% reduced	tot N
Samaná English	6	168	15	117
Ex-Slave Recordings	17	42	25	12

6.7.1.4. Subject noun

The only previously-attested conditioning factor influencing marking of past temporal reference from the history of the English language is one affecting auxiliary deletion, however this has only been noted for strong past participles with zero or deleted *have*. Apparently, in many dialects of British English the reduced form is found to be more prevalent when the subject is a pronoun. In order to determine whether such a process occurs in the case of auxiliary reduction in present participles we included this factor in our

⁷⁷ Recall that we exclude from these calculations those contexts in which an interlocutor switch precedes the relevant verbal context.

marginals. This is illustrated in Table (66) below. Our data from Samaná shows that contrary to attestations, full nouns, rather than pronouns demonstrate a higher percentage of reduction than other nouns. In the Ex-Slave Recordings however, no effect either way can be observed.

Table (66): Rates of auxiliary reduction or present morphology as a function of subject noun

	Pronoun		Other noun	
	% reduced	tot N	% reduced	tot N
Samaná English	5	223	27	62
Ex-Slave Recordings	19	37	18	17

6.7.1.5. Contextual disambiguation

We examine the effects of different temporal disambiguation features in Table (67) below. For the Ex-Slaves these categories are often irrelevant as very few temporal indicators occur with these forms. There are, however, sufficient tokens to extract at least some trends from the Samaná English cases. These indicate that there is no difference in marking rates whether or not a conjunction is present in the same clause. The presence of adverbs and particles however, does seem to inhibit the possibility of unmarked morphology. There is comparatively less reduction in clauses with particles or adverbs. By far the largest effect however, comes from the discourse context where narratives, in general, either in complicating action or other narrative clauses, are the primary environment for reduction to occur. The fact that adverbs and particles are selected as significant to reduction is reminiscent of the effects we saw with V-base strong verbs. We have previously suggested that this combination of contributing factors may represent temporal influences that are particularly relevant for narrative discourse. The fact that reduction appears restricted to this context lends further support for this hypothesis.

Table (67a): Rates of auxiliary reduction or present morphology as a function of contextual disambiguation — Samaná English

	% reduced	tot N		% reduced	tot N
+Conjunction	18	67	-Conjunction	10	218
+Adverb	3	39	-Adverb	11	246
+Particle	6	50	-Particle	11	235
+Narrative (CA + other)	18	115	-Narrative	4	170

Table (67b): Rates of auxiliary reduction or present morphology as a function of contextual disambiguation — Ex-Slaves

	% reduced	N		% reduced	N
+Conjunction	Ø	1	-Conjunction	19	53
+Adverb	17	6	-Adverb	19	48
+Particle	Ø	4	-Particle	20	50
+Narrative (CA + other)	20	15	-Narrative	18	39

6.7.1.6. Extra-linguistic factors

Evidence from descriptive studies of WEV in the United States (e.g (Mencken 1971; Menner 1926)) has suggested that reduction phenomena, at least in bare past participles, i.e. V-ed2, is correlated with extra-linguistic factors such as socio-economic class and/or education. When we assess whether such factors affect marking patterns in these data by examining the distribution of forms by sex and educational level in Samaná English we find that the results are consistent with these suggestions. As illustrated in Table (68) reduction of the *be* auxiliary in present participles is more prevalent in males than in females and in the uneducated speakers of our sample. Although, educational level cannot be assessed for the Ex-Slaves, the distribution of unmarked morphology between males and females indicates the opposite tendency from Samaná — 11% (N= 27) vs. 26% (N= 27) reduction rates for males and females respectively.

Table (68): Rates of auxiliary reduction or present morphology as a function of extra-linguistic factors (sex, education) — Samaná English

	% reduced	N		% reduced	N
Female	8	162	Male	12	123
Educated	6	161	Uneducated	15	121

6.7.2. Multivariate analysis of the contribution of factors to auxiliary reduction or present morphology in present participles

The results of a variable rule analysis of the factors contributing to the probability of reduction in these contexts are displayed in Table (69). The table shows that significant conditioning factors are subject noun, discourse type and education. A non-pronominal subject may be seen to favour auxiliary reduction more than any other factor examined, with a factor weight of .82. Another strong effect is narrative complicating action environments which favour auxiliary reduction at .75. Uneducated informants also show a fairly strong tendency towards this type of marking with a probability of .68. The fact that no proximate contextual disambiguation features promote the reduction of tense marking is once again antithetical to the creole hypothesis which maintains that such reduction in surface morphology occurs when these are present in the surrounding context. Note especially that preceding mark is also not selected as significant to this process. These results provide at least some support for the supposition that these forms are not the product of a relative tense marking system. They do not, however, contribute unambiguous support for the fact that an underlying auxiliary is present in these structures, although their restricted occurrence to narrative discourse, where temporal reference is already highly specified, makes this a plausible consideration. Since this is also the context for HISTORICAL PRESENT PROGRESSIVES in English, however, there is really no way to determine whether the underlying auxiliary has present or past morphology, since the examples in (203a-c) above suggest that it could be either.

Table (69). Contribution of factors selected as significant to auxiliary reduction or present tense morphology with present participles — Samaná English

(1) Subject noun		(2) Discourse type	
Other noun	.82	Narrative	.75
Personal pronoun	.40	Non-narrative	.32
(3) Education			
Uneducated	.69		
Educated	.35		

Factors not selected: Sex, Particle, Temporal conjunction, Syntactic structure, Preceding mark, Adverb.

6.8. Past participle

Auxiliary deletion has also been hypothesized as an explanation for the occurrence of bare past participles (V-ed2). Such forms occur very infrequently in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings, representing only 1.1% (N=89) and .9% (N=28) of the total number of verbal structures that are used for past temporal reference in each of these data bases respectively. Furthermore, it must be determined how many of these forms actually represent instances of auxiliary deletion, before any attempt is made to examine the factors that condition it. The assessment of which (Std E) tense/aspect category these forms belong to is confounded by the fact that only a select group of verbs have distinct V-ed2 morphology in English. Therefore, our delimitation of what group of verbs constitute "bare" past participle forms can only be those which occur with no auxiliary and which also exhibit their characteristic and unique V-ed2 morphology.

Verbs falling into this category are extremely few in number. The only bare past participles of this type that occur in the Samaná English Corpus are *done*, *born*, *seen*, *been* and *gone*. They are even more rare in the Ex-Slave Recordings, where only *done*, *been*, and one token of *seen* occur. A detailed examination of these contexts indicates that all of

them cannot be included in an analysis examining the reduction of a potential underlying *have* auxiliary.

6.8.1. Done

In Samaná English the bare verb form *done* occurs 26 times, while in the Ex-Slave Recordings it occurs only 9 times. In both corpora, all of these represent either 1) the usage of V-ed2 morphology for the simple PAST tense category, as can be seen in example (204a-e), or 2) the usage of V-ed2 morphology in an environment in which either simple PAST tense *or* PRESENT PERFECT tense are possible, as can be seen in example (205a-e).

- (204a) Interviewer: What did they do, the Americans when they came in ...?
Informant: What they done? (001/443-5)
- (204b) And I see when he done so. And when he done so I called the little boy. (007/1309)
- (204c) He done what he felt like. (011/367)
- (204d) Soon she get married and she begin to have children, the first thing she done, she made a little church, you see. (017/278-9)
- (204e) But we never done that but one time. ... But then that was a Sunday night too, that we done that. (ESR/008/173-75)
- (205a) Do like I done. (019/1019)
- (205b) I never done it. (ESR/008/25)
- (205c) I berate them for not taking after me because they say they done as I done. (006/256)
- (205d) There's none of the minister what went in there done the work what I done. (011/1004)
- (205e) Tha's what state he was raised in, the man [who] done the killing. (ESR/00X/231)

Because all of these could potentially represent an extension of the surface form *done* to represent the simple PAST tense category, they cannot be included in an analysis of

auxiliary reduction. Further support for this position comes from the fact that the use of the form *done* as simple PAST tense is amply attested in the historical (e.g. (Mencken 1971; Menner 1926; Vanneck 1955; Wright 1905) etc.) and dialectal (e.g. (Cheshire 1982)) record of the English language.

