

THE MORPHO-SYNTAX OF THE JAMAICAN CREOLE VERB

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Historical Background

It is generally accepted that the main components of Jamaican Creole are English (various dialects) and African languages. The contribution of Spanish is usually regarded as marginal. Cassidy points out that

Spanish words have been entering Jamaican English directly from the very first and still continue to do so at the folk level. Some of the earliest -- *hato*, *bocadero*, *palenque* -- have virtually died out.¹

He underlines the importance of Spanish in the area and its continuing influence. However, apart from the lexical influence the possibility of any linguistic contribution which may have resulted from the 143 years of Spanish occupation is generally rejected.

Most of the historical backgrounds to the studies of Jamaican Creole seem to assume or conclude that when the English invaded Jamaica the only languages which were brought in contact were English and African languages. This

1. Cassidy: Jamaica Talk, p. 11.

examination of the historical facts pertaining to the conquest of Jamaica by the English is undertaken here in order to investigate the possibility that a Spanish based Creole may have been present during the period when Jamaican Creole was evolving. There are two main questions to be explored. In the first place, we must consider whether many slaves remained after the Spanish occupation ended and if so, what became of those who remained. Secondly, we must examine whether any Spanish slaves entered Jamaica after 1655.

There are conflicting reports as to the size of the population at the time of the English invasion in 1655. Shortly after the invasion, Juan Ramirez, the Spanish Governor, writing for help, indicated that there were more than 8,000 persons scattered about the island. The report to the Council of State stated that "the inhabitants to the number of 1,400, (had) fled to the hills, except for some negroes and Portuguese, who (had) submitted to the English".¹ Blome's account is different. He observed that

1. Calendar of State Papers (Colonial) 1574-1660, Sept. 26, 1655, quoted by Robert Le Page in "An Historical Introduction to Jamaican Creole" in Creole Language Studies, Number 1, p. 7.

at the time of the invasion "the number of Inhabitants did not exceed 3,000, of which half (if not more) were slaves".¹

It is possible that the 1,400 in the Council of State's report referred only to those who had escaped to the mountains. In that case we would have to assume that some 1,600 negroes and Portuguese had surrendered to the English. The bulk of this total would represent negroes, of course.

There is no evidence to support Le Page's² conclusion that by 1656 the women, children and most of the Spanish slaves had been evacuated to Cuba. This seems unlikely as Long records that the Spaniards experienced great difficulty in getting transportation off the island. Wealth and influence seemed to have played an important part in the decision as to who could leave the island. Long records that "Those who were called the gentry had found means of escaping to Cuba."³ At no time is there any indication that the number of runaway slaves exceeded 250. Ysassi who was appointed Governor by the Spanish Crown reported that:

1. Blome: A Description of the Island of Jamaica, p. 45.

2. Le Page: "An Historical Introduction to Jamaican Creole" in Creole Language Studies, Number 1, p. 7.

3. Long: The History of Jamaica, Vol. I, p. 251.

The negroes, Sir, who have remained fugitives from their masters who have abandoned the island and your Majesty's arms, are more than two hundred but many have died.... I have not done a small thing in conserving them, keeping them under my obedience, when they have been sought₁ after with papers from the enemy.

In February 1660, the majority of the negroes under their leader Juan de Bolas deserted to the English and helped in the final defeat of Ysassi. When the Spaniards left the island there could only have been very few runaway slaves still in the mountainous interior.

It is interesting that the language of the present-day Maroons contain no more Spanish than Jamaican Creole as a whole. However, Bryan Edwards records that "their language was a barbarous dissonance of African Dialects with a mixture of Spanish and broken English".² Dallas' account is different: "The maroons in general, speak like most of the other negroes in the island, a peculiar dialect corrupted with African words."³ He indicates that an uprising in

1. Cundall & Pietersz: Jamaica under the Spaniards quoted by Robert Le Page in "An Historical Introduction to Jamaican Creole" in Creole Language Studies, Number 1, p. 8.

2. Proceedings of the Governor and Assembly, in Regard to the Maroon Negroes. (Introduction by Bryan Edwards) quoted by Robert Le Page "An Historical Introduction to Jamaican Creole" in Creole Language Studies, Number 1, p. 8.

3. Dallas: The History of the Maroons, Vol. I, p. 92.

Clarendon in 1690 had nothing to do with the original runaway (Spanish) slaves. This new group was formed by runaway slaves from the English. Dallas also records that these slaves occasionally recruited their numbers from plantation negroes with whom they kept up communication. It must be pointed out that Bryan Edwards' account is earlier than Dallas'. It is also possible that while Edwards visited the original maroons Dallas met a group which consisted mainly of English runaway slaves.

It must be assumed that in the 143 years of Spanish colonization of Jamaica some language had developed to fill the communicative needs of both the slaves and their masters. The communicative channels may be represented as follows:

Africans \longleftrightarrow Africans \longleftrightarrow Europeans.

As Alleyne¹ points out only a fraction of the Africans had any meaningful contact with the Europeans -- the bulk of the African population were in effective communication only within their own group. The Spanish slaves who surrendered to the English would therefore have a great impact on the newcomers from Africa as they would form a homogeneous nucleus in the face of the diversity of languages of the newly

1. Alleyne: "The Linguistic Continuity of Africa in the Caribbean" unpublished paper presented at the Conference on Continuities and Discontinuities in Afro-American Societies and Cultures, Mona Ja. 1970.

imported Africans. In addition, it must be remembered that there was a great deal of prestige attached to Africans who had already spent some years in the Indies. Moreover, since they knew the place, they would presumably be the slaves who would be in close contact with the English as the latter would presumably seek to find out all they could from them. This would place the Spanish slaves in an excellent position for their language to undergo rapid relexification.

It must be emphasized that numerical proportion of the two components is not necessarily the main factor as far as the nature of the emerging language is concerned. This has been studied by Rona with respect to the importance of Peninsular dialects on the dialects in Spanish America. The main point is that a relatively small original nucleus can absorb an extremely large influx of later arrivals, without losing its original character. As Rona says:

Hay que tomar también en cuenta que el influjo de las diversas capas de colonización no tiene la misma fuerza. Si a una ciudad fundada hace veinte o treinta años con cincuenta familias andaluzas llegan de a poco doscientas nuevas familias, procedentes de diversas otras regiones de España, lo probable será que los nuevos colonos adopten insensiblemente las modalidades (o algunas modalidades) del habla andaluza. Lo mismo es válido en el sentido

contrario. También hay que considerar la importancia social que dentro de una colonia pueden tener las colonos¹ procedentes de un lugar u otro.

This statement of Rona's is relevant here because if the original nucleus had a spanish base, its influence would be much greater than the numerical proportion would indicate.

The second question to be considered is whether any Spanish slaves came into Jamaica after 1655. There is evidence to suggest that some did. Port Royal, Jamaica became the home of the Buccaneers and therefore the base for privateering not only against the Spanish galleons but also against the Spanish possessions. Under Henry Morgan the Buccaneers held a privateering commission from Governor Modyford. One of their orders was to take prisoners of the Spanish nation to ascertain whether they planned to recapture Jamaica. Black² states that the raid on Porto Bello in 1668 led to the capture of 300 negro slaves. In 1670 Panama City was sacked and 600 captives were taken; these included women, children and negro slaves. Black records that most of the prisoners were sold and the rest ransomed later.³

1. Rona: Aspectos Metodológicos de La Dialectología Hispanoamericana, p. 32.

2. Black: History of Jamaica, p. 63.

3. Ibid., p. 67.

Methodological Considerations

The main weaknesses of Creole Grammars have been the result of either a superficial treatment or too close imitation of descriptive models which were designed essentially to deal with the grammatical patterns of English. This meant that:

- (a) Data which could reveal the structure of the language was often not taken into account.
- (b) Jamaican Creole patterns were forced into a mould thus obscuring the essential structure of the language.

This study is an attempt to explore all the logical possibilities -- the compatibilities and the incompatibilities of the verbal system of Jamaican Creole.

One of the difficulties encountered in any study of Jamaican Creole stems from the nature of the language situation in Jamaica. There is a linguistic continuum; Jamaican Creole and Standard Jamaican English may be regarded as the two end points of the continuum. Differentiation along the continuum may be expressed in terms of features which appear at one end of the continuum and which gradually become replaced by forms nearer Standard English eventually undergoing extinction. It must be pointed out that a

speaker rather than occupying a point of the continuum, occupies an area. He can shift his position on the continuum as the occasion demands it. Because of the fluid linguistic situation and lack of standardisation, (Jamaican Creole is not a written language), shifting and linguistic variation are prevalent. Any attempt to describe Jamaican Creole necessitates some abstraction of data, as forms which represent intrusions from English have to be rejected.

Sources

Three major informants were consulted during the course of this study. In addition observations had been made over a considerable period of time prior to the beginning of this study. While my intuition as a speaker of Jamaican Creole proved to be invaluable in the analysis of the data, all data used in this study was rigorously checked with the three major informants.

Orthography

The orthography that is used in this study is that which is used in the Dictionary of Jamaican English. It was originally used by David Cassidy in Jamaica Talk and later used by Beryl Bailey in Jamaican Creole Syntax. This orthography was chosen for two reasons: to maintain

uniformity in orthography in works dealing with Jamaican Creole and secondly because it does not require the use of diacritics. The orthography is phonological, not phonetic, as this study is only concerned with morpho-syntax.

The Verb

The verb has been chosen as the area of this study as it represents one of the areas in which the Creole languages in general, and Jamaican Creole in particular, differ most from the European languages from which they derive their lexicon.

Verbs for the purpose of this study, are all words which occur or may occur accompanied by the aspectual particles a, fi, en and wi as well as the permissible combinations -- ena, fia wia, enfi and enfia. The verb is always stressed while the particles are always unstressed. The verbal particles may therefore be regarded as proclitics. This characterization of the verb means that some forms which are elsewhere treated as adjectives on the basis of their similarity to the English adjectives are here treated as verbs. We take the semantic value of verbs into account to delimit the set of verbs but it must be remembered that the semantic value is often relative because a given

Jamaican Creole string may be construed both as a noun phrase and verb phrase.

