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**META Systems**

A Handbook of Varieties of English  
2: Morphology and Syntax



# A Handbook of Varieties of English

A Multimedia Reference Tool

Two volumes plus CD-ROM

*Edited by*

Bernd Kortmann and Edgar W. Schneider

*together with*

Kate Burridge, Rajend Mesthrie,  
and Clive Upton

Mouton de Gruyter  
Berlin · New York

# A Handbook of Varieties of English

Volume 2: Morphology and Syntax

*Edited by*

Bernd Kortmann

Kate Burridge

Rajend Mesthrie

Edgar W. Schneider

Clive Upton

Mouton de Gruyter

Berlin · New York

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## Abbreviations

AAVE	African American Vernacular English
AbE/C/P	(Australian) Aboriginal English / Creole / Pidgin
AfBahE	Afro-Bahamian English
AfKE	Afrikaans English
AmE	American English
AnBahE	Anglo-Bahamian English
AppE	Appalachian English
AusE/VE/C	Australian English/Vernacular English/Creoles
BahE	Bahamian English
Baj	Bajan (Barbadian Creole)
BelC	Belizean Creole
BIE	Bay Islands English (Honduras)
BrC	British Creole
BrE	British English (= EngE + ScE + WeE)
ButIE	Butler English (India)
CajE	Cajun English
CAmC	Central American Creoles (Belize, Miskito, Limón, etc.)
CamP/E	Cameroon Pidgin/English
CanE	Canadian English
CarE	Caribbean English
Car(E)C	Caribbean (English-lexicon) Creoles
CFE	Cape Flats English
ChcE	Chicano English
ChnP	Chinese Pidgin English
CollAmE	Colloquial American English
CollSgE	Colloquial Singapore English
EAFE	East African English
EMarC	Eastern Maroon Creole
EngE	English English
EModE	Early Modern English
ME	Middle English
OE	Old English
ESM	English in Singapore and Malaysia
FijE	Fiji English
GhE/P	Ghanaian English/Pidgin
GuyC	Guyanese Creole
HawC	Hawaii Creole
HKE	Hong Kong English
IndE	Indian English, Anglo-Indian

InlNE	Inland Northern (American) English
IrE	Irish English
JamC/E	Jamaican Creole / English
KenE	Kenyan English
KPE	Kru Pidgin English
LibC/E	Liberian Creole/English
LibSE	Liberian Settler English
LibVE	Liberian Vernacular English
LimC	Limonese Creole (Costa Rica)
LonVE	London Vernacular English
LnkE	Lankan English
MalE	Malaysian English
NEngE	New England English
NfldE	Newfoundland English
NigP/E	Nigerian Pidgin / English
NZE	New Zealand English
NYCE	New York City English
OzE	Ozarks English
PakE	Pakistani English
PanC	Panamanian Creole
PhilE	Philadelphia English
PhIE	Philippines English
RP	Received Pronunciation
SAfE	South African English
BISAfE	Black South African English
CoSAfE	Coloured South African English
InSAfE	Indian South African English
WhSAfE	White South African English
SAmE	Southern American English
SAsE	South Asian English
SEAmE	South Eastern American English enclave dialects
ScE	Scottish English, Scots
ScStE	Scottish Standard English
SgE	Singapore English
SLVE	St. Lucian Vernacular English
SolP	Solomon Islands Pidgin
StAmE	Standard American English
StAusCE	Standard Australian Colloquial English
StAusFE	Standard Australian Formal English
StBrE	Standard British English
StE	Standard English
StGhE	Standard Ghanaian English



StHE	St. Helena English
StIndE	Standard Indian English
StJamE	Standard Jamaican English
SurC	Suriname Creoles
TanE	Tanzanian English
TobC	Tobagonian Creole
Trad-RP	Traditional Received Pronunciation
TrnC	Trinidadian Creole
T & TC	Trinidadian & mesolectal Tobagonian Creoles
TP	Tok Pisin, New Guinea Pidgin, Neomelanesian
WAfE/P	West African English/Pidgin
WeE	Welsh English
WMwE	Western and Midwestern American English
ZamE	Zambian English

**More abbreviations**

ESL	English as Second Language
EFL	English as Foreign Language
EIL	English as International Language
ENL	English as Native Language
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
P/C	Pidgins and Creoles



## General introduction

Bernd Kortmann and Edgar W. Schneider

The all-important design feature of this Handbook is its focus on structure and on the solid description and documentation of data. The two volumes, accompanied by the CD-ROM, provide comprehensive up-to-date accounts of the salient phonological and grammatical properties of the varieties of English around the world. Reliable structural information in a somewhat standardized format and presented in an accessible way is a necessary prerequisite for any kind of study of language varieties, independent of the theoretical framework used for analysis. It is especially important for comparative studies of the phonological and morphosyntactic patterns across varieties of English, and the inclusion of this kind of data in typological studies (e.g. in the spirit of Kortmann 2004).

Of course, all of this structural information can be and has to be put in perspective by the conditions of uses of these varieties, i.e. their sociohistorical backgrounds, their current sociolinguistic settings (not infrequently in multilingual societies), and their associated political dimensions (like issues of norm-setting, language policies and pedagogical applications). Ultimately, all of the varieties under discussion in these Handbooks, certainly so the ones spoken outside of England, but in a sense, looking way back in time, even the English dialects themselves, are products of colonization processes, predominantly the European colonial expansion in the modern age. A number of highly interesting questions, linguistically and culturally, might be asked in this context, including the central issue of why all of this has happened and whether there is an underlying scheme that has continued to drive and motivate the evolution of new varieties of English (Schneider 2003). These linguistic and sociohistorical background issues will be briefly addressed in the introductions of the four regional parts and in some of the individual chapters, but it should be made clear that it is the issue of structural description and comparison which is at the heart of this project. Accordingly, in this General Introduction we focus upon the organization of the Handbook and the information to be culled from it.