6.8.2. Born

In Samaná English only, verb structures with *born* occur with no preceding auxiliaries (N=55). Although such a structure is, to our knowledge, unattested in either Creole or English varieties, they appear to represent elision of auxiliary *be* as can be seen in example (206). Thus, they are not instances of auxiliary *have* deletion and cannot be included in an analysis which examines auxiliary deletion before V-ed2 verbs.

- (206a) I was born in the ten. (015/60) vs. Well, I born in the ten. (015/62)
- (206b) One of his children was born yonder and the other one born here. (019/109-110)
- (207a) I was born in the- no, in the third- the third of nineteen-nine, just like we are now. (002/105) ... I was born in the third day. (002/107)
- (207b) He was born in the seventeen and this one was born in the twenty. (004/320-1)

At first glance examples such as (206a-b) may look similar to the classic creole patterning, i.e. a marked form followed by an unmarked form, however examples such as (207a-b), where marking occurs in both clauses, run counter to this view. Consideration of all tokens within this variable context, i.e. $\emptyset$ *born* vs. *was born*, in particular those occurring subsequent to a marked verbal form indicates no tendency towards reduction in these sites where the majority of verbs exhibit a marked form (62%) as can be seen in Table (70) below.

Table (70): Percent reduction of *was* before *born* as a function of preceding mark

	%reduced	N
Unmarked verb	57.0	7
Marked verb	38.0	34
Speaker change	28.0	46

Independent examination of the usage of auxiliary *be* with the verb *born* suggests that its reduction is in fact conditioned by a number of syntactic factors. A distributional analysis indicates that there is more reduction with pronouns, in main clauses, in female speech and in the educated informants as can be seen in Table (71). Furthermore, adverbials tend to inhibit reduction, e.g. *I was born in 1909* (002/103). The results from sex and education suggest that the variation is not stigmatized and perhaps represent a localized idiosyncrasy in the Samaná English variety. Due to the paucity of tokens of this type, a variable rule analysis is not possible.

Table (71): Rates of auxiliary reduction with "born"

	%reduced	N		%reduced	N
Pronoun	36	70	Other noun	29	17
Main clause	36	67	Subordinate	30	20
Female	42	45	Male	26	42
Educated	38	50	Uneducated	30	37
Adverb	13	15	No adverb	39	72

6.8.3. Seen, been, gone

The variable context for auxiliary reduction preceding past participles is thus extremely restricted. Only three verbs, *been*, *seen* and *gone* in Samaná English and only *been* in the Ex-Slave Recordings exhibit any variation at all. In Samaná English, all other verbs that can be construed as past participles always occur with their respective auxiliaries, *had* or *be*, (either full or contracted); there is no variation, e.g. (208). These forms are quite infrequent, (N=18) in the Ex-Slave Recordings, e.g. (209). Note, however, that if, in fact,

such verbs did occur without their auxiliaries there would be no way to differentiate them from regular simple past verbs except independently through our factor group interpreting each context in terms of what Std E tense/aspect category would be possible in that context.

- (208a) I have passed a lot of little frights, yes, but thank God I am here yet. (002/389)
- (208b) In time of Jacob James, they had an old steamer. Maybe you all have heard about the old Jericho? (003/101)
- (208c) None of my children didn't teach their children English. ... Well, some of 'em have regretted it already. (006/169-72)
- (208d) 'Cause the English, now, has come to be more useful than the same Spanish. (010/629-30)
- (208e) But it's so many churches now what's took charge, that, you know, they's almost took over more than a quarter of the immigrants. (011/1192)
- (208f) All those trees, I'm raise them six years this side. (011/123)
- (208g) Now is time that everybody could be afraid, even in their house. Because there is sinning. The thing is increase so bad that we don't know ... (018/990-992)
- (208h) I have a daughter down to Colon. I'm never put a switch on her. (021/814)
- (209a) The United State name me *Trigger Kid*, but that's a name I've hated. (ESR/008/198)
- (209b) I'm near forgot what I was to holler. (ESR/001/42)
- (209c) I've made molasses myself. (ESR/009/134)

We are left with 75 tokens in the Samaná English Corpus and 32 tokens in the Ex-Slave Recordings of unambiguous past participles, (V-ed2), either with or without their auxiliaries. In the Samaná data 11 tokens of auxiliary *be* as in example (210), also (208f) and (208h), are included with the auxiliary *have*-marked structures since this form seems to function as a variant of auxiliary *have*.

- (210) I born and raise here. I'm never been nowheres. (020/54)

Perhaps the only factor conditioning auxiliary deletion in this environment which has been attested previously is the type of subject, i.e. where the subject is a pronoun more reduction occurs. This does not seem to be borne out in either data base: In Samaná pronominal subjects exhibit a greater propensity, however slightly, towards *retention* of the auxiliary while in the Ex-Slave Recordings this result is obscured by the paucity of examples with full, or other, nouns. These results can be seen in Table (72a-b). Here

again there is no apparent distinction based on education. This coupled with the fact that females tend to use the forms more suggest that it too, is not stigmatized in the community.

Table (72a): Rates of auxiliary reduction with *been, seen, gone* — Samaná English

	%reduced	N		%reduced	N
Pronoun	46	63	Other noun	50	12
Main clause	48	62	Subordinate	38	13
Female	52	44	Male	39	31
Educated	40	42	Uneducated	42	33
Adverb	45	65	No adverb	50	10

Table (72b): Rates of auxiliary reduction with *been, seen, gone* — Ex-Slave Recordings

	%reduced	N		%reduced	N
Pronoun	54	28	Other noun	100	4
Main clause	56	25	Subordinate	71	7
Female	62	13	Male	58	19
Adverb	56	16	No adverb	63	16

The very small numbers in some cells, for both data bases, in fact, prevents any relevant percentages and, of course, a multivariate analysis.

We have seen that the two variables associated with auxiliary reduction behave virtually identically across the two corpora. This is particularly evident in the latter case where identical lexical items exhibit the described variation. What is perhaps the most striking fact however, is a comparison of these verbs to older and dialectal varieties of English. We find that the same lexical items have preserved the old strong past participle forms, i.e. *done, seen, been*. For centuries each of these has been attested in the English language. Such correspondences can hardly be coincidental and must surely represent the same vestigial features noted by Wright in 1905.

Chapter 7:

7. Discussion

To the best of our knowledge, this dissertation has performed the first analysis which has attempted to examine, in two different grammatical systems, the entire range of morphological types that are used for the interpretation and representation of a given temporal sector. This has given us an unprecedented view of the *interaction* among related categories. The evidence we have presented is also unique in that provides a quantitative examination of the surface linguistic forms that appear in each of our corpora in conjunction with other non-verbal linguistic elements with which they co-occur. Although there have been previous analyses of the same forms, *systematic* examination of these inter-relationships across a number of different linguistic dimensions with a view to the contexts within which the forms could *potentially* occur has provided independent confirmation of usage patterns. This has gone a long way towards providing an objective assessment of function.

We have analyzed the behaviour of past temporal reference verbal morphology in Samaná English and Ex-Slave Recordings in two different ways: 1) distributional analysis of morphological types and 2) a variable rule analysis of a number of variable processes: covert vs. overt marking, suffixal deletion, regularization to invariant V-base in strong verbs, and auxiliary deletion. These have provided complementary and corroborating views of our diachronic BE materials. In the first, we correlated particular tense/aspect morphologies with specific dimensions of the linguistic context and illustrated the compartmentalization of form to function while at the same time indicating the location and extent of overlap among forms. In the second, the statistical procedure enabled us to assess the relative weights of individual conditioning effects and thus the relevant underlying factors which condition surface forms.