It is generally stated that Creoles have little or no morphology and that what is expressed by morphological devices in other languages is expressed by syntactic means in the Creoles. It is not our aim here to discuss whether the use of these particles belong to morphology or syntax as this would lead to considerations of linguistic theory and here we attempt only a description of the Jamaican Creole Verbal system.

CHAPTER II

THE VERBAL PARTICLES

The verbal particles may be classified into two groups: the pre-verbals which precede the main verb and the post-verbals which follow and may be attached to the verbs. The post-verbals are those particles like -we in the word gi-we "give away", -op as occurs in jump-op "jump repeatedly".

The pre-verbals include the aspectual particles (a, en, fi, wi) as well as the modal particles (mos, hafi, kyan). While the aspectual particles modify the aspect of the main verb as well the modal particles, the modals modify only the main verbs.

The term aspect as used in this study does not coincide exactly with the term as applied to Indo-European languages. In Indo-European languages, 'aspect' generally indicates the particulars of an action -- beginning, continuation or ending. In non-Indo-European languages, other particulars regarding the action are specified and aspect is used in the widest sense here to cover all these. The continuative and perfective aspect of Jamaican Creole coincide roughly with their counterparts of Indo-European languages.

The hypothetical aspect of Jamaican Creole represents the unreal or an action which is not known to be real. This is designated "aspect" in this study not because it corresponds to any aspect which occurs in Indo-European languages, but because it bears a relationship to the other members of the Jamaican Creole aspectual system. Since Indo-European aspect describes the particulars of the action, the hypothetical may be regarded as \emptyset happening or aspect. It may or may not occur. If we accept that the hypothetical represents an action which may be non-existent, then the representation of this possibility is as much aspect as neuter is gender.

Since all future is hypothesis, because as Coseriu¹ observes the future can never be the object of knowledge, but not all hypothesis is future, future is a subclass of hypothesis. If fi marks the hypothetical aspect in general, then wi indicates the hypothetical relative to the future. For this reason, wi is described in this study as an aspectual particle with a strong tense value. This explains why wi does not combine with the non-future or the universal hypothetical particle fi.

1. Coseriu E.: "Sobre el futuro Romance" in Revista Brasileira de Filologia.

The Aspectual Particles

The process, action, state or mood of the verb or modal is modified by the presence or absence of the aspectual particles a, en, fi, wi and their combinations. These particles occur immediately before the verb or modal that they modify. The complete paradigm may be represented as:

	en	fi	a	
	en	fi	-	
	en	-	a	
	en	-	-	
Subject	-	fi	a	Verb
	-	fi	-	
	-	-	a	
	-	-	-	
	-	wi	-	
	-	wi	a	

A:

The particle a indicates that the action of the verb is viewed as being in progress. This does not mean that it is in progress at the moment of speaking; it may be in progress at any other time which must be specified by a temporal adverb or statement. In the absence of such an adverb or

statement or contextual clue, this particle always has the value of present continuative i.e. if there are no indications to the contrary, the action of the verb is interpreted as being in progress now. "Now" also includes a future which is regarded as either so near, or so certain, that it is envisaged as already happening.

This view is characteristic of many Niger-Congo languages.

The indicative mood in Kongo has no future tense. Whenever future time is spoken of, the time or circumstance of the action is distinctly mentioned and the₁ action is represented as being present.

di gyal a plie marbl.

"The girl is playing marbles."

yu a stie lang?

"Are you staying long?"

shi a run.

"She is running."

"She will be running."

1. Rev. Bentley: Dictionary and Grammar of the Kongo Language, p. 649.

yeside wen Jan a tek di gyabij im

faal dong an kot im finga.

"Yesterday when John was taking out
the garbage he fell down and cut his
finger."

bai neks mont di biebi a waak.

"By next month the baby will be walking."

There are two variants of this particle a: de and da. De occurs most frequently with verbs of motion while da may replace a in all its occurrences.

im de kom.

im da kom.

"He is coming."

im da wash.

"He is washing."

This particle a coincides to a great extent with the value attributed to ka in several Antillean French Creoles -- "ka when placed before a verb or other predicate, indicates that the action or state is either in progress, about to begin very shortly or habitual".¹

1. Carrington and Valdman: Instruction Course in French Patois, p. 22.

The habitual aspect in Jamaican Creole however, is indicated by the unmarked form of the verb.

En:

The presence of this particle indicates an action which is regarded by the speaker as terminated. The consequences no longer determine the present situation, and may or may not be operating at time of speaking.

Jan en lef di duor opn.

"John left the door open." (The door may or may not be still open.)

Jan lef di duor opn.

"John left the door open." (The door is known to be still open.)

This particle en is also used to emphasize the fact that the speaker is certain that a particular event did, in fact, take place.

mi rait di leta yeside.

"I wrote the letter yesterday."

mi en rait di leta yeside.

"I did write the letter yesterday."

Jamaican Creole has two widely used variants of the particle en -- ben and wen.

Jan ben tel Mieri.

Jan wen tel Mieri.

"John told Mary."

Fi:

This particle is used to express the hypothetical or the potential aspect. It indicates an action which the speaker does not know to be real or not.

Jan fi go a skuul neks wiik.

"John is to go to school next week."

if Jan fi kliin Mieri fi wash.

"If John is to clean then Mary will wash."

Ø:

The unmarked or "base" form of the verb which is characterised by the absence of all particles may be regarded as non-continuative, non-perfective and non-hypothetical. When opposed to a which indicates the continuative aspect, the unmarked form means that the action of the verb is not necessarily continuative i.e. we are not sure whether the action of the verb is taking place at the present time.

If we were sure, we would use the continuative particle a. When opposed to en, the unmarked form indicates that the consequences of the action are still relevant at the present time. Opposed to fi, the \emptyset particle indicates the reality of the action. The unmarked form is therefore used to express the following:

1) A habitual action.

di bway waak go a skuul.

"The boy walks to school."

Mieri sel ina markit.

"Mary sells in the market."

2) General statements.

pus tiif.

"Cats steal."

haas gyalop.

"Horses gallop."

3) An action which is recently past and still viewed as determining the present situation.

di bway run gaan.

"The boy has run away." (He is not here.)

Mieri lef di duor open.

"Mary has left the door open." (It is still open.)

This value of the unmarked form in Jamaican Creole coincides roughly with that of several Antillean French Creoles. "When there is no particle before a verb which expresses action, the meaning is that the action is recently past and still viewed as related to the present moment."¹

4) The unmarked form of the verb is used to express the imperative. The pronoun does not usually occur with the singular. It may, however, be used for emphasis. On the other hand, with the plural form, the pronoun unu generally precedes the verb.

tel Mieri se mi a kom.

"Tell Mary that I am coming."

unu no tek-we di baskit.

"Do not take away the basket."

In Ewe, commands are also expressed by the verb alone. Like Jamaican Creole, the pronoun precedes the plural form.

1. Carrington and Valdman: op. cit., pp. 58-59.

/yi/ "go". (singular)

/mi yi/ "go". (plural)¹

Ena:

The form ena represents the combination of en + a and its meaning is the combination of the function of these two particles. It represents an action which continued over a period of time, but which may be terminated at the moment of speaking.

Jan ena plie wen im enfia plant di piiz.

"John was playing when he should have been planting the peas."

Mieri ena go a datde skuul bot mi muuv ar.

"Mary used to go to that school but I transferred her."

Jan ena plie wen im mada si im.

"John was playing when his mother saw him."
(He may or may not be still playing.)

Fia:

This form which is the combination of fi + a indicates a hypothetical action with a continuative aspect.

1. Warburton et al: Ewe Basic Course, p. 142.

Jan fia plant di piiz wail

Mieri a wata di gyadn.

"John should be planting the peas
while Mary is watering the garden."

Enfi:

The combination of en + fi, produces both the past of the hypothetical as well as the hypothetical of the past. There is a variant fi + en produced by the reversal of the order which occurs only when the past of the hypothetical is indicated.

Jan enfi wata di gyadn.

"John should have watered the garden."

Mieri enfi go bot Jan enfi stie.

"Mary should have gone but John should
have stayed."

Enfia:

This form expresses hypothetical action of a continuative nature, but whose consequences no longer determine the present situation.

laas nait wen Jan enfia du im
huomwok im go plie kyaad.

"Last night when John should
have been doing his homework he
went and played cards."

if mi en nuo se shi enfia kliin
mi wudn aks ar fi go a toun wid mi.

"If I had known that she should
have been cleaning I would not
have asked her to go to town
with me."

Wi:

Wi unlike a, fi and en is an aspect marker which has a strong tense value. It indicates the hypothesis relative to the future. This means that in the case of the hypothesis relative to the future, there are two possibilities -- fi and wi. What generally happens in languages, as Michel Breal¹ observes, is that interchangeable elements acquire additional functions. Since wi is a subclass of fi they are interchangeable in most instances. As a result, they have undergone further specialization and differentiation. The

1. Breal: Essai de sémantique.

particle fi remains the indicator of the hypothetic aspect while wi indicates a future which tends toward modality. This probably explains why many scholars took wi for a future and fi for a modal.

While the other aspectual markers have no restrictions on combinability, wi can only combine with a. The negative particle which generally precedes the aspect markers follow wi. It appears that Jamaican Creole wi is derived from the English "will" and was a later addition to the basic African derived verbal system.

Jan wi go.

"John will go."

Wia:

This represents the combination of wi + a. It indicates a future action which is continuative in nature.

Bai den Jan wia wok.

"By that time John will be working."

The forms a go and a are often used in preference to wi, wia. This is not surprising as these forms are more in keeping with the basic structure of Jamaican Creole.

Modals

These form a class of preverbals which may be constituents of the verbal chain (one or more modal plus a non-modal) but which like the aspectual particles cannot occur without the non-modal. Pre-verbals in this group include maita, mosa "may, might", mos "must" (inferential as well as obligative value), shuda "should", wuda "would", kuda "could", kyan "can", hafi "have to". While the signifiant of these modals are evidently derived from the English modals, we would suggest that their functions are non-English. In the first place, they may be combined with each other.

im kuda mos hafi go.