This Handbook is geared towards documenting and mapping the structural variation among (spontaneously spoken) non-standard varieties of English. Standard English is of course that variety, or set of closely related varieties, which enjoys the highest social prestige. It serves as a reference system and target norm in formal situations, in the language used by people taking on a public persona (including, for example, anchorpersons in the news media), and as a model in the teaching of English worldwide. Here, however, it is treated as is commonplace in modern

descriptive linguistics, i.e. as a variety on a par with all other (regional, social, ethnic, or contact) varieties of English. Clearly, in terms of its structural properties it is not inherently superior to any of the non-standard varieties. Besides, the very notion of “Standard English” itself obviously refers to an abstraction. On the written level, it is under discussion to what extent a “common core” or a putatively homogeneous variety called “International English” actually exists: there is some degree of uniformity across the major national varieties, but once one looks into details of expression and preferences, there are also considerable differences. On the spoken level, there are reference accents like, for example, Received Pronunciation for British English, but their definition also builds upon abstractions from real individuals’ performance. Thus, in this Handbook especially the grammar of (written) Standard English figures as no more than an implicit standard of comparison, in the sense that all chapters focus upon those phenomena in a given variety which are (more or less strikingly) different from this standard (these being perceived as not, note again, in any sense deficient or inferior to it). In light of the wealth of publications and comprehensive grammars on Standard English, there are no survey chapters on, for example, Standard British or American English in this Handbook. For the reference accents of British and American English chapters have been included.

## 1. Coverage

The Handbook covers some 60 (sets of) varieties, including main national standard varieties, distinctive regional, ethnic, and social varieties, major contact varieties (pidgins and creoles), as well as major English as a Second Language varieties in the British Isles (edited by Bernd Kortmann and Clive Upton), the Americas and the Caribbean (edited by Edgar W. Schneider), the Pacific and Australasia (edited by Kate Burridge and Bernd Kortmann), and Africa, South and Southeast Asia (edited by Raj Mesthrie).

The inclusion of second-language varieties (e.g. English in India, Singapore, Ghana, Nigeria) and, especially, English-based pidgins and creoles, which add up to more than half of all varieties covered in this Handbook, may come as a surprise to some readers. Normally these varieties are addressed from different perspectives (such as, for example, language policy, language pedagogy, linguistic attitudes, language and identity (construction), substrate vs. superstrate influence), each standing in its own research tradition. Here they are primarily discussed from the point of view of their structural properties. This will make possible comparisons with structural properties of, for example, other varieties of English spoken in the same region, or second-language or contact varieties in other parts of the English-speaking world. At the same time the availability of solid structural descriptions may open new perspectives for a fruitful interaction

between the different research traditions within which second-language and contact varieties are studied.

The boundaries of what is considered and accepted as “varieties of English” and thus included in the Handbooks has been drawn fairly widely, to include English-based pidgins and creoles which at first sight look quite different from what many English-speaking people may have been exposed to. Pidgins are makeshift contact varieties used in communication between people who share no other tongue. Creoles, according to the classic definition, emerge when pidgins become a new generation’s native language. Pidgins are usually described as structurally reduced, while creoles are structurally complex and fulfill all communicative requirements by human speakers, but in practice the distinction between both language types is anything but clearcut, as some of the contributions in the Handbook illustrate. Traditionally, creoles have been regarded as distinct languages of their own, but linguists agree that the line between what constitutes a separate language as against a dialect of a language is usually drawn on political and social grounds rather than because of structural properties. In accepting English-oriented pidgins and creoles in the present context, we adopt a trend of recent research to consider them as contact varieties closely related to, possibly to be categorized as varieties of, their respective superstrate languages (e.g. Mufwene 2001). Creoles, and also some pidgins, in many regions vary along a continuum from acrolectal forms, relatively close to English and used by the higher sociolinguistic strata in formal contexts, to basilects, “deep” varieties maximally different from English. Most of our contributions focus upon the mesolects, the middle ranges which in most creole-speaking societies are used most widely.

For other varieties, too, it may be asked why or why not they have been selected for inclusion in this Handbook. Among the considerations that led to the present selection, the following figured most prominently: amount and quality of existing data and research documentation for the individual varieties, intensity of ongoing research activities, availability of authors, and space constraints (leading, for example, to the exclusion of strictly local accents and dialects). More information on the selection of varieties will be given in the regional introductions by the editors.

## **2. Organization of the Handbook**

The overall organization of the Handbook is very simple: one volume each for phonology and grammar (i.e. morphology and syntax), with each of the volumes falling into four parts according to region or rather continent(s). The major world regions relevant for the discussion of varieties of English are the following: the British Isles, the Americas, the Caribbean, Africa, (South and Southeast) Asia, Australasia and the Pacific (or Oceania). These world regions have been lumped together into the four parts spelt out in section 1, according to criteria such as

number of relevant varieties, their (present and/or past) relatedness, availability of documentation and of researchers into the specific issues under discussion, and the expertise of the individual volume editors.

Following the general introduction, each volume opens with a list of general reference works, all of them exclusively book publications, relevant across the world regions covered in the Handbook and for individual world regions. Within the two volumes, each of the four regional parts opens with an introduction by the responsible editor(s) which puts in perspective the varieties spoken in the relevant world region(s) and provides a brief guide to the chapters written on them. These regional introductions include accounts of the histories, the cultural and sociolinguistic situations, and the most important data sources for the relevant locations, ethnic groups and varieties. Further issues addressed may include a survey of current research, but also the discussion of such notoriously problematic notions as dialect boundaries, dialect areas, or traditional as opposed to modern dialects, and the problem of treating pidgins and creoles as varieties of English.