The most important findings of our distributional analysis involve the systematic identification of the morphological types occurring in our samples and their exhibited pat-

terms according to a number of different dimensions attested in the literature. In general, most of these were entirely consistent with the expected characteristics of the Std E tense/aspect system, both in form and in function as well as with respect to specific collocation restrictions attested in the prescriptive grammatical literature. In fact, only 25% of the verb structures in Samaná English and 24% in the Ex-Slave Recordings exhibited surface morphology that was in any way deviant from what would be expected in Std E. However, it is these structures which provide the crux of our inquiry. We identified three specific areas in which surface morphologies occurred that were interpretable as either Creole or English forms: 1) unmarked single main verbs (V-base), 2) verbs which were marked for aspect but not for tense (V-ing or V-ed2) and 3) preverbal *had, done, been, did* and possibly have + V-base (or V-ed2). The interaction of these, with other *marked* structures occurring in our data, provided us with the raw materials necessary to examine the mechanism(s) of the underlying grammar.

The most frequently occurring of these are single main verbs with no overt morphology, either weak (e.g. *die*) or strong (e.g. *come*). Our distributional analyses of these two surface forms consistently indicated that they behaved in the same fashion. In the distribution of morphological forms across different temporal reference times, syntactic structure, and in their collocation with temporal conjunctions, adverbs and particles, the patterning of V-ed1 and V-base morphology were proportionately identical. Furthermore, the virtual restriction of particles to these two forms is suggestive of the English system in which the particle is considered a segmentalization of an underlying perfective meaning. With respect to temporal relationship, V-ed1 and V-base forms were found to predominate in posterior and/or coincidence temporal relationships contexts. They were also found to be virtually the only morphological forms which occurred in complicating action narrative clauses. This striking parallelism, which is consistent with the function of the simple PAST tense in English, and is apparent in both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings, suggests very strongly that they are in fact variants of the same underlying form and repre-

sent the Std E simple PAST tense category. The infrequent occurrence of either of these forms in contexts which would trigger the PRESENT PERFECT in our data, e.g. *She had plenty time yonder and now she came to the capital to live* (002/794), does not detract from this conclusion since extension of the preterit to these contexts has been attested in the historical record (Brunner 1963). Occasional forms such as these can be reasonably interpreted as vestigial forms.

Of particular interest to our inquiry was the distribution of irregular strong verb morphology, which in previous analyses has failed to yield any patterned alternation. Perhaps one of the most apparent characteristics of the Samaná and Ex-Slave inventories of these forms was that they correspond almost identically both in lexical identity and morphological configuration to those which have been attested in the English language from the inception of the breakdown and reorganization of the strong verb classes right through to the present day, i.e. *knew* vs. *knowed*; *came* vs. *come*; *did* vs. *done*; *give* vs. *gave* etc. We have argued that such similarities could hardly be coincidental. For example, the most frequent invariant base forms in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings are not just similar, but actually identical to each other. Moreover, in both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings we found that verbs which had identical V-base and V-ed2 morphology, i.e. *come/came/come* had the most frequent occurrence of V-base while those with distinct V-base and V-ed1 forms are far less frequently V-base. This was entirely consistent with the results reported in Christian et al (1988) for two rural dialects of (white) English in the United States. Furthermore, a comparison of our two corpora based on a hierarchy of irregular verb forms posited by Christian et al. also illustrated that our diachronic BE English materials had the same proportions of different non-standard types as was reported for these two (white) English dialects. Perhaps even more striking is that when we examine the exact lexical verbs which demonstrate invariant or irregular morphology across our two diachronic corpora and compare them with attested variants in the historical record, contemporary studies of British English dialects, American English dialects and others, we find

that the same lexical verbs exhibit identical non-standard forms. For example, the most frequent invariant strong verb in Samaná and the Ex-Slave Recordings is *give* for *gave* followed by *come* for *came*. Both these forms are attested from as early as 1570 (Traugott 1977) but they are also specifically noted in modern studies, (Edwards 1985; Cheshire 1982; Hughes and Trudgill 1979) where the verbs *give* and *come* (among others) occur in the past tense with forms that are identical to the verb stem and are attributed to tendencies of generalization. Moreover, any speaker of virtually any variety of North American English can easily attest to the fact that these forms of these two verbs occur frequently with past temporal reference. Thus, irregular morphological forms have been the same across the centuries and across contemporary dialectal varieties. For example, the verb *know*, appearing as *knowed*, is the most frequently-attested regularized form in Appalachian and Ozark English. It is also the most frequently-attested regularized form in both our data sets. In total, these similarities between a wide variety of Englishes and our two diachronic speech samples strongly argues for the fact that invariant morphology on strong verbs and irregular verb morphology in general is an inheritance from earlier stages of the English language caused by the restructuring of the strong verb classes. If, in fact, these surface variants were functioning in accordance with independent features of the contextual environment, as would be predicted by a relative tense system, strong verbs should demonstrate a similar propensity toward the unmarked form in the same contexts. As it is, however, the idiosyncratic nature of the irregular morphology on one hand and the observed similarity in the actual lexical verbs and morphological forms used for that irregular morphology in our two corpora completely contradicts such an analysis.

Our examination of the verb phrase also considered the status of various morphological types whose status within contemporary BEV has long been debated in the sociolinguistic literature. The first of these is the verbal structure consisting of the auxiliary *have* followed by some form of the verb (V-ed2, V-base or V-ed1). This form has long been held to be quite marginal in Black English dialects; however, we have been able to demon-

strate in our distributional analyses that this form is not at all marginal in contexts where it has the potential to occur in either Samaná English, or the Ex-Slave Recordings. Instead it functions as a productive marker of PRESENT PERFECT in these data as can be inferred by its characteristic patterns of occurrence. In Samaná English we found that a full 79% of all *have* + V forms and in the Ex-Slave Recordings 51%, were used in contexts that *required* the PRESENT PERFECT in Std E whereas it virtually *never* occurred in contexts which were incompatible with the PRESENT PERFECT in Std E (i.e. less than 1% of the data). The balance of these forms occurred in contexts where either the PRESENT PERFECT or the simple PAST was possible. The fact that a small percentage of these forms did occur in contexts only compatible with Std E simple PAST tense or the PAST PERFECT does not necessarily imply a non-English function, since we know from the historical record that such extensions of the PRESENT PERFECT are amply attested English. Perhaps the strongest evidence for a Std E PRESENT PERFECT interpretation of *have* + V forms however comes from their distribution across temporal reference times. Here we found that there was no differentiation across time periods for any frequently-occurring morphological type (i.e. V-ed1, V-base, *had* + V, habituais) in either Samaná English or the Ex-Slave Recordings *except* for *have* + V. This form distinguished itself by uniquely marking one temporal domain — that of recency, the very sector which in Std E is covered by the PRESENT PERFECT. The evidence does not end here however. These forms also distinguished themselves with respect to temporal relationship where they were found to concentrate in anterior temporal relationship contexts and with respect to syntactic structure, where they were found to concentrate in subordinate as opposed to main clauses. Both of these are patterns predicted for the Std E PRESENT PERFECT. Also, of all morphological types, they were the foremost form to occur with the temporal conjunction *since*, the adverb claimed to distinguish the PRESENT PERFECT by Std E grammar books. Moreover, they demonstrated collocation restrictions with adverbs that exactly replicated those predicted in Std E as well, i.e. *already*, *now*, and even the adverb *just*,

which Palmer (1988) says is a special lexicalization of recency. Such consistent and systematic parallelism led us to claim that the Std E PRESENT PERFECT is a fully operative category in both these varieties of BE.