"It could be that he has to go."

Secondly, these particles cannot occur alone, not even in cases of ellipsis. The so called "echo construction" in English is non-existent in Jamaican Creole.

"Mary would tell but Jane wouldn't."

Mieri wuda tel bot Jein wudn tel.

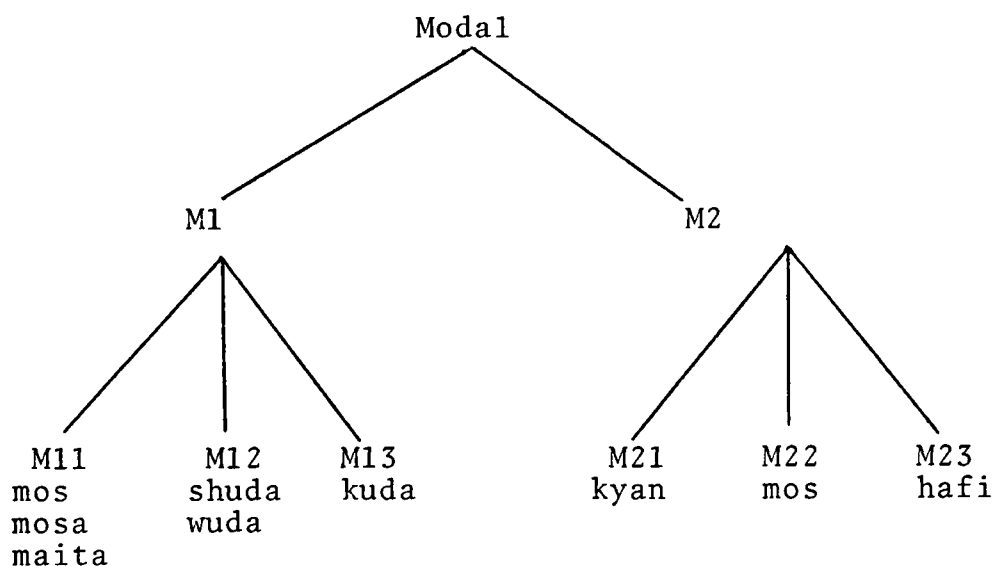
It is precisely because of these two characteristics that the modals are treated as particles rather than verbs.

Within this class, it is possible to distinguish two subclasses, M1 and M2, on the basis of (A) their position in the verbal chain and (B) their behavior with respect to the aspectual and negative particles. There is a general order rule which can be represented as M1 + M2; either can be \emptyset . This rule is recursive: the members of the same subclass may co-occur but when this happens there is a strict order rule. (Cf. statements under sections dealing with the combinations of M1 and M2.) It must also be pointed out that there is a limit to the number of modals that can occur in a verbal chain -- maximum three.

The M1 cannot be inflected while the M2 can be. However, none of the modals can occur with the continuative particle. The non-modal in the sequence may also be inflected. As stated earlier in this study the aspectual particles immediately precede the verb or modal they inflect. Normally, only one member of the chain may be marked for aspect -- exceptions will be dealt with under the section dealing with M2. (p. .) Generally speaking, the M1 cannot be negated. There is one exception, the M13 kuda can be negated. On the other hand, the M2 as well as the non-modal may be negated. Only one member of the verbal chain may be negated, however. A more complete treatment of negation of modals appears in Chapter V which deals with negation.

TABLE I

Subclassification of Modals



Inflect.	Cannot be inflected	Can be inflected		
Negation	Cannot be negated	Can be negated		
Co-occur.	Only two members may occur in a given sequence	All three members may occur together		
Position	May occur as the first or second member	No restrict. on its position	First or second	First or third
Order	There is a general order rule M1+M2. In addition the subclasses are strictly ordered. The order rule is reversed in the sequence M11+M1+M23			

Modal 1 (M1)

The members of this subclass are the following: mos, maita, mosa, shuda, wuda, kuda. This subclass may be further divided into three -- M11, M12 and M13 based on their order of occurrence. M11 always precedes M12 or M13 and M12 always precedes M13. As indicated earlier, the subclass cannot be negated. However, the negative particle which negates the subsequent modal or non-modal may become attached to the preceding Modal 1. (For a more detailed discussion see chapter on Negation.)

M11 -- comprises mos, mosa and maita. All these modals indicate probability or possibility with a varying degree of certainty. Mos is so certain that it is almost impossible to see any other possibility but it still indicates probability; if it were knowledge or complete certainty, then it would be indicated by the non-modal and the aspectual particles. The form of this modal is definitely derived from the English "must" with the inferential value. It must be distinguished from the mos M22 which expresses obligation. With the inferential value, mos must be absolutely first while with the obligative value it can only be followed by hafi which occurs only in final position. The M1 seems to have a rising tone when compared to the falling tone of the M22.

Mosa has a variant mosi which occurs most frequently in combinations. This modal contains more certainty than maita. It is also possible that mosa is derived from the inferential use of the English "must". While the event expressed by the maita + verb (with no other particle) tends to be future the event expressed by the same construction but with mosa substituted for maita tends to be recently past.

im maita go.

"He will probably go."

im mosa go.

"He probably went."

In all other occurrences they are mutually substitutable. As pointed out maita is less certain than mosa however.

im mosa en go.

im maita en go.

"He probably went."

M12 -- comprises shuda, wuda. Both of these modals express a possibility but in addition shuda indicates an obligation and wuda a predisposition.

M13 -- Kuda has the value of "could" (inferential) as well as that of capability.

(A) The M1, as indicated by the general order rule, occur as the first or second member of any modal chain. It can be preceded only by another M1.

im maita kyan go.

"He probably can go."

im kuda hafi go.

"It could be that he has to go."

(B) The verbal particles do not occur with any M1, not even in combinations of modals. There is one exception to this formulation, wi maita does occur, although it is regarded as less acceptable than maita wi. This may be explained by the fact that it is the only "aspectual" particle which has a strong secondary tense value. This may be seen as the influence of English tense on the aspect-based verbal system and may account for the irregularity characteristic of wi.

Jan maita wi go.

Jan wi maita go.

"John will probably go."

The presence of an M1 also restricts the verbal particles which may occur with the non-modal verb.

When the M1 is maita or mosa the non-modal occurs with all the verbal particles except fi. This may be explained by the fact that these modals already contain the value indicated by this particle viz. "hypothesis", and there is a tendency to eliminate redundancy in Jamaican Creole. Mos, however, expresses more certainty than these two and occurs with fi as well as with the other particles.

*im maita fi go.

im mos fi go.

"It must be that he is to go."

im maita enfi go.

"He probably should have gone."

When the M1 is M12 only en and a can occur with the non-modal.

im shuda go.

"He should go."

im wuda en go.

"He would have gone."

When the M1 is M13 fi and fia do not occur.

im kuda wi go.

"It could be that he will go."

"He just may go."

im kuda en wash.

"He could have washed."

Modal 2 (M2)

This subclass contains the following modals: kyan "can, able to", mos "must" (obligative) and hafi "have to". They may be classified as M21, M22 and M23 respectively, on the basis of their occurrence in a given sequence. This rule cannot be recursive because there is only one member in each subgroup.

(A) The M2 cannot precede M1. It may only occur as the first member of a sequence if that sequence contains only members of M2. As indicated, the occurrence of the subgroups themselves are strictly ordered.

(B) M21 kyan does not usually occur with any of the aspectual particles. The form en kyan has limited acceptability. The non-modal may be inflected with a, en, fi and wi.

im kyan fi go.

"It can be that he is to go."

im kyan a go.

"He can be going."

M22 mos combines with all the aspectual particles except a which does not occur with any of the modals. As indicated when dealing with the M11 mos, the M22 seems to have a falling tone when compared to M11.

In the case of mos (M22), the non-modal can only be inflected with en and a.

M23 hafi occurs with the particles en, fi, enfi and wi.

im en hafi kliin.

"He had to clean."

im wi hafi kliin.

"He will have to clean."

if im fi hafi kliin im wuon

nasti op di plies.

"If he is to be compelled to clean then he will not dirty the place."

It must be pointed out that in the case of the M22 or M23, it is possible for the modal to be combined with en while the non-modal is in the continuative aspect. This indicates that the action which the subject had to perform was continuative in nature but that there is a possibility that the obligation indicated by the modal no longer exists.

im en hafi a kliin.

"He had to be cleaning." (Possibility
obligation terminated.)

Combination of Modals

Up to this point we have discussed order and combinability only in terms of aspectual particles. In the rest of this chapter, we will discuss the combinability of modals with each other. Restrictions on combinations may be syntactic as indicated by the order rules already alluded to, or semantic. As for semantic restrictions, it must first of all be stated that the semantic value of the combinations is the sum of the individual modals so that every modal modifies the subsequent member of the chain.

M1 + M1:

(A) The combinations within this subclass are ordered. M11 always precedes M12 and M13, and M12 always precedes M13 so that the sequence is always M11 + M12 + M13. Any of them may be \emptyset . This order rule is non-recursive so that M11 + M11, M12 + M12 or M13 + M13 is not possible. It is impossible for three M1 to occur together in a sequence, therefore, at least one sub-group must be \emptyset .

im maita kuda go.

"He might be able to go."

im mosa (mosi) shuda go.

"He probably should go."

im shuda kuda du dat.

"He should be able to do that."

The combination * wuda kuda does not occur. This incompatibility is semantic not syntactic. It is probably due to the inherent redundancy that would result from this combination. Wuda indicates a possibility or predisposition, kuda indicates a possibility or capability. Wuda therefore presupposes the meaning of kuda, be it possibility or capability. It is to be noted that the negative particle may occur with the unacceptable combination thus making it acceptable.

im wuda kudn go.

"He would be unable to go."

(B) With all combinations of M1 + M1 only the perfective and continuative particles and combination of these can occur with the non-modal.

Mieri mos wuda go.

"It must be that Mary would go."

Mieri shuda kuda en du dat.

"Mary should have been able to do that."

In this combination, either the second M1 or the non-modal may be negated.

M1 + M2:

(A) The only restriction: *mos mos, *mosa mos because of cacophony.