Following the regional parts, each of the volumes concludes with a fifth part in which the reader will find two types of synopses: four regional synopses and a general synopsis. In the former, the editors will summarize the most striking properties of the sets of varieties of English spoken in the individual world regions and, within them, of selected cross-sections of varieties (e.g. contact varieties). Each volume will close with a general synopsis (authored by Edgar W. Schneider for the phonology volume, and Bernd Kortmann and Benedikt Szmrecsanyi for the morphology and syntax volume) on the most noteworthy findings and tendencies on phonological and morphosyntactic variation in English from a global perspective.

What will emerge from the synopses is that many of the features described for individual varieties or sets of varieties in this Handbook are not unique to these (sets of) varieties. This is true both for morphology and syntax and for phonology. As a matter of fact, quite a number of morphosyntactic features described as salient properties of individual varieties may strike the reader as typical of other varieties, too, possibly even of the grammar of spoken English in general. In a similar vein, it turns out that certain phonological processes (like the monophthongization of certain diphthongs, the fronting, backing or merging of some vowels, and some consonantal substitutions or suprasegmental processes) can be documented in quite a number of fairly disparate language varieties – not surprisingly, perhaps, given shared underlying principles like constraints of articulatory space or tendencies towards simplification and the reduction of contrasts.

It seems possible to distinguish three broad groups of non-standard features according to their distribution across varieties of English:

Group I: by far widest distribution on a global scale

Group II: found relatively frequently in one or more parts of the English speaking world

Group III: restricted to relatively few non-standard varieties of English (possibly only one variety)

As it turns out, only very few of the formal variants belong to Group III. The distributions of selected individual features, both morphosyntactic and phonological, across varieties world-wide will be visualized by the interactive world maps on the accompanying CD-ROM (see also section 4 below). On these maps, each of the selected features, for almost all of the varieties under discussion, is categorized as occurring regularly (marked as “A” and colour-coded in red), occasionally or only in certain specified environments (marked as “B” and represented by a pink circle) or practically not at all (“C”, grey). These innovative maps, which are accompanied by statistical distribution data on the spread of selected variants, will provide the reader with an immediate visual representation of regional distribution and diffusion patterns. It should be noted that, not surprisingly, it has turned out to be impossible to obtain accurate documentation on the presence or absence of each and every feature in each one of the varieties, so category “C” also includes those cases, for example, where no positive evidence as to the presence of a given feature has been provided, though the positive non-existence of anything seems impossible to prove. Also, any such categorization by necessity enforces problematic distinctions at times, so that finely-graded distinctions and conditions cannot be represented appropriately. For a summary presentation and discussion of the major results of these comparisons the reader is referred to the regional and the global synopses.

### **3. Nature and structure of the contributions**

The chapters are descriptive survey articles providing state-of-the-art reports on major issues in current research, with a common core in order to make the Handbook an interesting and useful tool especially from a comparative, i.e. cross-dialectal and cross-linguistic, point of view. All chapters aim primarily at a qualitative rather than quantitative perspective, i.e. whether or not a given feature occurs is more important than its frequency. Of course, for varieties where research has focused upon documenting frequency relationships between variants of variables, some information on relevant quantitative tendencies has been provided. Depending upon the research coverage in a given world region (which varies widely from one continent to another), some contributions build upon existing sociolinguistic, dialectological, or structural research, and a small number of other chapters makes systematic use of available computerized corpora. In some cases and for some regions the chapters in this Handbook provide the first-ever systematic qualitative survey of the phonological and grammatical properties of English as spoken there.

For almost all varieties of English covered there are companion chapters in the phonology and morphosyntax volumes. In these cases it is in the phonology chapter that the reader will find a concise introductory section on the historical and cultural background as well as the current sociolinguistic situation of the relevant variety or set of varieties spoken at this location.

In order to ensure a certain degree of comparability, the authors were given a set of core issues that they were asked to address (provided something interesting can be said about them in the respective variety). For the phonology chapters, this set included the following items:

- phonological systems
- phonetic realization(s) and (phonotactic) distributions of a selection of phonemes (to be selected according to salience in the variety in question)
- specific phonological processes at work in the relevant variety
- lexical distribution
- prosodic features (stress, rhythm)
- intonation patterns
- observations/generalizations on the basis of lexical sets à la Wells (1982) and Foulkes/Docherty (1999), a standard reading passage and/or samples of free conversation (cf. also section 5 on the content of the CD-ROM below).

It is worth noting that for some of the contributions, notably the chapters on pidgins and creoles, the lexical sets were not sufficient or suitable to describe the variability found. In such cases authors were encouraged to expand the set of target words, or replace one of the items. The reading passage was also adjusted or substituted by some authors, for instance because it was felt to be culturally inappropriate.

This is the corresponding set for the morphology and syntax chapters:

- tense – aspect – modality systems
- auxiliaries
- negation
- relativization
- complementation
- other subordination phenomena (notably adverbial subordination)
- agreement
- noun phrase structure
- pronominal systems
- word order (and information structure: especially focus/topicalizing constructions)
- selected salient features of the morphological paradigms of, for example, auxiliaries and pronouns.

Lexical variation was not our primary concern, given that it fails to lend itself to the systematic generalization and comparability we are aiming for in this Hand-



book. However, authors were offered the opportunity to comment on highly salient features of the vocabulary of any given variety (briefly and within the overall space constraints) if this was considered rewarding. The reader may find such information on distinctive properties of the respective vocabularies in the morphology and syntax chapters.