Another morphological type that we considered in our analyses was the verb structure represented by the auxiliary *had* followed by some form of the verb (V-ed2, V-base or V-ed1). In contrast to *have*, this structure has always been considered a viable form in BEV; however, its function has been amply debated, particularly with respect to its putative anterior (relative tense) capabilities. The biggest problem we encountered in dealing with this particular morphological item was that the Std E PAST PERFECT category, also marked by *had* + V, along with the simple PAST tense category, with its variants V-ed1 and V-base, with which it alternates in many contexts, is virtually indistinguishable, either in form or in function, from the markers said to be used in decreolizing Creoles for anterior (relative tense — a fact that no study, to our knowledge, has so far addressed. Therefore, it was particularly difficult to differentiate the two in order to determine which function this morphological form actually had, since both of them occur in virtually identical contexts. First of all, we found that *had* + V forms were concentrated in contexts where The PAST PERFECT tense was predicted to occur in Std E, but virtually never anywhere else. We were able to show, in contrast to the predicted Creole patterning that *had* had no particular association to remote or distant time as it appeared in similar proportions across all temporal reference periods. This is one of the foremost means to distinguish Std E PAST PERFECT from Creole anterior tense (cf. Comrie 1976:68) and section 3.3.3 above). Since in English, although the PAST PERFECT refers to a reference time anterior to another reference time in the past, that reference time need not be remote. Moreover, like Std E compound tenses, it was found to concentrate in subordinate as opposed to main clauses. With respect to temporal conjunctions, we found it to be associated with *since*, also a predicted location from within Std E grammar. It was not, as has been claimed for BEV, associated with narrative clauses at all but appeared consistently in non-narrative clauses,

particularly *non*-complicating action clauses in narratives, a environment where PAST PERFECT tends to occur more frequently than the simple PAST in Std E (Frank 1972). Perhaps most suggestively however, was the fact that it was overwhelmingly associated with anterior temporal relationships — but in contrast to what would be expected in the Creole prototype where anterior tense functions relative to all temporal reference points (i.e. anterior to PAST or PRESENT time) — it was concentrated (91% in Samaná English; 90% in the Ex-Slave Recordings) in contexts in which the event to which it made reference was also in the past. This is the definition par excellence of the Std E PAST PERFECT. These suggestive patterns and characteristics, which were parallel, where sufficient tokens occurred, in the Ex-Slave Recordings, are far more suggestive of a Std E function for this form than a general relative tense (ANTERIOR) marker. Instead, the distributional facts suggests that it is, in fact, the Std E PAST PERFECT category.

We also considered a number of different forms which were used to mark habitual past events, processes and states. While the standard markers *used* and *would* were by far the majority, we also found two additional forms *did* + V and *'ll* + V which appeared in exactly the same distribution and function as each of the former markers respectively. At least one of these, i.e. *did*, is amply attested in the history of the English language *and* in dialectal varieties for which study of these forms have been conducted. We were able to trace its form to sixteenth century British dialects where it appeared in alternation with the simple PAST tense, with no distinction in meaning. In a study of the contemporary dialect of East Somerset in England (Ihalainen 1977) this form was found to pattern as a marker of the generic, or habitual, past — exactly the same function which it is found to have in Samaná English. In contrast, our distributional analysis provides no support to the possibility that this form is a marker either of a specific time period or a relative tense marker as has been suggested in the Creole literature. First of all, *did* + V patterns in exactly the same way as the two English habitual markers, and in no case can either of these be interpreted as a marker specialized for a specific time, other than general past. Secondly, it *only* serves to

mark generic past and does not occur in any other context, e.g. punctual events. Moreover, the parallelism of its patterning with *used to* + V suggests that it functions as a variant of this form. While *'ll* + V is not attested in any studies we have examined, it too appears in past habitual environments only, where it patterns along with *would* + V, suggesting that it is a variant of this form.

We also found that contexts in which these habitual markers occurred were also interspersed with unmarked forms which we have referred to as "ambiguous", i.e. indeterminate between a simple PAST tense form without its inflection *or* the reduction of an underlying habitual auxiliary. This is locale of one obvious difference between the two corpora. The Ex-Slave Recordings contained over four times the percent frequency of these than Samaná English. These forms presented a case for Creole-like marking since they are identical in form and distribution to the verbs that Bickerton (1975) claims will resist past tense inflection — non-punctuals. However, a number of factors weaken this interpretation. First of all, the majority of these verbs occur in conjoined clauses, and are thus well-formed structures in English. Furthermore, an examination of the marking patterns across all aspectual contexts indicated that non-punctual is not the relevant feature conditioning the unmarked forms. In fact, non-punctuals of different types had widely ranging marking characteristics. Corroborating evidence for an English interpretation for these forms comes from the fact that patterns such as this are attested throughout the literature on the English language where the auxiliary itself is not always explicit in the expression of past habitual action (Visser 1970). Moreover, general processes of reduction in this context, i.e. the reduction of auxiliary *would* to *'d*, could well extend to the complete elision of the auxiliary. The fact that the majority of unmarked verbs in past habitual environments overall, occur in contexts where one or the other of these forms is possible provides support for this hypothesis.

Aside from the occurrence of V-base forms, the second most frequent morphological types which could potentially be either Creole or English forms were those which had

non-standard preverbal markers. While the form *did* + V occurred quite productively and was discussed above, three forms, i.e. *done* + V, *be* + V, *had done* + V, *amI's done* + V are all fairly marginal and occur in a completely different range of contexts. All of these, (with the exception of *done* + V) although quite distinct from what is known in contemporary Std E, are all attested in the history of the English language.

What function do these forms have? Recall that preverbal *done* preceded by an auxiliary is absolutely atypical of Creoles. This has led to the speculation that while *done* + V is a bona fide Creole marker, the three verb cluster, *had/have* or *amI's done* + V is a vestigial English form. While all forms occur in both our data sets, our distributional analysis indicates that these are in large part explicable in terms of being additional variants to the aforementioned tense/aspect category morphemes. Our distributional analyses of tense types and overlap suggests that of all the morphological types the largest variety of forms occur in contexts which in Std E would require the PRESENT PERFECT or in contexts which would admit either the PRESENT PERFECT or the simple PAST. In Samaná English these are the only contexts where *done* + V occurs. Since, in contrast, it does *not* occur in contexts which admit *only* the simple PAST tense, we take this to suggest that its function is parallel to the PRESENT PERFECT. In contrast, *had done* + V occurs only in contexts which require the PAST PERFECT. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, on the other hand *done* + V occurs in contexts which require the PRESENT PERFECT, which require the PAST PERFECT, which admit either the PRESENT PERFECT or the simple PAST as well as those which admit either the PAST PERFECT or the simple PAST. Thus, in contrast to the Samaná English Corpus, here *done* + V appears to be a perfective marker regardless of temporal reference point, either present or past. Finally, the case of *be* + V in Samaná English suggests that it is a variant of the PRESENT PERFECT as well, since it occurs consistently and only in the same contexts as the PRESENT PERFECT. Corroborating evidence for these suggestions come from the fact that only *done* + V never occurs with a preceding reference verb of present temporal reference. All the others, *be* +

V, *had done* + V and 'm/'s *done* + V occur with preceding reference verbs in the past. Unfortunately the extreme rarity of these forms prevents a distributional analysis across any of the other dimension we have defined. Nevertheless, the distributions we have found suggest that most of these forms occur as variants of the Std E PRESENT PERFECT. Why should this be so?

We have documented the development of the PRESENT PERFECT category in the history of English and found that it is perhaps the only tense/aspect category in English which has a written history of variation in the segmentalization of its auxiliary. From the very inception of the tense, when auxiliary *had* or *be* were productive variants, it has involved competing forms. In Middle English further segmentalization within the realm of perfective meaning led to the development of the three-verb structures, *have/had done* + V. While these forms disappeared in the standard language, they are said to be found in dialectal varieties, some to the present day. Thus, it is not surprising that these corpora which are representative of diachronic speech, may well have maintained some degree, albeit slight, of variable occurrence of these old variants.

We also discussed in detail how and where there are overlaps within English and Creole grammars between morphological form(s) and varying tense and/or aspect interpretations. Thus, an overall view of the morpheme inventory has enabled us to ascertain which ones behave similarly, which are complementary, and which are completely distinct from each other, and perhaps most importantly, in which contexts. These findings have provided the basis for determining the contexts appropriate for a variable rule analysis.