(B) Any M2 may be inflected with en. In addition the M23 may also be inflected with wi. The non-modal takes en and a and the combined form ena. However, when the M2 is M21 the continuative particle can only occur if the M1 in the sequence is M13.

im maita en kyan go.

"He probably could go."

im kuda wi hafi go.

"It could be that he will have to go."

"He will probably have to go."

im maita kuda a go.

"There is a possibility that he could be going."

In this combination either of the two modals or the non-modal may be negated.

M2 + M2:

(A) As indicated earlier there is an order rule which governs the occurrence of the members of this subclass so that the only possible combinations are M21 + M22, M21 + M23 and M22 + M23.

(B) In the combination M21 + M22 the M21 kyan may be inflected with en and wi while the M22 mos can only occur with wi.

im kyan wi mos go bot im no waan mek yu nuo.

"It can be that he will have to go, but he doesn't want to let you know."

im en kyan mos go.

"There was a possibility that he was able to go."

In the combination M21 + M23 kyan hafi, no aspectual particles can occur with the modals.

im kyan hafi luk afta di biebi.

"It is possible that he has to look after the baby."

"He may have to take care of the baby."

When the M2 + M2 is M22 + M23 then en, fi, enfi and wi may inflect the M22.

if im enfi mos hafi du it im wudn laik i.

"If he were to have to do it he wouldn't
like it."

In all combinations of M2 + M2, en and a can occur with the non-modal.

Combination of Three Modals

M1 + M1 + M2:

(A) M22 mos cannot occur as the final member of a chain of three modals. When the M2 is M21 the only M11 that is possible is mos.

im mos kuda kyan go.

"It must be that there is a possibility that
he can go."

"There is no reason why he should not be able
to go."

All members of M1 can occur with a M23.

im maita kuda hafi go.

"He probably could have to go."

im mosa wuda hafi go.

"He probably would have to go."

When there is a M11 in the sequence M1 + M1 + M2 the order rule which governs the occurrence of the members of M1 is reversed so that both orders are possible. Still, there is no recursivity.

im mos wuda kyan go.

"He certainly would be able to go."

im wuda mos kyan go.

"He would certainly be able to go."

im maita kuda hafi go.

"He probably could have to go."

im kuda maita hafi go.

"He could probably have to go."

(B) When final member is M21 then en may inflect the M21. When it is M22 hafi both en and wi may inflect the M22. Both en and a and the combination ena may occur with the non-modal.

The sequence M11 + M12 (shuda) + M21 cannot be negated.

M1 + M2 + M2:

(A) In this chain the final M2 has to be hafi. The first M2 can be either M21 kyan or M22 mos. When it is M21, all members of M1 occur. When the first M2 is mos then mos and mosa do not occur. The non-combinability of these modals is probably due to cacophony.

(B) In the combination M1 + M2 + M2 any modal in the chain may be inflected with en while the non-modal may be inflected with en and a.

When the first M2 is M21 then only the M23 can be negated.

im maita kyan no hafi go.

"He probably can not have to go."

"It probably can be that he does not have to go."

When the first M2 is M22 and the M1 is M11, then only the M22 can be negated.

When the M1 is a M12 the M22 or the non-modal may be negated.

im shudn mos hafi go.

"He shouldn't be compelled to go."

im wudn mos hafi go.

"He would not have to go."

im wuda mos hafi no go.

"He would have to not go."

With a M13 in the sequence any modal except hafi as well as the non-modal may be negated.

M2 + M2 + M2:

(A) As pointed out earlier the order of this combination is fixed: M21 + M22 + M23.

im kyan mos hafi go.

"It can be that he has to go."

(B) The final M2 may take en and the non-modal can take both en and a.

Any of the modals as well as the non-modal may be negated.

The Post-verbal Particles

This class of particles include -aaf, -we and -op as occur in nyam-aaf "eat up", tek-we "take away" and tier-op "tear up". When there is no direct object or when the direct object is a noun or a noun phrase, the post-verbal particles cannot be separated from the verb. If the direct object is a pronoun, the post-verbal particle invariably follows the occurrence of the pronoun. In English "up" or "off" as well as other members of the so called "two place verbs" may or may not be separated when the object is a noun or noun phrase. Separation does not follow any general rule but is dependent on the particular construction.

im gi-we di buk.

"He gave away the book."

*im gi di buk we.

"He gave the book away."

im gi it we.

"He gave it away."

*im gi-we it.

In English "off" and "up" are often semantically equivalent; choice of one or the other is often dependent on the verb. In Jamaican Creole their functions remain

discrete. It is possible for -aaf and -op to occur with the same verb with completely different values.

im nyam-aaf im dina.

"He has eaten up his dinner." (All of it.)

im nyam-op im dina.

"He ate up his dinner." (Heartily but not necessarily all of it.)

-aaf:

This particle indicates that the action of the verb is complete.

im nyam im dina.

"He has eaten his dinner." (Not necessarily all of it.)

im nyam-aaf im dina.

"He has eaten up his dinner." (There is none left.)

-we:

Usually occurs with the value of the English "away".

im gi-we di buk.

"He has given the book away."

-op:

Apart from the directional value, this particle indicates the repetitive nature of the verb, or it intensifies the action indicated by the verb.

im ben-op di waiya brok i.

"He bent the wire and broke it."

im laaf-op wid di gyal.

"He laughed with the girl." (This indicates both repetition as well as intensity. In this case, it indicates a certain amount of familiarity.)

im kot-op di gyal.

"He cut the girl badly." (More than one cut implied.)

CHAPTER III

THE VERB CLASSES

All verbs in Jamaican Creole may be divided into two subclasses: 1) Aspective Verbs

2) Other Verbs

Aspective Verbs

This class may be considered as aspects of the verb "to be" in that they all contain some aspect in addition to the concept inherent to this verb. This common concept can be construed as a logical belonging or E.¹ Aspective verbs may therefore be regarded as combining E with various aspects. Coseriu discusses this problem with regard to a class of verbs in Spanish which corresponds to our class of aspective verbs.

"Pero la mera copula, tanto la explícita como la implícita, no significa "aspecto": este se expresa, justamente, mediante los verbos andar, estar, ir, salir, venir, etc., "gramaticalizados" que en tal caso, tienen el valor de ser un determinado aspecto."²

1. For a discussion see Rona: "La estructura lógico-gramatical de la oracion".

2. Coseriu: Sobre las llamadas "Construcciones con verbos de movimiento": un problema hispánico, p. 8.

When there is no aspect then there is the "pure copula" which has as its signifiant in Jamaican Creole \emptyset or a. We must emphasize that these aspects are not necessarily temporal.¹

These verbs may be divided into two groups: those which combine E with some other aspect (Group 1) and those which combine E + location + some other aspect (Group 2). The first group takes an attribute while the second takes an adverbial phrase. There is one verb tan which occurs as a member of both groups. Tables 2(a) and (b) show the aspective verbs and give an interpretation of the forms along with some examples.

1. The term aspect originated in Indo-European Linguistics (more exactly slavic linguistics) where it designates only temporal aspects, e.g. perfective, inchoative, iterative etc. See Lyons: Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics, pp. 313-315. We don't see why African or Creole languages should have the same limitations. Notwithstanding the fact that some of the Jamaican Creole categories are temporal while others are not, we think that the term aspect is useful to describe them.

The "base" verb of each series de and a (copula) cannot occur with the continuative particle. A similar restriction also occurs in other Creoles: in Papiamentu ta + ta does not occur except in emphatic speech. In normal speech the copulative ta occurs without the continuative particle. In Jamaican Creole, the continuative particle occurs with de when the negative particle is present in the sequence. The most frequent value of this combination is a near future; that is, the action of the verb is so certain that it is almost interpreted as already taking place.

Jan naa de a yaad dis eevning.

"John won't be at home this evening."

TABLE 2(a)

Aspective Verbs--Group 1

Signifie	Signifiant	Examples
E alone	∅, a	<u>Jan ogli.</u> "John is ugly." <u>Jan a tiicha.</u> "John is a teacher."
E + appearance	luk	<u>Jan luk ogli.</u> "John looks ugly."
E + similarity	fieba	<u>Jan fieba Mieri.</u> "John resembles Mary."
E + inchoative	ton, gruo, get	<u>Jan ton ogli.</u> <u>Jan gruo ogli.</u> <u>Jan get ogli.</u> "John has become ugly."
E + temporariness	tan	<u>Di ruum tan gud nou bot</u> <u>di pikni suun pul i op.</u> "The room is well ar- ranged now but the kids will soon disarrange it."

TABLE 2(b)

Aspective Verbs--Group 2

Signifie	Signifiant	Examples
E + location	de	<u>Jan de a yaad.</u> "John is at home."
E + temporariness	tan	<u>Jan tan a di shap too lang.</u> "John stayed too long at the shop."

The Copula

An initial examination of the copula system in Jamaican Creole leads to the conclusion that the signifiant is sometimes \emptyset and sometimes a. The suppression of a occurs where there is no possibility of ambiguity resulting from its omission. It is therefore suppressed in the presence of a verbal particle as the latter is sufficient to indicate the verbal function even if the verb is not present. The copula is retained in expressions involving exact time and when there is no expressed subject.

a faiv aklak.

"It is five o'clock."

a wan hat.

"It is a hat."

When there is no verbal particle, as the case in non-continuative statements and the predicate is a noun or a noun phrase, there is no suppression of the copula, e.g.: Jan a tiicha * Jan tiicha. It must be pointed out that the form of the copula and the form of the continuative particle coincide. Possibly because of the nature of the form (no consonantal support), there is no combination of the copula and the continuative particle, i.e. the form a+ a does not

occur. As pointed out earlier Papiamento is similar in that ta + ta occurs only in emphatic speech. Rona¹ suggests that the combination has probably fallen into disuse because of the homophony or because of the quasi-aspectual nature of the verb itself. This could be the case in Jamaican Creole as well.

The following break-down indicates the exact environment in which the copula occurs.

i) When the predicate is a noun or a noun phrase the form of the copula is a. It occurs optionally in negative statements.

Mieri a im sista.