In the interest of combining guidance for readers, efficiency, space constraints, but also the goal of comprehensiveness, bibliographic references are systematically divided between three different types of reference lists. As was stated above, this introduction is accompanied by a list of “General References” which compiles a relatively large number of books which, taken together, are central to the field of world-wide varieties of English – “classic” publications, collective volumes, particularly important publications, and so on. It is understood that in the individual contributions all authors may refer to titles from this list without these being repeated in their respective source lists. Each of the individual chapters ends with a list of “Selected References” comprising, on average, only 15–20 references – including the most pertinent ones on the respective variety (or closely related varieties) beyond any others possibly included in the General References list, and possibly others cited in the respective article. In other words, the Selected References do not repeat any of the General References given at the very beginning of both Handbook volumes. Thirdly, a “Comprehensive Bibliography”, with further publications specifically on the phonology and morphosyntax of each of the varieties covered in the Handbook, for which no space limitations were imposed, is available on the CD-ROM. The idea behind this limitation of the number of references allowed to go with each article was to free the texts of too much technical apparatus and thus to increase their reader-friendliness for a target audience of non-specialists while at the same time combining basic guidance to the most important literature (in the General References list) with the possibility of providing comprehensive coverage of the writings available on any given region (in the Bibliographies on the CD-ROM). It must be noted, however, that at times this rule imposed limitations upon possible source credits allowed in the discussions, because to make the books self-contained authors were allowed to refer to titles from the General and the Select References lists only. In other words, it is possible that articles touch upon material drawn from publications listed in the CD-ROM bibliographies without explicit credit, although every effort has been made to avoid this.

#### **4. The CD-ROM**

The two volumes of the Handbook are accompanied by a CD-ROM providing illustrative, additional and incidental material. Most importantly, given that in their natural setting language varieties are spoken and heard rather than described in

writing but that such oral material is hardly ever available, the CD contains audio samples, new sound material for each variety that, depending upon availability, may comprise (partly) phonemically transcribed samples of free conversation, a standard reading passage, and recordings of the spoken “lexical sets” which define and illustrate vocalic variation (Wells 1982). Another highly innovative feature of the CD is the vivid and in parts interactive graphic illustration of the variability discussed in the books. The user is provided with representations of regional vowel charts and with interactive maps showing the geographical distribution of individual phonological and grammatical features and, on a global scale, their degree of pervasiveness across the varieties of English. The CD-ROM also includes the “Comprehensive Bibliographies” for the individual chapters mentioned above. For individual varieties, users will find phonetic analyses of sounds and intonation patterns as well as further incidental material considered relevant by the author.

## 5. Acknowledgements

A publication project as huge as this one would have been impossible, indeed impossible even to think of, without the support of a great number of people devoted to their profession and to the subject of this Handbook. First among these, the editors would like to thank the members of their editorial teams: in Freiburg, these are Melitta Cocan, Cosima Diehl, Cara Heinzmann, Isabella Risorgi, Anna Rosen, Susanne Wagner, Veronika Westhoff and, above all, Monika Schulz; in Regensburg, Regina Trüb and Petra Orendi; in Cape Town, Sarah Johnson and Rowan Mentis. The editors are also much indebted to Elizabeth Traugott, for all the thought she gave to this project right from the very beginning of the planning stage and her extremely helpful feedback on draft versions of chapters, introductions and synopses. Without Jürgen Handke, the rich audio-visual multimedia support of the chapters in the Handbook would have been impossible to conceive of. Furthermore, we have always benefitted from the support and interest invested into this project by Anke Beck and the people at Mouton de Gruyter. Finally, and most importantly, of course, the editors would like to thank the contributors and informants for having conformed to the rigid guidelines, deadlines and time frames that we set them for the various stages of (re)writing their chapters and providing the input material for the CD-ROM and, in the final stages of the editing process, for not having tired of answering last-minute questions.

This Handbook truly represents an impressive product of scholarly collaboration of people from all around the globe. Right until the end it has been an exciting and wonderful experience for the editors (as well as, we would like to think, for the authors) to bring all these scholars and their work together, and we believe that this shows in the quality of the chapters and the material presented on the CD-ROM. May this Handbook be enjoyed, appreciated and esteemed by its read-

ers, and treasured as the reference work and research tool it was designed as for anyone interested in and concerned with variation in English!

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# **The British Isles**

Bernd Kortmann and Clive Upton (eds.)



# Introduction: varieties of English in the British Isles

Bernd Kortmann and Clive Upton

## 1. A note on geopolitical terminology

‘The British Isles’ is a geographical term which refers to the two large islands that contain the mainlands of Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic, Wales, and England, together with a large number of other, smaller islands that are part of the territories of these countries: one island (the Isle of Man) and one archipelago (the Channel Islands) have a significant degree of autonomy within the state which encompasses the bulk of the British Isles, the United Kingdom. ‘The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland’ (the UK) is a state that encompasses Scotland, Wales, England, Man, and the Channel Islands, together with the northernmost part of the island of Ireland. If Northern Ireland is omitted entirely from a description, the designation of the area described is properly ‘Great Britain’. ‘Ireland’ properly designates the whole of the island of Ireland (though popularly it is used to refer to the *state* of Ireland, that is the Republic of Ireland, which occupies the central, southern, and north-western parts).

## 2. The coverage of British Isles accents and dialects

Major accent and dialect distinctions in the British Isles section of this Handbook are represented in chapters covering Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Northern England, and Southern England. Other chapters cover the distinctive accents and dialects of somewhat less extensive areas: Orkney and Shetland, the Channel Islands, the eastern England region of East Anglia, and the very major conurbation and administrative area of the English West Midlands. Variation *within* each of these areas is, of course, discussed in the relevant chapters: in particular, Northern and Southern Irish are distinguished, as is the speech of southwest and southeast England, where major differences apply. It is expected that the reader might concentrate on particular chapters or smaller sections to gain in-depth knowledge of a particular variety or group of closely-related varieties or, especially by referring to the sound charts, to obtain an overview of wider overall variation or of variation relating to specific linguistic variables.