The second part of our examination of Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings involved several variable rule analyses, in which we posited four variables operating within and across various different tense/aspect categories. In these analyses we tested a subset of our total factor groups. These were extracted from the literature on Creoles, BEV and WEV in order to quantitatively examine the significance of a variety of contextual and temporal disambiguation features of the surrounding linguistic environment

held to be relevant for the verbal marking patterns of these varieties. The most important findings of these examinations was that neither Samaná English nor the Ex-Slave Recordings demonstrate *consistent* and *unambiguous* conditioning effects that are predicted to be the case for a Creole-like system. On one hand although certain individual patterns appear to follow what has been suggested for Creoles, e.g. less marking with temporal conjunctions, in most cases the same pattern cannot be discounted as an English-like, or even general, linguistic pattern. On the other hand, although some patterns *within* a given factor group go in the same direction as suggested for Creoles, e.g. posterior temporal reference, the patterning tends not to be generalized across *all* the factors within the factor group. This indicates that the effect is localized and thus cannot be taken as illustrative of some general pattern as would be predicted by the original hypothesis. Instead, we have shown that independent processes such as phonological reduction, morphological class distinctions and the lexical nature of particular verbs are the most significant linguistic factors affecting surface tense morphology. In addition, and perhaps the most interesting result with respect to temporal structure and organization overall is the finding that preceding mark was selected as significant to all the variables we examined. The consistency of this effect, which, contrary to the expected Creole pattern, operates in a counter-functional fashion, has led us to believe that there are general patterns of morphological marking having to do with the redundancy of language which operate in these corpora. Additionally, we have found that different features contributing to tense/aspect interpretation are invoked in particular environments (i.e. narrative complicating action, non-narrative discourse) where they contribute to the organization of time in discourse. We surmise that these associations are important to the accurate interpretation and maintenance of coherent and comprehensible discourse.

In our first analyses we posited an entirely Creole interpretation of our data, looking at the morphological forms in terms of overall presence (overt tense) or absence (covert tense) of verbal morphology in an attempt to quantitatively investigate the relative tense

hypothesis. In Samaná English we found that surface realizations appear to be affected more consistently by the discourse context than any other factor. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, where narrative complicating action contexts were unfortunately quite infrequent, discourse context was, not surprisingly, not relevant. Thus, we re-analyzed these data, but separately according to discourse context. This revealed some significant tendencies, which were consistent across both data sets. First, the strongest constraint on covert marking was found to be the mark on the preceding reference verb. This factor group demonstrated that overt tense marking leads to more overt tense marking and covert tense marking lead to more covert tense marking. Because this was consistent across all discourse types we were led to suggest that it represents more general constraint on morphological marking — a local concord effect. The fact that a previous overt mark does *not* lead to a covert mark and in fact a previous overt mark lead to another overt mark makes this overall tendency distinct from what would be predicted in a relative tense system. Here *functional* unmarkedness is the paramount tendency of the grammar; while overt tense marking is predicted to lead to subsequent covert marking presumably because the mark is redundant, the opposite tendency, i.e. that overt tense marking should also lead to more overt marking is not. Moreover, relative tense marking is claimed to hold across all discourse types. The results from our analysis indicated that, aside from the effect of preceding mark, specific temporal disambiguation features from the surrounding environment pattern differed significantly according to discourse context. This suggests that something distinct from relative tense marking is involved in the interaction of temporal disambiguation and surface tense. Moreover, in the context which would be predicted to be the most propitious to covert marking in Creole, namely the most heavily disambiguated discourse context, narrative complicating action clauses, we find that the foremost linguistic element of temporal disambiguation — adverbs — promotes, rather than inhibits *overt* marking. This provides corroborating evidence for the fact that the system does not operate in such as way as to reduce redundancy. But perhaps the most important evidence in favour of the

suggestion that these data do not represent a Creole relational tense system comes from our results for the punctual/non-punctual distinction. This quintessential Creole distinction was shown to be significant but in a direction opposite to that predicted for a Creole-like grammar. We found *no* tendency for overt marking to be inhibited in non-punctual environments. All these findings led us to suggest that relational tense marking, as it has been defined in the relevant literature on this topic, cannot be posited as the pervasive mechanism governing the tense marking system in either Samaná English or the Ex-Slave Recordings.

In our second analysis, the nature of the variable itself — suffix deletion — enabled us to make an important synthesis of Creole *and* English factor groups in one analysis. The results from this examination provided overwhelming confirmation that phonological factors are the most influential conditioning effect on unmarked, i.e. V-base, weak single verbs in both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings (see Table (48a-b)). This result is even more suggestive of the English-like nature of these grammars when we recognize that this particular context is one of the largest areas where unmarked verbs occur in these data. In both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings preceding phonological environment and following phonological environment were chosen as the most significant factors to the deletion of suffixal inflection in all discourse contexts. In both cases verbal aspect, the factor considered by Bickerton to be the pervasive underlying influence on these forms in a Creole situation, was not selected as significant to the analysis at all. These results are particularly important because they demonstrate for the first time the relative importance of phonological over aspectual influences, at least in these varieties of BE, for this particular variable.

Pursuing the aspectual factor further we found that a breakdown of verbal aspect into punctual, iterative, continuous and stative categories revealed that the punctual/non-punctual distinction masked significant marking differences amongst non-punctual verbs. When this factor group was considered in this form by the variable rule analysis for suffix deletion it *was* selected as significant, but the strong position of the phonological condition-

ing effects was maintained. Moreover, we found that aspect does not have a *systematic* effect on verbal morphology. Instead characteristics of the individual verb coupled with its use in context, rather than an underlying mechanism in the grammar, are responsible for surface morphology. These results provided additional support for the suggestion that these corpora do not have an underlying system which parallels what has been suggested for Creoles.

Our third variable rule analysis examined the verbal marking patterns of strong verbs — suppletion vs. invariant base morphology. By including only those factor groups that had been included in the two previous analyses we were able to demonstrate that this variable process was distinct from the appearance of V-base forms in weak verbs. Thus, there is no evidence for a general process governing the appearance of unmarked forms in these corpora such as might be expected in a relative tense system. Instead, strong verbs, which mostly lack the configuration for phonological reduction, appear to be conditioned by a variety of influences from the contextual environment, particularly the preceding mark and the discourse context. However, when we reanalyze this variable by including verb class, we find that although most of these factors remain significant, the class of the verb itself exhibits the most significant effect over and above all the others. This is consistent with the findings from our distributional analysis which indicated that class affiliations in strong verb were the predominant influence on 'irregular' morphology. It also parallels the findings of Christian et al (1988). On the other hand these results directly contradict what might be expected in a Creole relative tense system where unmarked forms appear based on disambiguation from context and/or the aspectual nature of the verb and not based on English verb classes.

However, in at least one of our analyses verbal aspect was also chosen as significant to the appearance of V-base morphology in strong verbs. Because this might suggest some Creole-like influence on these data after all, we examined the internal make up of this effect in more detail. In so doing, we uncovered an interesting result. As we found with

weak verbs, it is obvious that whatever the relevance of aspect to verbal morphology, it is clearly not due to the creole punctual/non-punctual distinction. Instead, verbal aspect and verbal morphology appear to be the result of quite unrelated and independent processes. A distributional analysis of the effect of aspectual interpretation on the verbal marking patterns of individual strong verbs revealed that, once again, there was *no* systematic patterning involved. Instead, individual verbs behaved quite idiosyncratically with respect to aspect. Examination of a number of frequently-occurring verbs separately, confirmed that different specialized functions and/or idiosyncratic features of the verb itself influenced the way in which it will be marked for tense. Some support for this suggestion comes from the verb *say*. This verb is often attested as being categorically unmarked. We found, however, that this fact can be explained as a distinction between a quotative function vs. and non-quotative function. Such idiosyncratic characteristics of individual lexical items significantly effect their surface tense marks.

These findings do not detract from the fact that our analysis showed that strong and weak verbs in general, are governed by some higher order counter-functional organizational strategy which produces unmarked forms in the environment of a preceding unmarked form and marked forms in the environment of a preceding marked form. A variable rule analysis including a four-part aspectual division as well as the other contextual features included in all the other analyses revealed that the effects of preceding mark were maintained, and at a more significant level, than aspect in both runs of the data. In weak verbs, as we would predict, phonological effects were still primary. While V-base weak verbs are first and foremost the product of consonant cluster simplification, V-base strong verbs also exhibit influences which are pervasive, but instead of phonological effects, they are conditioned by their morphological and lexical class. Overlying these conditioning influences, is the effect of discourse context, which is mitigated in the case of weak verbs by the overriding phonological effects. In strong verbs, on the other hand, where the phonological configuration for this process does not exist, discourse context becomes significant. In both

cases however, is a local concord effect which appears in the same ranking for both variables.