"Mary is his sister."

Jan en pienta nou im a kyapinta.

"John was a painter now he is a carpenter."

Jan a tiicha.

"John is a teacher."

If the copula were omitted in the last example, there would be ambiguity as the primary function of juxtaposition in

1. Rona: "Elementos espanoles, portugueses y africanos en el papiamento" in Watapana III.

Jamaican Creole is to indicate possession. The form Jan tiicha would therefore mean "John's teacher". The presence of the negative particle eliminates this possibility; in this case the a is optional and, in fact, occurs most frequently in emphatic speech.

Jan no tiicha.

Jan a no tiicha.

"John is not a teacher."

This same function of separation is carried out by the verbal particles.

ii) Whenever there is no subject expressed the copula is always a.

a wan rabbit.

"It is a rabbit."

a en Jan.

"It was John."

iii) In expressions of time the copula is obligatory.

a bet yu se a tri aklak aredi.

"I bet you that it is already three o'clock."

di miiting a ten aklak.

"The meeting is at ten o'clock."

iv) When the predicate is a prepositional phrase the a is optional.

da buk ya(a) fi Jan dyada(a) fi Mieri.

"This book is (for John) John's the other is Mary's."

v) In all other instances the copula is \emptyset .

di bway ogli.

"The boy is ugly."

di bway en ogli.

"The boy was ugly."

i erli.

"It is early."

In deleting the copula before an adjectival complement Jamaican Creole coincides roughly with at least two French Creoles -- Haitian and Grenadian. Papiamento presents a slightly different case. Since two ta are not possible in such constructions as e casa ta grandi we do not know whether ta represents the continuative particle or the copula verb. It seems more likely that it represents the copulative ta which we would assume to be obligatory in this position as omission would lead to ambiguity as the form e casa grandi exists in the language with the value "the big house".

This problem does not arise in Jamaican Creole. Compare

a) di hous big.

"The house is big."

b) di big hous.

"The big house."

The constraint on the form of copula + adjective in Papiamentu is the same as the one which holds in Jamaican Creole for the form of N + copula + N. In both cases it leads to the obligatory presence of the form of the copula.

One possible diachronic explanation of the alternation between \emptyset and a would entail the postulation of the existence of a in all constructions where \emptyset now appears. At this stage Jamaican Creole would be exactly the same as the Spanish based Creoles in having a copula which coincided exactly in form with the continuative particle. This a, however, started being eliminated wherever its elimination would not lead to ambiguity or misinterpretation. We would assume, if this hypothesis is correct, that around the eighteenth century there existed an a which was the marker of the continuative aspect and an a which represented "E + \emptyset " aspect. While the form of the copula is superfluous (it is not opposed to a non-copula and may therefore be omitted), the continuative particle is not;

this may explain why the former was eliminated and the latter was retained.

Ferguson in a paper entitled "Absence of Copula and the Notion of Simplicity, A Study of Normal Speech Baby Talk, Foreigner Talk, and Pidgins,"¹ puts forward a series of hypotheses which he suggests, possibly explains the absence of the copula in pidgins and Creoles. In his analysis of the copula in equational clauses he divides natural languages into Type A which has the copula in normal equational clauses and Type B which is characterized by the absence of the copula in these clauses. He discusses the notion of simplified speech in "Baby talk" and "Foreigner talk". The normal outcome of the use of "Baby talk" is resolved in the acquisition by the child of the non-simplified registers of one language while retaining some competence in "Baby talk". On the other hand, the usual outcome of "Foreigner talk" is that one side or the other acquires an adequate command of the other language and the "Foreigner talk" is used for purposes of ridiculing and talking to people who have not yet acquired competency in the language. In certain contexts however, this foreigner talk may serve

1. This paper was originally presented at a conference at U. W. I. (MONA) and appears in Pidginization and Creolization of Languages edited by D. Hymes, pp. 141-149.

as an incipient pidgin and become a more widely used form of speech.

Based on the notions of simplified speech and given that the natural languages can be classified into Types A and B according to the criteria already mentioned, Ferguson puts forward two hypotheses. First, the copula will tend to be omitted in simplified speech and "Foreigner talk". "Going one step further the hypothesis would suggest that a pidgin language whose lexical source was Type A would tend to omit the copula."¹ The second hypothesis indicates the conditions under which the copula would most likely be omitted.

Ferguson therefore sees the origin of Creoles in pidgins which in their turn may have originated from "Foreigner talk". He insists that such a view would not deny the grammatical influence of the other languages but would help to explain some otherwise surprising similarities among distant Creoles by setting the starting point in a universal simplification process. There is no reason to assume that "Foreigner talk" exists or is as widespread as Ferguson supposes. Ferguson maintains that a Spanish speaker in attempting to

1. Ferguson: op. cit., p. 146.

communicate with a foreigner who has little or no Spanish will typically use the infinitive. The example¹ (Lynch 1955) in which an Englishman is portrayed as using that type of Spanish, has nothing to do with the question. Even if what he says is true, it would constitute a less important factor than the way that foreigners actually speak. Indians are portrayed as using the infinitive form of the verb because they speak that way. Spanish speakers, however, consistently use correct Spanish syntax when speaking to the Indians.

Ferguson sees the pidgins as essentially the creation of Europeans. This is pure hypothesis and it seems more likely that the pidgins were created by the natives themselves. Moreover the notion that Creoles evolved from pidgins is pure supposition as there is no example of a pidgin which became a Creole. When Ferguson tries to generalize on his initial hypothesis, he concludes that a pidgin whose lexical source was Type A language would tend to omit the copula. However, the lexical source has nothing to do with the grammatical source. The grammatical source of the Creoles is African and European. It is impossible to speak in terms of one language being influenced by another in a discussion of Creole genesis -- for example in the case of Jamaican Creole would

1. Ferguson: op. cit., note 5, p. 148.

it be English influenced by African languages or African influenced by English? What is usually European in the Creole is the form signifiant not the function signifie. Since forms are usually considered secondary or lower level items while functions are more basic, if a choice had to be made it would seem more reasonable to regard the Creoles as African grammars influenced by European languages.

Assuming the validity of all Ferguson's assumptions, the universal simplification process that he proposes would explain the similarities between pidgins with the same lexical source but would fail to explain the striking similarities between pidgins and Creoles with different lexical sources.

Furthermore, the simplification that Ferguson discusses is not the kind that usually occurs in a pidgin. In a pidgin, what is usually simplified is the content -- "the signifie". With regard to the copula, the meaning is always retained in spite of the \emptyset form. In fact, the meaning is so strongly retained that the "signifiant" does not disappear if there is any doubt that the meaning would not be clear. This is the case when the predicate is a noun or noun phrase and the copula is therefore retained in this position. Neither could this theory satisfactorily explain why in the simplification process the Creole languages usually employ

a different verb in existential clauses -- there is/are X where the source language has only the copula.

di man a tiicha.

"The man is a teacher."

dopi de.

"There are ghosts."

"Ghosts exist."

buk de pan di tiebl.

"There are books on the table."

di buk dem de pan di tiebl.

"The books are on the table."

Ferguson's explanation of the absence of the copula in Creoles would become unnecessary if he admitted the possibility that at least this aspect of the grammatical structure is African derived. As Alleyne points out

"The verb "to be" is not omitted in "creoles". The predicative use of adjectives in expressions such as mwe malad, mi sik, can be shown to have West African models: Ewe gli la keke "The wall is broad". There are, in fact, African models for the precise "creole" dissection of "to be" into i) to be a quality, ii) to be a copula and iii) to be locational."¹

1. Alleyne: "Acculturation and the Cultural Matrix of Creolization", p. 173, in Pidginization and Creolization of Languages, ed. by Dell Hymes.

It appears reasonable to assume that the copula system in Jamaican Creole is grammatically related to one or more African systems since similar systems exist and no such European system does. Finally, independent spontaneous creations would hardly show such striking similarities among themselves and to other already existing systems.

De:

As Cassidy¹ points out, de is most certainly African in form as well as in function. It is found in most Ewe dialects and the Ibo language as well as other West African languages. It is glossed as a verb of incomplete predication meaning "to be".

In Jamaican Creole de occurs in locative clauses as well as in existential clauses.

Jan de huom.

"John is at home."

Mieri no de de.

"Mary is not there."

ruoling kyaaf de.

"Rolling calves exist."

1. Cassidy: Jamaica Talk, p. 60.

There is a variant of this verb daa which may be explained as the combination of de+a or da+a which would be phonetically more acceptable. The de which is used with the continuative value (im de kom) has a da variant, so we may suppose that the aspective verb de could also have had a variant. Be it as it may, daa is probably a contraction of some form of de+a because we have:

im de a yaad.

im daa yaad.

"He is at home."

with exactly the same function and meaning.

It is possible that de and the variant da come from different African languages. Twi has a verb da which means "to lie" or "to be situated". The Nubian languages have da which indicates a state of motion but which must have acquired the sense "to be present" as it is used in locational clauses.

Other Verbs

All other verbs in Jamaican Creole may be divided into four form classes.

Class 1:

This class of verbs may occur in both causative and active constructions. Examples of this class are: kot "cut", brok "break", laas "lose". The subject of the active construction appears as the direct object of the causative.

Jan kot di trii.

"John cuts the tree."

di trii kot.

"The tree is cut."

Only an inanimate subject can occur with the active construction. The inchoative construction described in Chapter IV is used instead, when the subject is animate. It may also be used instead of the active construction. While the active construction indicates a state without specifying whether the state was brought about by an agent, the inchoative seems to suggest that the state was brought about by the intervention of some unspecified agent.

di ruop kot.

"The rope is cut."

(This state may have resulted with or without the intervention of an agent.)

di ruop get kot.

"The rope has been cut."

(Some unspecified agent was involved.)

Class 11:

These verbs characteristically select an animate subject. They may occur in both the causative¹ and absolute but not active constructions. Belonging to this class are the following verbs: nuo "know", figat "forget", beg "beg", jump "jump", swim "swim".

Jan jump.

"John jumps."

Jan jump di fens.

"John jumps the fence."

*di fens jump.

*di fens get jump.