Whilst Received Pronunciation (RP) is specifically presented as a supra-regional accent model frequently used in the teaching of English worldwide and for purposes of wide communication, its description plays only a very minor part

in the analysis of the regional varieties, each of which is described in its own terms rather than in any sense as divergent from an externally-imposed norm. For reasons spelt out in the General Introduction to this Handbook, Standard English grammar is not explicitly discussed as a separate entity.

### **3. The concept of the ‘dialect area’**

The linguistic varieties of the UK and Ireland presented in this Handbook are discussed along geographical lines. This arrangement by region is convenient in terms of structure, and is helpful to the user who wishes to understand regional differences, or who needs to concentrate on the variety or group of varieties found in one particular region. But it is also potentially misleading, since the impression might be gained that UK and Irish varieties are tidily to be separated from each other, with one being spoken by a fixed, geographically identifiable group of people quite distinct from another group using another quite different set of speech-forms.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Far from there being regional cut-off points for ways of speaking, i.e. boundaries where, for example, one accent ceases to be heard and another takes its place, accents and dialects blend subtly and imperceptibly into one another. Rather than the hearer detecting the presence or absence of features as they move about a country or region, particularly at a local level it is a matter of ‘more or less’, of features being heard with greater or lesser frequency as features most characteristic of one region are left behind, to be replaced with greater intensity by others associated with a region being approached.

Nor should we think that all speakers in one place use the same set of features with the same level of intensity, if they use them at all. It is to be expected that some speakers, those who sound most local to a particular place, will fairly consistently exhibit a set of features which most closely conform to a characteristic local way of speaking, and it is these which form a central part of the local accent and dialect descriptions given in the chapters that follow. However, very many speakers will not be consistent in their use of these features, being variably more or less regional in different situations or under different social promptings (e.g. the social status of addresser and addressee, and the degree of familiarity between them), even within the same discourse (e.g. depending on the topic). It is important to note immediately that such variation is not random: speakers do not drift between, towards, or away from markedly regional pronunciations on a whim. Rather, it has been shown in numerous studies that such movement patterns correlate with such social phenomena as age, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity and local affiliations of both speaker and hearer, and can result in short-term, but also long-term, language change.

The acceptance of the absence of tight boundaries for phonological and grammatical features, and the acknowledgement of speakers in any one place being socially heterogeneous and, moreover, inconsistent in their speech lead to the inevitable conclusion that the concept of the 'dialect area' as a fixed, tidy entity is ultimately a myth. In terms of pronunciation, what we are faced with, in place of a certain number of accents, is in reality a continuum: accents shade one into another as individual speakers espouse features drawn from a range of accents to which they have access and that are indicative not just of their regional connections but also of their social needs and aspirations. The same is true for grammatical usage, and for lexical choice.

#### 4. The distinction between 'traditional' and 'modern' dialects

Another often-used notion in dialectology we would like to question is the separation of dialects into two distinct categories, the 'Traditional' and the 'Modern'. This artificially tidy categorisation is not only questionable given the fact of constant language change. It is even more debatable in the light of the fact that, as will be explained below, much of our knowledge of recent distributions of dialect features over wide sweeps of territory in the British Isles continues to be based on surveys now considered to have focused on the 'traditional', in the sense that their target was the essentially rural speech of comparatively static communities. (No community is ever wholly static or isolated, of course: there will always be incomers and external contacts, however few these might be in particular communities at certain times.) Nevertheless, the bipartite distinction does have some undoubted merit as an idealisation: it reminds us that urbanisation and geographical and social mobility have resulted in some accelerated and often quite dramatic changes in speech in recent years, as is made clear in the following chapters. Perhaps it reminds us, too, that language should be seen in its continuous historical (diachronic) as well as its 'snapshot-in-time' (synchronic) dimension, that there was a 'then' to contrast with the 'now'. However, we would be wrong to suppose that there is a straightforward, clear-cut distinction between the way English was spoken in the rural communities of half a century ago and as it is in the towns and cities of today, or that change is happening to language now as it has not happened before. Across time there are periods of comparatively rapid and of slower alteration in speech, but language is *constantly* changing. (And, indeed, the mechanisms of language change occupy the research attention of very many dialectologists today, just as ascertaining the facts of its progress absorbed the efforts of dialect researchers of previous generations.) Furthermore, since human society is in essence the same as it was in the past, a greater understanding of the facts of and reasons for that change today informs our understanding of developments both in the past and into the future.

## 5. Historical and cultural elements in the formation of British accents

Varieties of English around the world are all derived from one ancestral root-stock (variously called Anglo-Saxon or Old English). In part at least, the distinctive sounds and grammatical properties of each are tied to developments in the history of the language, these sometimes dating back many centuries. It is in the UK and Ireland, and in England in particular, however, that this matter of pedigree is most significant. This fact is unsurprising. English is, after all, at bottom the product of England and southern Scotland, born of a fusion of West Germanic dialects brought from mainland Europe to the islands of Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries AD, and perhaps even earlier. Fusing over the centuries with elements of Celtic, Norse, and French, and subject to sundry other influences as a result of the islands' complex history of trade and conquest, the language in its homeland has had time and motive both to preserve ancient forms and to fragment to a degree unknown elsewhere in the English-speaking world.