Our final variable rule analyses examined the auxiliary deletion hypothesis, which can be divided into two distinct processes: 1) elision of auxiliary *be* before present participles and the 2) elision of auxiliary *had* before past participles. In the first case, we found that the effect of discourse context was particularly relevant. In a distributional examination of these forms across our two data sets we found that the Ø V-ing form was found to occur almost exclusively in narrative non-complicating action contexts in Samaná English. In the Ex-Slave Recordings, on the other hand, these were quite rare. Those that did occur were found primarily in non-narrative contexts. A variable rule analysis of a number of conditioning features indicated that the reduction of verbal morphology is the product of the subject noun, discourse context and education. These included the one syntactic conditioning effect that has been noted in the literature, i.e. preceding subject noun. This factor was found to be significant, but in a direction opposite to that predicted.

The important conclusion that can be drawn from these results is that the reduction of tense marking in these contexts is not caused by a relative tense pattern. A preceding overt marker did not lead to a covert form, nor did any of the other features thought to be characteristic of a relative tense system. Instead these forms appear to be the product of conditioning effect that are distinct from a Creole relative tense system, i.e. discourse context, education etc. Although we have been unable to find an attestation of these identical forms from the history of the English language, the elision of auxiliaries cannot be considered alien to the grammar as it occurs in other contexts. The fact that it is quite infrequent as well as highly constrained in terms of its context of occurrence in general suggests that its usage is, in fact, stylistic and not part of the general processes of marking in the language.

In the case of bare V-ed2 participles, a systematic examination and breakdown of the relevant context of variation revealed a number of important facts. First of all, through

our distributional analyses we were able to show that the rare occurrence of *been* + V was completely explicable in terms of elision of *have* and did not exhibit any of the characteristics of a Creole remote time or ANTERIOR marker. The verb it follows is never an infinitive in which the structure is active and refers to a past state or action as has been attested for some structures of this type in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives (Schneider 1989) and in contemporary Alabama (Faegin 1979). This would make it quite unlike a Std E structure. Instead, its restricted occurrence in 'recent' or 'continuing' temporal reference periods argues favourably for an Std-E PRESENT PERFECT interpretation of this form. Second, the variable context for auxiliary reduction preceding past participles in both Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings is extremely restricted and thus cannot be interpreted as an important or widespread variable in either data set. Instead, what appears to be the case is that three distinct lexical verbs, perhaps because of their irregularity and thus salience, are maintaining their historical forms. Only the three verbs *been*, *seen*, *gone* in Samaná English and only *been* in the Ex-Slave Recordings exhibit this variation. Due to the paucity of examples in both data sets a variable rule analysis was not feasible and even the marginals are suspect in some cases due to the extremely low numbers in some cells. Overall, however, it appears that the one syntactic constraint, that of type of subject noun, as we saw in the case of V-ing participles, works in the opposite direction to what was predicted in the historical literature. Pronouns do not promote the reduction of the auxiliary. The fact that these remarks were only observational in any case however, leads us to suspect that this claim may well have been due to categorical perception on the part of the grammarians. Nevertheless, what our results in this examination show incontrovertibly is that the verbs which appear as bare V-ed2 forms in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings are identical and consistent not only with historical descriptions of the English language but also with contemporary dialects of English from widely separated geographical locations. This suggests that these forms represent extremely stable variation, appearing in an exceptionally limited context in the grammar which has existed over a long period of

time. In a Creole-like system, these verb forms would be expected to occur across a more productive range of verbs in the grammar, if not according to at least some characteristics of the relative tense system. For these reasons, we suggest that they cannot be attributable to underlying relative tense phenomena

In conclusion, we return to our original question, that is, are the variable past temporal reference verbal morphologies in these data essentially English lexical items being manipulated to conform to an underlying non-English semantic system or do they indeed correspond to the English one? Our distributional analysis demonstrated that the forms corresponding to the simple PAST, PRESENT PERFECT, PAST PERFECT, HABITUALS and PROGRESSIVES in English all function along the same lines as the Std-E tense/aspect categories or can be explained with reference to historical developments in the history of the language. We found very little evidence either in our distributional analyses or in our variable rule analyses that these forms are functioning in a manner that is consistent with what has been predicted in a Creole grammar in Samaná English. This is also the case in the Ex-Slave Recordings, with the small exception, based on very little data, of the use of preverbal *done* + V in these data as opposed to Samaná English. While some features appeared to be distributed along the lines of a relative tense grammar (e.g. adverbs, particles) this is not always the case. Moreover, such patterns cannot be unambiguously attributed to a Creole-like system over and above any other.

Perhaps one of the most important findings of these analyses has been the striking similarities between Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings with respect to the distribution and conditioning of verbal morphology. We have found consistent, systematic parallels between the two corpora throughout our examinations. This finding is particularly germane to the arguments we presented in section 2.3. and lends substantial support for the relevance of these data to the controversy over the origins and development of BEV.

To the more specific questions, namely what factors condition the unmarked forms of the individual variables? For V-base weak verbs, we posit phonological reduction pro-

cesses remove an underlying PAST tense morpheme. For V-base strong verbs, verb class is the strongest predictor. For bare V-ed2 participles the individual lexical verbs are the strongest effect. To the question of whether or not these are English processes — there is little evidence that they are not. Phonological reduction effects such as these have been attested in varieties of English all over the world while identical irregular strong verb morphology (either for preterit or participle forms) has been present in the language for centuries. For Ø V-ing participle forms, we suggest this is likely due to the elision of an underlying auxiliary, either present or past, which is removed under restricted conditions having to do with discourse context, subject noun and education. It may function along similar lines to the HISTORICAL PRESENT. Although we have not found attestations of this phenomenon in any historical or dialectal English source, they do not appear to be conditioned by characteristics which would suggest relative tense patterning. Thus, to the question of whether *any* of the productive variable morphological patterns we have examined derive from an underlying Creole grammar, we would have to say, with the rare exceptions we have noted above, there is little evidence that they are.

The places where these two data sets do diverge are with respect to pragmatic factors affecting the type and range of topics in the discourse itself, which, as we have seen, have had an important impact on the *types* of tense/aspect categories that are used for past temporal reference. If and when these do occur however, they would not affect the underlying patterning or distribution of forms, but only their respective frequencies. An interesting result of this study was the finding that tense marking in general appears to be influenced by different contextual features depending on the discourse context as well as general constraints on marking. We have suggested that the latter involves a local concord effect which operates quite distinctly from the functionally-induced unmarked tense/aspect phenomena in Creoles or decreolizing varieties. Such influences on tense/aspect morphology have yet to be explored quantitatively in other contexts and varieties of English and/or other languages. This would be a profitable and interesting line of inquiry to confirm

and/or contrast the present results as well as to more fully explore the underlying mechanism by which tense/aspect features are organized in discourse.