1. Since there is no opposition here between active-causative, we could also regard this form as the active construction which coincides structurally with the form which usually indicates the causative.

To express the idea which normally corresponds to the active construction, the indefinite construction is used. The indefinite pronoun dem is substituted for the definite agentive subject of the causative construction.

Class 111:

In this class fall rait "write", plie "play", haid "hide", lif-op "lift". These verbs enter into both active and causative constructions (like Class 1) and absolute constructions (like Class 11).

Jan plie marbl.

"John plays marbles."

Jan plie.

"John plays."

marbl a plie.

"A game of marbles is being played."

Class IV:

This class comprises the verbs which can only be used absolutely. These verbs seem to be primarily directional:

kom "come", go "go", kidaan "keep on".

im kom ya yeside.

"He came here yesterday."

im fi kidaan til im kom a Mieri shap.

"He is to continue until he comes to
Mary's shop."

TABLE III

The verb classes and the constructions

that they enter into

	Inanimate Subj. + Verb.	Animate Subj. + Verb.	Animate Subj. + Verb. + Obj.
1.	Active	∅	Causative
11.	∅	Absolute	Causative
111.	Active	Absolute	Causative
1V.	Absolute	Absolute	∅

CHAPTER IV

THE MULTI-VERBAL CONSTRUCTIONS

This chapter will deal not only with the serial verb construction which has become the focus of much of the recent interest in Creoles in general, but also with other multi-verbal constructions which are as characteristic of the Creoles as is the serial construction itself. Like the serial verb construction, multi-verbal constructions also occur in the Niger-Congo as well as other African languages. Irene Warburton et al observe:

A peculiarity of Ewe is that we often find a row of verbs one after the other. The chief features of this are that all verbs stand next to each other without being connected, that all have the same tense or mood, and that in the event of their having a common subject, these stand with the first, the others remaining bare.¹

The Transitive Construction

This construction consists of the verb mek + V2. The logical subject of the action of the sentence is the direct object of mek.

1. Warburton et al: Ewe Basic Course, p. 141.

Jan mek Mieri drap.

"John caused Mary to fall."

Jan mek Mieri tel lai.

"John caused Mary to lie."

Either of the two verbs in the sentence can be negated.

Jan mek Mieri no drap.

"John caused Mary to not fall." (Literally)

"John prevented Mary from falling."

The inflections usually occur in front of the first verb.

Jan en mek Mieri drap.

"John caused Mary to fall."

Jan wi mek Mieri drap.

"John will cause Mary to fall."

The imperative form of this verb introduces an exhortation.

mek wi go.

"Let us go."

This verb also has other syntactic functions:

a) It is used to introduce a conditional clause instead of if.

mek mi en go im wuda kil mi.

"If I had gone he would have killed me."

mek Jan kom liet im wi faiya ar.

"If John comes late he will fire him."

b) It conjoins two sentences, the second of which may be interpreted as the result or consequence of the first. In this instance mek may be regarded as having not only a sentence object but also a sentence subject.

a fasti im fasti mek tiicha biit im.

"He was impertinent causing the teacher to beat him."

a it mek mi tel mi mada.

"That is why I told my mother."

The Aspective Construction

In this construction the first verb indicates an aspect, be it beginning, continuing, ending, becoming or repetition. The aspective verbs may therefore be classified as (a) Inceptive (b) Continuative (c) Completive (d) Inchoative and (e) Repetitive.

The aspectual and modal particles precede the first verb in the sequence. With the Inceptive verbs the second member of the sequence may be preceded by fi. It is possible

that this fi represents the fi of the causal and purposive constructions and affected the inceptive constructions through analogy. Alternatively, it represents the hypothetical particle. The former seems more likely and the fi in these constructions occur less frequently and seem to be a recent addition through the influence of the English infinitive after these verbs. With the continuative kimaan the particle a may occur before the second verb.

(a) Inceptive Verbs:

In this class are the verbs taat "start", begin "begin" as well as the verbs kom and go with the inceptive value. The second verb may be preceded by the particle fi.

im taat (fi) waak.

"He started walking."

The verbs kom, go deserve special treatment as they have acquired additional syntactic functions when they occur in the verbal sequence. When they refer to another predicative verb, kom and go can follow their own predicative homonyms. In addition, go may follow kom but the reverse order is not possible.

kom kom kis mi.

"Come and kiss me."

kom go kliin di ruum.

"Come and clean the room."

go go kliin di ruum.

"Go and clean the room."

When the sequence kom/go + verb is preceded by another verb, it indicates that the action of the second verb starts after the action of the first. We can say that kom or go used between two predicative verbs denote an ordering of two actions. The second action may be regarded as the purpose or consequence of the first, and these are, of course, subclasses of inceptivity. If in a given sequence, both ordering as well as beginning of the second action are to be indicated, there are two occurrences of kom/go in the sentence.

im draiv ya kom kom trobl mi.

"He drove here and started molesting me."

im kaal mi kom kom trobl mi.

"He called me and started molesting me."

To reiterate briefly the verbs kom and go are used in the following ways:

(1) In its purely inceptive value it indicates the beginning of one action.

yu kyan kom kliin nou.

"You can start cleaning now."

(2) It indicates an ordering of two actions in which case it occurs between two predicative verbs, the first of which may be its own predicative homonym.

im kom kom tel mi se Mieri ded.

"He came to tell me that Mary is dead."

(3) If in addition to the ordering we still want to indicate the beginning of the second action then it is indicated by a second occurrence of the verb.

im kaal mi kom kom tel mi se Mieri ded.

"He called me and started telling me of
Mary's death."

In Jamaican Creole the definite future is constructed by using the continuative form of the verb go + the predicative verb.

im a go ron.

"He is going to run."

It is possible to consider this usage as an extension of the inceptive usage. What Bendix states about the usage of ta-bay in Papiamentu is true for Jamaican Creole go. "The future with ta-bay indicates that plans or preparations are

already made for the action or that things are such that the action will occur etc."¹ A similar construction also occurs in Ewe: "In the ingressive, (i.e. intentional) /le/ may be replaced by a verb of motion such as /va/, /gbɔ/ "to come" /yi/ "to go"."²

The existence of the English "going to" would have facilitated the retention of this future construction.

It is also interesting to note that alé "go" and vini "come" are used in Grenadian French Creole in very much the same way as the Jamaican Creole counterparts.

jé ka muté isi vini van.

"They came up here and sell."³

ka vwe mwẽ bòdlamè alé pwã sab.

"He sent me to the seaside to fetch sand."⁴

Cassidy noticed the frequency of these verbs in the multi-verbal constructions in Jamaican Creole. He is of the opinion that the model for the usage is African rather

1. "Serial Verbs in Caribbean and West Africa: Their semantic analysis in Papiamento", p. 53.

2. Warburton et al: op. cit., p. 71.

3. Roberts: The Verb in Grenadian French Creole, p. 204.

4. Ibid., p. 201.

than English. "The paratactic piling up of verbs, such as we see here, is a characteristic feature of Niger-Congo languages."¹

(b) Continuative Verbs:

Examples of continuative verbs are gwaan "go on", "continue", kipaan "keep on", "continue".

As indicated earlier the verb which follows kipaan may be preceded by the continuative particle a.

mi tel im fi gwaan riid bot im neba hier mi.

"I told him to continue reading but he never heard me."

if im kipaan (a) trobl mi mi a tel tiicha.

"If he continues molesting me I shall tell teacher."

(c) Completive Verbs:

These are the verbs tap and don with a purely completive value. They can sometimes be translated by the English "finish".

1. Cassidy: op. cit., pp. 62-63.

tap taak nou.

don taak nou.

"Stop talking now."

The verb don may either precede or follow the other member of the sequence. When it precedes, the action may not necessarily be completed or, even initiated, for that matter. When it follows, the action to which it refers is either already completed or at least initiated.

wen yu don iit go luk som wud.

"After you have eaten go and look some wood."

wen yu iit don go luk som wud.

"After you have finished eating go and look for some wood."

wen Jan kot di trii don di man se a di rang wan.

"When John had already cut the tree, the man told him that it was the wrong one."

When both en and don occur in a sentence don indicates the completive aspect of the action itself while en indicates that the consequences of the action may or may not have been terminated.

afta im en don kot di trii di man se a di rang wan.

"After he had cut the tree the man said that it was the wrong one."

(d) The Inchoative Verb:

The only inchoative verb which occurs in this construction is get. Only when used with the continuative particle does it actually focus on becoming. In all other instances it has the value of denoting a state which was brought about by some unspecified agent. As indicated in Chapter III this construction may be used in place of the Active. When the subject is animate only this inchoative construction may be used.

di trii (get) kot.

"The tree is cut."

"The tree has been cut."

di bway get kot.

"The boy has been cut."

(e) The Reduplicated Verb:

To indicate a repeated, continual or habitual action, there is no special verb; the same verb is repeated instead.

im fiil-op fiil-op di mango.

"He squeezed the mango." (several times)

im dis a taak taak.

"He is just talking continuously."

The reduplicated form of the verb (partial or total reduplication) with the value of intensification or repetition is characteristic of the Niger-Congo languages, e.g. Twi and Fanti.

The Causal and Purposive Construction

This construction consists of at least two verbs, the second of which is preceded by fi. The verb introduced by fi expresses the cause or purpose of the action of the preceding verb.

mi mada biit ar fi tel lai.

"My mother gave her a beating for telling lies."

mi bara di buk fi riid di stuori.

"I borrowed the book to read the story."

It is possible to relate this usage to English or Twi as Cassidy does.

Fe (fi) has the usual senses of for, but it is used for to of the infinitive. This is either an abbreviation of 'for to' common in earlier English: "I've come 'for to' see you", which the present-day Jamaican folk would render "me come fe see yu", or it is from an African verb such as Twi or Yoruba fa which, used before another verb has the effect of the English infinitive to, Jamaican fe.¹

1. Cassidy: op. cit., p. 67.

It is interesting to note that Fanti has a prefix a (distinguished from the other preverbal by tone) which coincides exactly with the function of fi in Jamaican Creole.

a indicates an action that takes place after and in relation to a preceding action already mentioned, or an action that is the purpose of a preceding action already mentioned (...). In the first meaning, indicating the second of two consecutive actions, forms with this prefix are always preceded by a verb and the conjunction no and the prefix occur immediately before the stem. In the second meaning, indicating a purposed action, forms with this prefix are always preceded by a verb;¹

The function of this construction is definitely African. It is possible that the form of English and Twi reinforced each other.