Thus, constant echoes of earlier phonology and grammar are to be heard in the British regional varieties discussed in this Handbook. They are very clearly evident where contrasts appear between regional accents and the convenient touchstone accent of RP, which is itself an evolving accent but one which, as a model for pronunciation of British English, does not go back before the nineteenth century. The STRUT/PUT merger of the English North and North Midlands, i.e. the vowel in words like *strut* and *hut* being the same as in *put*, is Anglo-Saxon, for example. So are long monophthongs where RP and some other accents have diphthongs. So too, among many other features, are the 'Velar Nasal Plus' feature (as in the pronunciation /sɪŋg/ of *sing* or /'sɪŋgə/ of *singer* [Wells 1982: 365]) of the English north-west Midlands, and the rhoticity (i.e. the pronunciation of /r/ following a vowel, as in *star* or *start*) characteristic of Scotland, Ireland, south-west England, parts of Lancashire and the Northeast, as too of North America of course. Corresponding grammatical features from earlier periods of English include multiple negation (or negative concord), as in *She couldn't say nothing about them*, and personal pronoun forms like *thou* and *thee*.

The length of time over which English has been evolving in the small area that is the British Isles accounts in large part for the complex variation in its present-day dialects. To this must be added the region's ethnic and political mix, both now and in the past. There are, of course, two sovereign states represented, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. The United Kingdom in turn comprises the nations of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and matters of national as well as of narrower regional identity come into play when espousal of features of language are concerned. In the present, Wales especially, and Scotland and Ireland to lesser extents, see the interaction of English with Celtic languages. In the past, this interaction with Celtic has been most influential in the north and west of the region, as has that with Norse in Ireland, in northern Scotland and the Orkney

and Shetland Isles, and in northwest and eastern England. The economic and political dominance exerted on Britain by London and the southeast of England has also inevitably shaped accents: not itself a regional accent, RP nevertheless has an essentially southeastern phonemic structure and phonetic bias; such processes as the Great Vowel Shift have acted to shape modern phonology more consistently and more completely in the south of England than elsewhere. All of this cultural and historical complexity, as it affects language, is rehearsed in the various chapters that follow, and each in consequence has its own unique perspective.

## 6. Dialect surveys

Although they are neither very recent nor focused upon the accents of major centres of population, a small group of major regional dialect surveys are heavily drawn upon in the writing of the following chapters, as they must inevitably be by anyone commenting on variation in the speech of the British Isles. Foremost among these, for England, is the *Survey of English Dialects (SED)*. This essentially rural survey from the mid-twentieth century continues to be drawn upon for information because of its detailed coverage, its reliability (given the constraints under which it operated) and the accessibility of its information: it is fair to say that no reliable statements can be made about the widespread distribution of linguistic features within England without reference to its findings, since there exists no more recent country-wide comprehensive evidence. The SED is paralleled by its contemporary in Scotland, the *Linguistic Survey of Scotland*, in Wales by the *Survey of Anglo-Welsh Dialects*, and in Ireland by the *Tape-recorded Survey of Hiberno-English Speech*. The last two surveys were in some large measure directly inspired by the SED, under whose founder, Harold Orton, some of their founder-workers had trained.

Recently, however, whilst there have been some comparatively large-scale efforts at data-gathering (see especially the *Survey of British Dialect Grammar* [Cheshire/Edwards/Whittle 1993], the *Freiburg English Dialect Corpus* [Kortmann 2003, Kortmann and Wagner 2005], and the *Sound Atlas of Irish English* [Hickey 2005 and this volume]), the reader will notice that, with the notable exception of the latter, even these have not been on the scale of earlier surveys. This has not, however, been accidental or the result of academic indolence on the part of the linguistic community. Rather, recent concentration on social variation in speech, in order to better understand the mechanisms of language change, has resulted in focus being on small(er) areas and fewer locations in which diverse populations can be studied in close detail: the wide sweeps of variation that were the object of earlier research do not speak to the considerations of motivation for language use, and for language variation, which are a preoccupation of today's dialectologists. (In this regard, there have been a number of recent seminal works which have been drawn upon in the

present volume, such as Foulkes and Docherty's *Urban Voices* [1999] and Milroy and Milroy's *Real English* [1993].) Beyond the larger survey materials, therefore, the authors have drawn upon a wide range of materials which result from their own and others' intensive study of the localised speech of their respective areas.

## 7. The chapters on phonology

Melchers' focus is on distinctions between the phonology of Orkney ("Orcadian") and Shetland, and also between their divergence from and correspondence to the accents of mainland Scotland. Amongst those accents, Stuart-Smith identifies a continuum corresponding to a phonological range available to very many in Scotland, whose speech ranges seamlessly between Scottish Standard English and Scots: as regards the latter, on grounds of population density and the existence of detailed research data, she concentrates on the Urban Scots of the 'Central Belt' around Edinburgh and (especially) Glasgow. In a chapter which, concerning its northern data, relates very closely to that of Scotland, Hickey describes a complex of accents in which a north-south split provides a basic structure. He identifies a supraregional Southern accent and three regional southern varieties, distinguishing these from Northern varieties. He includes discussion of the complex terminology associated with northern variation, and three urban accents, those of Dublin, Belfast, and Derry. As Hickey's chapter treats the admixture of English, Irish and Scots influences on the Irish English accents, so Penhallurick's is concerned with the interface of English and Welsh in the phonology of Wales. Welsh sounds in English, the effects of long-established cultural links with the English Midlands and Southwest, and the existence of English as a Foreign Language for Welsh speakers are shown to be factors in the creation of the Principality's distinctive English accents.