It is hoped that these findings may contribute to a further understanding of the historical processes which have led to the contemporary linguistic patterns of BEV as well as aid in determining its ongoing evolution. On a broader level this research addresses questions about the means by which tense marking is distributed within discourse and more generally, to the progression of linguistic change in different sociocultural situations.

accept[Id]	come/came
accompany[d]	command[Id]
'ccomplish	commenc[t]
act[Id]	communicate[Id]
add[Id]	conduct[Id]
admir[d]	consent[Id]
affect[Id]	consider[d]
allow[d] {'llow[d]}	continue[d]
amaze[d]	convert[Id]
anchor[d]	correct[Id]
answer[d]	correspond[Id]
appear[d]	cook[t]
apply/appli[d]	counsel[d]
arm[d]	count[Id]
ask[t]	court[Id]
[a]stonish[t]	cross[t]
attack {'tack[t]}	cry[d]
bake[t]	cut
bathe[d]	dance[t]
[be] am/is/was/were	decid[Id]
beat	defend[Id]
become/became	deliver[d]
beg	depend[Id]
begin/began	descend[Id]
believe[d]	destroy[d]
belong[d]	die[d]
bite/bit	dig/dug
blaz[d]	dip/dipp[t]
bless[t]	disappear[d]
blow/blew	disarm[d]
born	discover[d]
boil[d]	dispatch[t]
break/broke	distribut[Id]
bring/brought	divid[Id]
buck[t]	divorce[t]
build/built	do/did
burn[d]/burnt	dominat[Id]
bury/buri[d]	draw[d]
buy/ought	drag/drug
call[d]	dream[d]
calm[d]	dry[d]
care[d]	drop[t]
carry[d]	dress (up)[t]
catch/caught	drink/drank
cause[d]	drown[d]
change[d]	dwell[d]
charge[d]	eas[d]
chastise[d]	eat/ate
check[t]	employ[d]
choose/chose	encourage[d]
christen[d]	end[Id]
civilize[d]	engage[d]
climb[d]	enjoy[d]
close[d]	escape[t]

[e]'stablish[t]	knock[t]
expect[Id]	know/knew
explain[d]	labour[d]
explode[Id]	land[id]
fan[d]	last[id]
farm[d]	laugh[t]
fall/fell	lay/lai[d]
feel/felt	learn[d]/[t]
fish[t]	lend/lent
flock[t]	lift[Id]
flourish[t]	light[Id]
fling/flung	live[d]
fight/fought	let out (school)
find/found	like[t]
finish[t]	leave/left
fix[t]	lodge[d]
flog[d]	look[t]
frighten[d]	loose[d]
follow[d]	love[d]
forbade/forbid	lose/lost
forget/forgot	made/make
form[d]	march[t]
fool[d/t]	marry/marri[d]
find/found	mash[t]
gain[d]	mean/meant
gather[d]	meet/met
give/gave	mention[d]
go/went/gone/going	mess[t]
get/got	mind[Id]
grab[d]	mis[t]
graduate[Id]	misplace[t]
grate[Id]	mix[t]
grew/grow	molest[Id]
hack[t]	mourn[d]
have/had	move[d]
happen[d]	multiply[d]
hear/heard	name[d]
help[t]	need[Id]
hide/hid	notice[d]
hinder[d]	oblige[d]
hire[d]	offer[d]
hold/held	open[d]
hunt[Id]	operat[Id]
hurt	ordain[d]
increase[t]	overcome/overcame
insist[Id]	owe[d]
install[d]	own[d]
intern[d]	pack(away)/pack[t]
invite[Id]	pardon[d]
join[d]	pass[d]
jump[t]	pay/pai[d]
keep/kept	pertain[d]
kill[d]/[t]	pick[t]
kneel/knelt	pile[d]

pilot[Id]
 pitch[t]
 plan[d]
 plant[Id]
 play[d]
 poison[d]
 pour[d]
 practise[t]
 preach[t]
 pray[d]
 prepare[d]
 present[Id]
 prevent[Id]
 promis[t]
 pull[d]
 put
 rain[d]/[t]
 raise[d]
 rassel[d]
 read
 recommend[id]
 reign[d]
 remain[d]
 remember[d]
 rent[Id]
 repair[d]
 resign[d]
 retire[d]
 return[d]
 reach[t]
 receive[Id]
 recount ('count')[Id]
 reform
 refuse[d]
 regret[Id]
 remove[d]
 represent[Id]
 reveal[d]
 rip[t]
 rot[Id]
 rub[d]
 rule[d]
 run/ran
 sail[d]
 salt[Id]
 salute[id]
 save[d]
 say/said
 scatter[d]
 scorn[d]
 see/saw
 sell/sold
 send/sent
 separat[Id]

set (free)
 settle[d]
 sew[d]
 shake/shook
 share[d]
 ship[t]
 shoot/shot
 shout[id]
 show[d]
 sight[Id]
 sign[d]
 sink/sank
 sit/sat
 sing/sang
 sleep/slept
 slide[Id]
 speak/spoke
 spend/spent
 spread
 spring/sprung
 stand/stood
 start[id]
 stay[d]
 steal/stole
 steer[d]
 strike/stuck
 sting/stung
 study[d]
 stop[t]
 suspend[Id]
 sum
 sweat
 take/took
 talk[t]
 teach/taught
 tear/tore
 tell/told
 tend[Id]
 thank[t]
 think/though
 throw/threw
 tie[d]
 touch[t]
 train[d]
 travel[d]
 treat[Id]
 trespass[t]
 try[ied]
 turn[d]
 understand
 use[d]
 vex[t]
 view[d]
 visit[Id]

vomit/vomit[Id]
wait/wait[Id]
walk[t]
want[id]
wash[t]
watch[t]
wear/wore
weed[Id]
weigh[d]
wet
{ withstand } 'stand
wipe[d]
work[t]
worry[d]
wound[Id]
write/wrote

[illegible]

Appendix C

(---H-111MS-X-P4-MSPMN---N-SFE 1156 {because} they had a next lady
 (--V1Y-W11MS-E-P4-RMPMC---N-SFE 1156 stayed
 (---W-X11MS-F-PP-MSPMC---N-SFE 1160 her name
 (---W-X11MS-Y-PP-MSPMC---N-SFE 1160 {and} that was
 (---W-X11MS-P-PP-BMTPA---NOSFE 1160 [I don't know what] she was
 (---W-X11MS-P-PP-MSPMC---NOSFE 1160 she was
 (---H-111MS-X-PP-MSPMN---NOSFE 1161 {because} they had <TR>
 (---W-X11MS-P-PP-MSPMC---NOSFE 1161 she was
 (---H-111MS-X-PP-MSPMC---NOSFE 1162 {and} they had
 (C1--U-3BEMP-F-MP-MSPMC---NOSFE 1162 {and} the doctor couldn't bring forth
 (--CDn-31SYP-P-PP-MSPMP---NNSFE 1163 she left
 (---\$-311MS-P-PP-TMPMA-H-NNSFE 1163 [when] she heard
 (--CDn-31SYP-P-PP-CXPMR---NNSFE 1164 she left
 (---A-811MP-P-PP-2CPMP---NNSFE 1164 [and] she went
 (X1--^4BEMP-P-6P-MSPMP---NOSFE 1164 she had to hide
 (---W-X11MS-F-PP-TSPMC-H-NOSFE 1165 {and} [when] the doctor was
 (---H-111MS-X-PP-MSPMC---1NOSFE 1164 {because} they had [at that time]
 (---H-111MS-P-PP-MSPMC---NOSFE 1165 {and} she was
 (---A-811MP-P-PP-MXPMPW---NNSFE 1167 she went
 (---W-X11MS-F-PP-LMPMC---NOSFE 1168 [where] the woman was
 (--C1E-415MS-P-PP-ETSPMC-H-NNSFE 1168 [when] she seed
 (---W-X11MS-FXPP-MTPMCA--NOSFE 1169 [ya] the doctors was
 (--CDh-31SYP-P-PP-MSGMP---NNSFE 1170 she told
 (O1--I-WBEMS-2-PP-MSPMPW--NOSFE 1171 [well] the NP, he didn't want
 (---W-X11MP-Y-PP-RMTPN---NOSFE 1172 [who] that was
 (---W-X11MP-F-PP-TSPMN-HSNOSFE 1173 [the time when] Cecilia was
 (---W-X11MP-P-PP-TSPMC-H-NOSFE 1173 [when] she was
 (B1--L-WGGMS-P-GW-MXPMCY--NOSFE 1176 she was living
 (--C2f-W1UXP-PYPP1TXPMPWWENNNSFE 1176 [well then as] they returnØ
 (---A-811MP-F-PP-MTPXP---NNSFE 1176 the doctor went
 (---A-811MP-F-PP-TSPMR-H-NNSFE 1177 {and} [when] the doctor went
 (---C-91UXP-PWPP0CTPMP---NNSFE 1177 she come
 (--C2r-W1UXP-PWPP12CPXP---NNSFE 1177 [and] she workØ
 (--C2r-W1UXP-PWPP1MSPMR---NNSFE 1177 she workØ
 (--V2r-W1UXP-PWPP1MSPXR---NNSFE 1177 she workØ
 (B1--C-9GGMC-F-GW-MSPXP--ENOSFE 1178 [and then] the doctor was coming
 (---A-811MP-P-PP-MSGMP---NNSFE 1178 she went
 (---^411MP-P-PP-MSPMP---NNSFE 1178 she hid
 (---C-91UXP-FWPP0CSPMP---NNSFE 1179 {and} the doctor come
 (--C1E-415MS-P-PPE2CPXP---NNSFE 1179 [and] he seed
 (---W-X11MS-F-PP-BMPMC---NOSFE 1179 [how] the lady was
 (---A-811MP-P-PP-32PMP---NNSFE 1179 [and] he went
 (B1--C-9GGMC-X-GG-MSPMCA-RNOSFE 1180 [ya] it was coming [in the night]
 (---C-91UXS-XWPP0TSGMP-HRNOSFE 1180 {and} [when] it come
 [10:00 in the night]
 (---H-111MP-F-PP-MTPXP---NNSFE 1181 the lady had
 (---W-X11MS-F-PP-MSPMC---NOSFE 1181 {and} the doctor was not
 (---W-X11MS-X-PP-MSPMC---NOSFE 1181 it was
 (D1--x-WBEMI-P-D43CQ-----N-SFE 1184 they did call
 (---W-X11MS-F-PP-2CDMC--N-SFE 1185 [but] her name was
 (--C2†-W11MI-P-PP-MSTPA---N-SFE 1195 she learned them all
 (--V2†-W16MI-P-PPGMSPMR---N-SFE 1195 she learnt all her children