The Desiderative Construction

This construction consists of a desiderative verb + another verb (V2). The desiderative verbs express the desire of the subject of the sequence, on the part of someone else, or himself, for the action indicated by the V2. If the decider and the wanter are not one and the same, i.e. if the logical subject of the desiderative verb and the V2 are different, then the action of the V2 is regarded as

1. Welmers: op. cit., p. 40.

hypothetical. All verbs of request and command, e.g. aks "ask", beg "beg", tel "tell", aada "order" are therefore followed by a V2 preceded by fi.

mi beg fi go.

"I begged to go."

mi aks im fi go.

"I asked him to go."

If the person who wants the action is the one who decides, then the action is regarded as being real. All verbs of desire e.g. waan "want", wuda laik "would like", would therefore be capable of occurring both with the \emptyset particle as well as the hypothetical fi. One would expect the hypothetical to occur when the logical subjects are different while the \emptyset particle would occur when there is one logical subject.

mi waan go.

"I want to go."

mi waan im fi go.

"I want him to go."

Possibly, because of the inter-influence, these verbs no longer adhere strictly to this pattern. However, the unmarked form of the verb occurs more frequently when the logical subjects are the same while the opposite is true when there are different logical subjects.

When the hypothetical particle occurs with verbs expressing desire the action is always regarded as being less "real", i.e. outside of the control of the one who desires the action.

mi waan go.

"I want to go." (I will make going depend on me.)

mi waan fi go.

"I want to go." (I admit that going is ultimately dependent on someone else or circumstances.)

The Serial Verb Construction

The serial verb construction has become the object of much interest and discussion among Creolists in recent years. This construction has been generally accepted as being African derived. Bendix¹ has shown the remarkable resemblance between serial verbs in Papiamentu and similar constructions in Ijo (Southern Nigeria). Certainly, no similar European construction exists.

1. Bendix: op. cit., pp. 5-7.

For the purposes of this study the serial verb construction may be described as a construction which consists of two or more verbs but which have the same subject. At the same time serial verb constructions must be distinguished from other multiple verbal constructions. When compared to other multiple verbal constructions, the serial verbal construction present a unity of action or activity. In Jamaican Creole there are few connecting conjunctions and as a result two verbs often appear next to each other in a given sentence. However, in all these cases the actions of the verbs are interpreted as completely different actions. This is not the case with the class that has been isolated as serial verb constructions.

kyari di baskit bring kom.

"Bring the basket here."

The serial verbs therefore constitute a basic unity of action where the different verbs of the sequence express the different aspects of the action. This is also true of Ewe as Irene Warburton et al point out.

The use of several verbs in one sentence to express a thought which may often be expressed in English by one verb is characteristic of Ewe. Westermann accounts for this with the explanation that Ewe people describe in detail every action or happening, and each detail has to be expressed by a special verb. They dissect every happening and present it in its various

parts, whereas in English the leading event is expressed by a verb and subordinate events are either not considered or are expressed by means of a preposition, adverb, conjunction, or prefix of the verb.¹

An example of the serial verb construction in Ewe is:

Va midi tsa y dɔnɔkɔdɔzi.

(Literally) "Come let us take a walk go hospital."

The serial verb constructions in Jamaican Creole may be inflected with the aspectual and modal particles. These particles usually occur only once i.e. before the first verb in the sequence. There is one exception, however, the continuative particle a may occur before the second verb if the first verb is preceded by en, a or ena, in the serial construction Class S 2.

Bendix isolates the relevant characterizations for serial verbs in Papiamentu and we will include them here as they are also relevant for Jamaican Creole.

16. (1) The time referred to by the verb phrase does not begin before the time referred to any of the preceding verb phrase.

(11) A state expressed by a verb phrase or resulting from an action expressed by a verb phrase extends at least to the beginning of the

1. Warburton et al: Ewe Basic Course, p. 111.

next state or action of an immediately following verb phrase (and may extend on into the latter).

17. The time referred to by an immediately preceding verb phrase (i.e., the time referent of a verb phrase at least forms an uninterrupted sequence with the time referent of an immediately preceding verb phrase and may extend back into the latter.¹

Bendix divides Papiamento serial constructions into two classes: Class 1 is marked for both 16 and 17, while Class 2 is marked for 17 only. We prefer to regard the serials in Jamaican Creole as one class with different subclasses. Many of the examples that Bendix uses to illustrate his Class 2 would be multiple-verbal constructions in Jamaican Creole. In Class 2 (Bendix) there is a temporal discontinuity but not a physical one. When there is temporal discontinuity Jamaican Creole speakers interpret a physical discontinuity as well, thereby interpreting the sequence as a multi-verbal construction rather than a serial.

im tek di baal fling i ina di waata.

"He took the ball and threw it into the water."

The subject is seen as taking the ball (one action) which he may hold for a period of time and then threw it into the water (another and we may say a deliberate action). We

1. Bendix: op. cit., p. 11.

therefore see no reason for including a construction such as this one in the class of serials. To further clarify let us compare it with the serial construction:

im tek di baal fling ina di waata.

"He took the ball and threw it in the water."

In the preceding example tek fling constitutes one action. There is no temporal pause -- the action indicates both a temporal as well as a physical continuity of activity. The action of throwing in this case is but a continuation of the taking of the ball and not a separate action. To clearly demonstrate the difference we will give an example of the context in which a serial but not a multi-verbal construction may be used. It is possible to say im tek di baal fling ina di waata about a boy throwing a ball which accidentally fell in the water. It is not possible for the multi-verbal construction to convey this meaning. While the second action in the serial is the direct result of the first and therefore a continuation of it, the second action of the multi-verbal construction constitutes a different and deliberate action.

Verbs in Jamaican Creole generally carry primary stress. In serial constructions only the first verb of the sequence has this stress. The remaining verbs bear secondary stress.

On the other hand all the members of the multiple verbal construction carry primary stress. When a sequence may be multiple verbal as well as serial the multiple verbal is usually indicated by the addition of an between the verbs or by the insertion of the co-referential pronoun after the non-first verb. This reinforces the second verb which is, in these cases, fully stressed.

The serial construction behaves as a unit in regard to the negative particle and only the entire chain may be negated.

im no kyari di hat bring kom.

"He did not bring the hat here."

*im kyari di hat no bring kom.

On the contrary the non-first element of the multiple verbal construction as well as the entire construction may be negated.

im wiek-op si Mieri.

"He woke up and saw Mary."

im wiek-op no si Mieri.

"He woke up and didn't see Mary."

im no wiek-op si Mieri.

"He did not wake up and see Mary."

It is possible to group the serial constructions into subclasses. It must be emphasized that serials are constructions not verbs and so it is possible for a serial construction to be part of multi-verbal construction.

S1:

The first subclass to be distinguished is perhaps the one that is generally regarded as the serial verb par excellence in Creoles, since it is the pattern which occurs most frequently. It consists maximally of three verbs. The first verb in the sequence usually indicates motion while the succeeding verbs indicate the direction of the motion. The second verb usually indicates direction with regard to some place or thing while the third uses the position of the interlocutors as the focal point.

im ron paas Mieri shap go-op a tan paip.

"He ran past Mary's shop up to the pipe."

paas go ina di ruum.

"Go in the room."

kyari di basket bring kom.

"Bring the basket here."

There are no restrictions on the particles which may occur before the first verb, but the second cannot be inflected.

S2:

This construction consists of two verbs, the first of which indicates the basic action while the second usually indicates the purpose of the action. Thus the two actions are simultaneous and interconnected. The inflexions of S2 have no further restrictions beyond the general rule given at the beginning of this chapter.

S3:

In this construction the first verb indicates the manner in which the action is carried out while the second verb expresses the action itself. Quite often the first verb is best translated by an adverb or an adverbial phrase.

There are restrictions on the particles which may precede the first verb but the second may not be inflected.

shi skriim sing.

"She sings in a screaming manner."

im limp waak.

"He walks with a limp."

shi laaf krai.

"She cries as if she is laughing."

draiv go-op a shap.

"Drive to the shop."

waak go-op a shap.

"Walk up to the shop."

S4:

This construction indicates an action and the result of the action. The first verb expresses the action while the second indicates the result of the action.

The continuative particle does not occur with this subclass. All other particles precede the first verb.

im faal dong brok im hed.

"He fell down and broke his head."

im shuut Jan kil im.

"He shot John and killed him."

CHAPTER V

NEGATION AND FOCUS

Negation

There are two negative particles in Jamaican Creole: no "not" and neba "never". Neba is generally restricted to the base or uninflected form of the verb while no is the general negator. Neba, however, may occur with the particle wi. This may be explained by the fact that neba has the value of non-occurrence. It is therefore almost equivalent to \emptyset aspect and its occurrence cancels all other aspects. The fact that it occurs with wi is understandable in view of the fact that wi indicates futurity and represents a temporal subclass of the hypothetical aspect.

Jan neba kom si mi.

"John never comes to see me."

Jan no kom si mi.

"John has not come to see me."

Jan wi neba tel.

"John will never tell."

The negative particle is generally placed immediately in front of the aspectual particles. With en, the contracted

form nein occurs more frequently than the full form. With the continuative particle only the contracted form naa occurs.

im no fi go.

"He is not to go."

im no en go.

im nein go.

"He did not go."

im naa go.

"He is not going."

As indicated earlier in this study the particle wi does not behave consistently. This is due to the fact that it represents a later addition to the Jamaican Creole aspectual system. The negative particle occurs after wi and there is a variant wuon.

im wi no go.

"He will not go."

im wuon go.

"He won't go."

*im no wi go.

When two aspectual particles occur in a sequence, the negator always precedes if one of the aspectual particles is the continuative. When the other particle is en, then only

the contracted form neina occurs.

im neina wash.