Directly across the border from Wales, Clark's West Midlands is the second largest conurbation of England and the UK, home to the two distinct if closely-related accents of Birmingham and the Black Country. Concentration in this chapter is on the Black Country on the one hand and on the wider West Midland conurbation on the other, with the various accents discussed as both distinctive and as collectively a Northern English variety. In a discussion of the Northern accents of England proper, Beal identifies pan-northern accent features, whilst pointing also to more locally distinctive characteristics, most especially though not exclusively those of the Northeast ('Geordie') and Liverpool ('Scouse'). Altendorf and Watt, in their chapter on the phonology of southern England, divide their area firmly into east and west (the non-rhotic and rhotic areas respectively), and describe the distinctive characteristics of the accents of these areas quite separately. Whilst they regard East Anglia as part of the South they do not venture specifically into this region: features of the East Anglian accents, and their relation to those of surrounding areas to the south, west, and north, are the subject of Trudgill's chapter.



Concluding the chapters which deal with the accents associated with specific geographical regions, Ramisch concentrates on the Channel Islands, where interaction with Channel Island (Norman) French and mainland immigrant English have both had an impact on distinctively local English pronunciation.

Descriptions of two non-regional accents round off the discussion of accents of the British Isles. The first is that of British Creole, an ethnic variety which, in Patrick's words, 'is the product of dialect contact between West Indian migrants ... and vernacular varieties of urban English'. The second is Received Pronunciation (authored by Upton), an accent that is in essence unmarked for place and so attracts none of the (sometimes adverse) social judgements which regional accents attract, and that is, in consequence, frequently used in broadcasting and as a language-teaching model.

## **8. The chapters on morphology and syntax**

With the exception of the West Midlands and the Channel Islands, all regional and ethnic (British Creole) varieties in the British Isles discussed in the phonology volume of this Handbook have a companion chapter in the morphosyntax volume. In all morphosyntax chapters the features described are distinctive of the relevant varieties, but in the vast majority of cases not to be understood as unique to these varieties (cf. also the General Introduction to this Handbook). Another property the majority of these chapters share is that they provide qualitative, only exceptionally quantitative, accounts based on large digitized and/or computerized corpora of spontaneous non-standard present-day speech.

The first two chapters complement each other. The one by Melchers on Orkney and Shetland is geared towards highlighting morphosyntactic features which are distinctive of the Northern Isles especially due to their Scandinavian substratum. The Scandinavian features are particularly pronounced at the Broad Scots end of the dialect continuum. Especially for the Central Lowlands (Edinburgh and East Lothian), this is also the focus of Miller's chapter on Scottish English. Southern Irish English, but also varieties of Ulster and Ulster Scots stand at the centre of Filppula's chapter on Irish English. Especially the morphosyntax of Irish English varieties shows an interesting mix of features which, due to one or a combination of the following four factors, have affected the development of Irish English: retention of features from earlier periods of English, dialect contact with other varieties spoken in the British Isles, substratal influence from the indigenous Celtic language (Irish), and universal features we associate with varieties resulting from rapid, large-scale second-language acquisition. The second and third of these features also figure prominently in Penhallurick's account of the morphosyntax of Welsh English: the influences of Welsh, and of the regional dialects spoken in the neighbouring counties of England.

Beal provides a survey of features found in the grammars of varieties spoken in the North of England, the vast majority of which are restricted to particular regions or cities. This variation in the morphology and syntax reflects the diverse histories of the different parts and urban centres of the North: in the far north, the shared history with Scotland and the continuing migration from central Scotland to Tyneside; the large-scale medieval Scandinavian settlements in an area stretching from the Northwest (Cumbria) south-east down to East Anglia, the so-called “Scandinavian belt” (including, for example, all of Yorkshire); in the large cities like Liverpool, Newcastle, and Manchester, high Irish immigration since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Three chapters are concerned with the morphology and syntax of non-standard varieties spoken in the southern parts of England. Trudgill deals with East Anglia, Wagner with the Southwest (traditionally known as the West Country), and Anderwald with the Southeast (London and the neighbouring counties, the so-called Home Counties). East Anglia and the Southwest have been well-established dialect areas since medieval times, especially the Southwest still boasting not only a unique mix of morphosyntactic features but also individual morphosyntactic properties which are truly unique to this area. The Southeast, by contrast, is a relatively young and, at least with regard to grammar, surprisingly underresearched area in modern dialect research. Here most morphosyntactic features seem to be representative of non-standard speech in present-day England in general. Anderwald’s survey is based, among other things, on quantitative analyses of the British National Corpus (BNC), the Bergen Corpus of London Teenage Language (COLT) and the Freiburg English Dialect Corpus (FRED), and provides a solid basis for studies wanting to explore the extent to which the Southeast may be responsible for the (partly ongoing) spread of the relevant morphosyntactic features in the British Isles.

The chapter on the Southeast is also useful background reading against which to judge Sebba’s observations on British Creole, since the conversational data Sebba has analyzed are all taken from British-born Caribbean adolescents living in London. This contact variety displays a fascinating degree of syntactic variability which cannot be explained by a continuum model, as known from pidgin and creole studies, alone. What additionally needs to be factored in is, for example, the existence of (especially Jamaican) creole- and standard-like variants for many linguistic forms, and the fact that (for a variety of reasons) speakers often mix Creole and English English forms.

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# English spoken in Orkney and Shetland: morphology, syntax, and lexicon

Gunnel Melchers

## 1. Introduction

An account of the unique historical and linguistic background of the Northern Isles, which were ruled by Scandinavians until the latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, is given in the phonology section of this handbook (see Melchers, other volume). Today, the traditional dialects as spoken in the Northern Isles must be described as varieties of Scots, yet with a substantial component of Scandinavian features, manifested at all levels of language. This component differs from the Scandinavian linguistic heritage in other parts of Britain (possibly with the exception of Caithness), not only in size but also in structure and history. The Norse invaders of Yorkshire, for example, met a native Anglo-Saxon population with whom they – allegedly – could communicate. They influenced the Anglo-Saxon language and some of this influence has survived, mostly in the form of lexical borrowings. In Orkney and Shetland, on the other hand, we see the still powerful impact of a Scandinavian *substratum*, supported by positive – to the degree of romantic – feelings of affiliation with Scandinavia.