Appendix D

Figure (1): Frequency of different types of nonstandard verb forms in Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings

Classification of non-standardness	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
	%	N	%	N
A	8.3	674	7.0	142
B	7.7	624	6.0	125
C	2.1	169	1.0	26
D	1.5	121	5.0	99
E	1.1	93	1.0	30
F	0.9	90	1.0	20
G	0.9	72	1.0	23
H	0.5	70	0.3	7
I	0.1	38	—	Ø
J	0.5	37	0.14	3
Total N		8046		2114

Figure (2a-b): Percent distribution of tense types used in past habitual contexts — Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings

Tense Overlap Site and variants	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
	%	N	%	N
PAST or would + V				
would + V	41	75	51	37
V-base	40	30	32	12
V-ed1	7	5	14	5
V-ing	—	Ø	3	1
'll	12	9	—	Ø
PAST or used to + V				
used to + V	41	119	5	13
V-ed1	36	104	83	206
V-base	5	15	11	27
did + V	15	44	1	2
V-ing	1	3	—	Ø
PAST, would + V or used to + V				
used to + V	39	179	3	12
would + V	25	113	51	191
V-base	15	68	19	73
V-ed1	12	54	25	94
did + V	4	17	1	9
'll + V	5	22	1	4
V-ing	.2	1	—	Ø

Figure (3a-b): Percent distribution of tense types in contexts permitting different combinations of the simple PAST, the PRESENT PERFECT, and the PAST PERFECT — Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings

Tense Overlap Site and variants	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
	%	N	%	N
simple PAST tense only				
V-ed1	68	2651	80	873
V-base	29.6	1154	19.4	216
have + V	.05	2	—	Ø
had + V	.8	31	—	Ø
V-ed2	.05	2	—	Ø
be + V	.05	2	—	Ø
be + done + V	—	Ø	—	Ø
have + done + V	—	Ø	.2	2
PRESENT PERFECT only				
V-ed1	10	8	3.6	1
V-base	6	5	—	Ø
have + V	47	38	39.3	11
had + V	—	Ø	—	Ø
V-ed2	2	2	10.7	3
be + V	14	11	—	Ø
be + done + V	2	2	—	Ø
have + done + V	—	Ø	Ø	Ø
simple PAST or PRESENT PERFECT				
V-ed1	31.2	76	37.5	9
V-base	24.3	59	12.5	3
have + V	18.1	44	20.8	5
had + V	1.6	4	—	Ø
V-ed2	2.5	6	8.3	2
be + V	9.9	24	4.2	1
be + done + V	.8	2	—	Ø
have + done + V	.4	1	Ø	Ø
PAST PERFECT only				
V-ed1	7.6	2	—	Ø
V-base	—	Ø	10	1
have + V	—	Ø	—	Ø
had + V	80.7	21	70	7
V-ed2	—	Ø	10	1
be + V	—	Ø	—	Ø
be + done + V	—	Ø	—	Ø
have + done + V	11.5	3	—	Ø

PAST PERFECT or simple PAST

V-ed1	55.2	111	47	16
V-base	11.9	24	15	5
have + V	.5	1	—	Ø
had + V	27.9	56	24	8
V-ed2	—	Ø	3	1
be + V	.5	1	—	Ø
be + done + V	—	Ø	—	Ø
have + done + V	1	2	—	Ø

Figure (4): Percent distribution of *been* + V in contexts permitting different combinations of the simple PAST, the PRESENT PERFECT, and the PAST PERFECT — Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings

Tense Overlap Site and variants	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
	%	N	%	N
simple PAST tense only				
<i>been</i> + V	1.1	42	.6	7
PRESENT PERFECT only				
<i>been</i> + V	19	15	46.4	13
simple PAST or PRESENT PERFECT				
<i>been</i> + V	10.3	25	12.5	3
PAST PERFECT only				
<i>been</i> + V	—	Ø	—	Ø
PAST PERFECT or simple PAST				
<i>been</i> + V	2.5	5	12	4

Figure (20 & 21): Percent frequency of V-ed1 and V-base forms across clause types.— Samaná English.

Clause Type	V-ed1	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
		%	N	%	N
Main		54	1779	65	820
1st conjunct		55	313	49	104
2nd conjunct		59	372	59	93
3rd conjunct		55	41	45	9
Temporal clause		48	235	64	92
Subordinate		55	149	70	71
Relative		54	150	63	25
Locative		53	26	—	Ø

Clause Type	V-base	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
		%	N	%	N
Main		24	786	15	189
1st conjunct		21	121	19	40
2nd conjunct		26	165	27	42
3rd conjunct		36	27	40	8
Temporal clause		31	153	26	37
Subordinate		19	51	12	12
Relative		22	60	28	11
Locative		20	10	—	Ø

Figure (22a-b): Percent frequency of *have* and *had* forms across clause types — Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings

Clause Type	have + V	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
		%	N	%	N
Main		2	11	1	13
1st conjunct		2	11	1	2
2nd conjunct		3	17	1	1
3rd conjunct		1	1	—	Ø
Temporal clause		2	10	—	Ø
Subordinate		8	22	7	7
Relative		5	13	—	Ø
Locative		—	Ø	—	Ø

Clause Type	had + V	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings	
		%	N	%	N
Main		2	66	1	13
1st conjunct		2	10	1	2
2nd conjunct		1	9	1	1
3rd conjunct		—	Ø	—	Ø
Temporal clause		1	4	—	Ø
Subordinate		6	16	2	2
Relative		7	19	—	Ø
Locative		4	2	—	Ø

Figure (23a-b): Distribution of morphological types across discourse contexts —
Samaná English and the Ex-Slave Recordings

Discourse context	Samaná English		Ex-Slave Recordings		N
		%	N	%	
Narrative - Complicating Action					
V-ed1	58	778	63	96	
V-base	41	550	34	52	
Hab	—	0	—	0	
V-ing	.4	5	3	4	
have + V	.2	2	—	0	
had + V	.1	1	—	0	
Narrative non-Complicating Action					
V-ed1	47	273	73	88	
V-base	14	84	12	14	
Hab	10	57	2	3	
V-ing	22	127	9	11	
have	2	11	1	1	
had	5	29	3	4	
Non Narrative					
V-ed1	54	2014	62	1030	
V-base	20	739	16	273	
Hab	14	518	15	253	
V-ing	5	172	2	40	
have + V	6	216	3	53	
had + V	3	96	1	14	

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