"He was not washing."

im no fi wash.

"He is not to wash."

With the combination of en and fi, there are two possible enfi and fi en. With the first, the negative particle may either precede or occur between the two particles.

im no enfi go.

im neinfi go.

"He should not have gone."

With the second order fi en it always precedes.

im no fi en go.

"He should not have gone."

When there are three aspectual particles, i.e. the perfective, the hypothetical and the continuative, the negative particle either precedes all, giving the contracted form neinfia or it occurs between the perfective and the hypothetical + the continuative giving en no fia.

im neinfia wash.

im en no fia wash.

"He should not have been washing."

If the subject nominal is negative, the verb must be negated.

nobadi no kom.

"Nobody comes."

no shuga no de ya.

"There is no sugar here."

Negation of Modals

As indicated earlier in this study, there are two subclasses of modals M1 and M2. The members of M1 cannot be negated. There is one exception however, the M13 kuda does occur in the negative form.

The M2 as well as the main verb in the sequence may be negated. The negative particle no, neba occurs immediately before the constituent that it negates. As indicated in the previous section of this chapter, the only aspectual marker which occurs with neba is wi.

im no hafi go.

im no mos go.

"He does not have to go."

im wi neba hafi klin.

"He will never have to clean."

The negation of kyan (negative + kyan) is kyaan. The distinguishing feature seems to be tone rather than the length of the length of the vowel. Kyan has a falling tone while the negative form has a rising tone. Lawton¹ uses this distinction as part of his evidence for postulating the existence of a low toneme in Jamaican Creole.

It is possible for the negative particle which negates the subsequent member of the chain to become attached to the preceding modal if that modal is an M1 or the M2 mos. In all cases we should remember that the negator negates the element that it immediately precedes. This coincides with the English function of the same constructions. In the sentence "He wouldn't go", what is being negated is his going. In many Guinean languages, there is a negator of the same form [ɔ] which also negates the main verb, but which is attached to the preceding particle. This means that in this case both English and the Guinean languages would yield the same result.



1. Lawton: Suprasegmental Phenomena in Jamaican Creole, p. 20.

im maitn go.

"He might not go."

im wudn go.

"He would not go."

The form maita no is also possible. The negative particle following the M1 mos or mosa never becomes attached to these modals as the form mosn indicates M2 + the negative no. In the case of mosa, the variant mosi usually occurs in the environment of the negative particle.

im mosi no go.

"He probably did not go."

im mos no go.

"There is a strong possibility that he did not go."

Completely different is the case of kudn which represents the negation of kuda and not the subsequent element. It is equivalent to Negative + kuda. Therefore, the particle which negates the following constituent always maintains its full form.

im kudn go.

"He could not go."

im kuda no go.

"It could be that he did not go."

im kudn hafi go.

"It couldn't be that he has to go."

im kuda no hafi go.

"It could be that he doesn't have to go."

The simultaneous combinations of aspectual and negative particles which occur with the modals follow the rules outlined earlier. It must be emphasized that when the negative is attached to the preceding modal, the particle occurs after the combined form and no other contraction is possible.

im maitn a go.

"He may not be going."

im maitn en go.

"He might not have gone."

Focus

Focus in Jamaican Creole is equivalent to what French linguists refer to as mise en relief. Any constituent of the Jamaican Creole sentence may be focused or highlighted. The focused element occurs first in the sentence. If it is not already in this position, it is brought to this position. In all cases, the focused element is preceded by a.

Jan tel Mieri.

"John told Mary."

a Jan tel Mieri.

"It was John who told Mary."

a Mieri Jan tel.

"It was Mary that John told."

If the verb is the element which is being focused, it is repeated and the first occurrence is fronted while the second maintains its original position in the sentence. The aspectual particles occur with the second occurrence of the verb.

a run Jan run.

"John did run."

a run Jan a run.

"Running, that's what John is doing."

A negated constituent may also be focused.

a biit dem no biit im.

"They did not beat him." (Contrary to what should have been done.)

a no biit dem biit im.

"They did not beat him." (Whatever else they did.)

The data suggests that the first occurrence of the verb is being used nominally. In the first place, the aspectual particles cannot inflect the first occurrence of the verb. If a which precedes the first occurrence is the copula, and there is reason to believe that it is, then the following constituent is to be interpreted as nominal rather than verbal. In Grenadian French Creole where the form of the copula and that of the continuative particle do not coincide, it is evident that it is the copula form which is being used in similar constructions.

sé sâté a i ka sâté.¹

"He was singing."

Papiamento has a similar construction. However, as pointed out earlier in this study the copula verb and the

1. Roberts: op. cit., p. 234.

continuative particle are homophonous.

ta kome mi ta kome.

"I am eating."

A similar construction occurs not only in Creoles in general, but also in West African languages. Ga has such an emphatic construction which is generally referred to as nominal iteration.

yi amɛ yi lɛ.

"Beating they beat him."

The Emphatic Use of No

Cosely linked to the idea of focus is the use of the particle no which has two functions:

- 1) To emphasize the truth of the statement to which it is added.
- 2) To elicit surprise on the part of the hearer.

This particle may occur with either or both of these values. It occurs with the non-negated focused element or with the verb of any affirmative sentence. When it emphasizes an already focused constituent, it occurs instead of a as the first element. In all cases the sentence which contains this

no is marked by a characteristic high pitched intonation pattern.

no Jan no tel Mieri!

"John told Mary!" (Can you imagine that?)

no Mieri Jan tel!

"It was Mary John told!"

no tel Jan no tel Mieri!

"John didn't tell Mary!"

Jan no tel Mieri!

"John told Mary!"

In this usage, no can only combine with the continuative particle a; it never combines with en.

Jan naa tel Mieri!

"John is telling Mary!"

Jan no en tel Mieri!

"John did tell Mary!"

*Jan nein tel Mieri!

CONCLUSION

In this thesis we have examined the verbal system of Jamaican Creole in its synchronic state. In addition, some attempt has been made to relate the elements to their possible sources -- English or African languages.¹

The verbal system of Jamaican Creole utilizes syntagmatic rather than paradigmatic means to express grammatical possibilities. While Jamaican Creole may be regarded as having simple paradigms, there is a high degree of combinability of elements. The result is that what Jamaican Creole loses paradigmatically it gains syntagmatically.

The notion that Jamaican Creole is best considered a deviant form of English is still very often heard. The data presented in this study shows conclusively that in its structural aspects Jamaican Creole is not English. The influence of African languages can be seen at three different levels.

1. There seems to be no grammatical proof of the influence of a Spanish based Creole, but on the other hand there is no grammatical evidence of the absence of such a Creole. This probably means that if there was such a Creole, its grammatical elements must have been African not Spanish and if they penetrated into Jamaican Creole they cannot be detected from other African sources. This means that grammatical influence is inconclusive as far as the question of the existence of a Spanish based Creole is concerned.

The first manifestation of this influence is seen in the aspectual rather than temporal verbal system. The one aspectual particle which has a strong tense value -- wi may be regarded as a later addition to the basic system. It evidently came into Jamaican Creole at a time when the contracted form "won't" was in use in English as is evidenced by the existence of the Jamaican Creole wuon. Except for this particle, the forms as well as the functions of the aspectual particles appear to be derived from African languages. . Yet another example of influence at this level is seen in the copula system. Here not only are there African models for the precise dissection into: "to be"+ a quality; locational; and copula but one of the forms de is definitely African and there is reason to suppose that the other is African as well.

African influence at a deeper level is apparent in the combinability of the modals and the use of serial verbal constructions. At this level, it is the function that shows the influence. In the case of the modals, the forms seem to be derived from the English modals. However, in Jamaican Creole these forms do not appear unaccompanied by the non-modal verb. Thus they are best considered as modal particles. They combine with each other and this combinability is

characteristic of West African languages. Focus with the verb also shows this influence. Here again, Jamaican Creole utilizes the English forms but the function of the construction is decidedly African and shows a high degree of similarity to the African construction with the same function.

There is still a deeper level at which African influence can be detected, i.e. in the general organization of the language. This results from the way that the universe is perceived. In Jamaican Creole, as in many West African languages, there is no passive voice. What is expressed by the passive in other languages is expressed by the active-causative opposition or by the use of the impersonal construction. Consequences are regarded as part of the action. An action which determines the present situation is therefore regarded as non-terminated. Also indicative of this world view is the fact that in Jamaican Creole wishes are "real". What is desired already has a real existence for the person who desires it.

Typologically Jamaican Creole is a Creole language and shows all the features that are usually accepted as characteristic of Creoles in general.

- (a) An aspectual verbal system.
- (b) Inflection of the verb by preposed aspectual particles.
- (c) Absence of the passive voice and the use of the distinction active-causative as well as the impersonal where Indo-European languages has the passive.
- (d) Existence of serial verb constructions.

One of the arguments that is used to support the postulate that Jamaican Creole is not a Creole language has been the existence of the language continuum outlined in the first chapter of this study. While this leads to considerable interference even at the Jamaican Creole end of the continuum, it does not affect the basic structural pattern of the language. At times, it may even be regarded as a type of relexification.

is replaced by a Jan buk.
iz Jan buk.

Although the English form is used instead of the Jamaican Creole copula, it is still interpreted in terms of the Creole system.

Moreover, as Alleyne has pointed out, the continuum situation is not restricted only to Jamaican as some scholars would have us believe. It is predominant in those countries where the European language from which the Creole derives its lexicon is the standard language. Nor is situation common only to a Creole situation. We find such a continuum in Quebec. This is a sociolinguistic fact, not a linguistic one. The continuum situation in Jamaican differs from that of other Creole speaking areas only in so far as there are more speakers in Jamaica situated midway along the continuum.

During the course of this study we found some evidence to suggest that Jamaican Creole uses a fair amount of supra-segmental phenomena for grammatical distinctions. The difference between kyan and kyaan (negative) appears to be tone rather than vowel length. The difference between multi-verbal and serial verb constructions seems to be largely dependent on the stress pattern. Even if tones and stress are morphophonemic, they could best be studied within phonology which is not our concern here.

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