Orkney and Shetland can be characterized as bidialectal speech communities with access to a choice of two discrete, definable forms of speech – one a form of standard, basically Standard Scottish English, and the other what Wells (1982) calls traditional dialect. Orcadians and Shetlanders are generally aware of commanding two distinct varieties and they have names for these, e.g. “English” vs. “Shetland” or “Orcadian”. Admittedly, age-related differences have been observed: on the one hand, young people are losing some of the traditional-dialect indexicals, on the other they often state explicitly that they do not wish to adapt to outsiders and tend to be scathing about islanders who do. It would, however, be difficult to find truly monolingual speakers of the traditional dialect today.

As for writing, it goes without saying that Shetlanders and Orcadians are in full command of Standard English, but there is a growing interest in maintaining written forms of the regional dialects as well, encouraged by schoolteachers and manifested in local publications as well as spontaneous notes, letters, scripts etc. The awareness of two varieties of language was demonstrated in the reading of the test passage for this handbook, *The North Wind and the Sun*, when a Shetland informant first read the text word for word and then spontaneously “translated” some words and phrases into a more Shetland version, e.g. *was arguin* ‘instead of *were disputing*, *what ane was stronger* instead of *which was the stronger*.

As varieties of Scots/Scottish English, Shetland and Orkney dialects naturally share a great many – if not the bulk – of the characteristics described in the chapter on the morphology and syntax of Scottish English (see Miller, this volume). This presentation should be seen as a complement to Miller's, exclusively drawing on examples from Orkney (O) and Shetland (S) data and highlighting some areas where language in the Northern Isles is particularly distinctive, often due to their Scandinavian substratum. As in the Scottish English chapter, the focus is on structures towards and at the Broad Scots end of the continuum, which in this case entails a sizeable component of Scandinavian features. Unlike the chapter on Scottish English, this presentation does not present morphology and syntax in distinctive sections. The main reason for this is that very little research has been carried out on the syntax of these varieties.

## 2. Research and data

Present-day language in the Northern Isles, especially Orkney, is indeed remarkably under-researched. With the exception of two dictionaries written in a popular style, *Orkney Wordbook* (Lamb 1988) and *The Orkney Dictionary* (Flaws and Lamb 1997), there has been no general study of Orcadian since Marwick's *The Orkney Norn* (1929), mainly a dictionary but with a useful, though extremely brief, general introduction to the language. Shetland dialect as spoken at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was carefully documented in Jakob Jakobsen's monumental *An Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland* (1928–1932); as the title suggests, it obviously has a clear Scandinavian bias but provides some information about the language variety as a whole. As in Marwick's work, morphological and syntactic structures basically have to be worked out through the study of individual entries, however.

John Graham, a native Shetlander, English teacher, fictional writer and linguist, wrote *The Shetland Dictionary*, whose first edition appeared in the early 1970s. Although a slim contribution compared to Jakobsen's dictionary, it is very important in providing up-to-date knowledge about current usage as well as a wealth of authentic examples. With T.A. Robertson as co-author, Graham also wrote *Grammar and Usage of the Shetland Dialect* (1991), which has less than 50 pages but constitutes the only attempt so far at producing a comprehensive grammar of the dialect. For Orkney, we only have just over two pages in Marwick's introduction to his dictionary and a few comments in the more recent popular works.

Aspects of Shetland dialect syntax, with special reference to word order typology, are currently being investigated by Dianne Jonas (cf. e.g. Jonas 2002).

Extensive fieldwork on Shetland dialect was carried out in the 1980s by Melchers and Foldvik, described in several publications. A great deal of the data, including recordings featuring on the CD-ROM, derives from this project. *The Linguistic*

*Survey of Scotland* (LSS) included various localities in Orkney and Shetland and provides useful information about the lexicon, but unlike the *Survey of English Dialects* (SED), its counterpart in England, unfortunately not on morphology and syntax. However, some unpublished LSS material in the form of slips containing answers to additional sections in the questionnaire eliciting aspects of grammar, e.g. negation, verb forms, and pronominal usage, has been consulted for the purpose of this chapter.

In addition to the above-mentioned recordings and material collected for this presentation in Orkney and Shetland during the summer of 2002, a great deal of material recorded for the purpose of oral history has been made available by the Orkney and Shetland Archives. This is particularly useful since the interviewers are mostly dialect speakers themselves, which means that the informants do not tend to adapt their language. Another source of information, reflecting present-day spoken language, is the extensive writing in local dialect, carried out in a variety of genres and encouraged in the schools (cf. Melchers 1999, which also contains some information about dialect writing in Orkney). The spelling used in the examples below is generally taken from local representations in writing, to some extent “standardized” in the widely circulated present-day dictionaries described above. Unless otherwise indicated, the presentation applies to Orkney as well as Shetland, although Shetland tends to dominate the description of characteristic features and hence the number of examples. There are two reasons for this imbalance:

- for historical and geographical reasons Shetland dialect has remained more distinct from other varieties of Scots and retained more of the Norse element;
- more linguistic research has been devoted to the present-day language situation in Shetland

It remains to be pointed out that some differences in Orkney and Shetland forms may be due to differences in the written tradition and that examples marked (O) or (S) do not necessarily signal that they are exclusive to Orkney or Shetland but mostly just state the origin of the data. “Unmarked” examples refer to both varieties.

### 3. Verbs

#### 3.1. Some morphological characteristics

As pointed out by Miller (this volume), a given verb may be strong in Standard English but weak in Scots (cf. [1] below) and vice versa.

Regular verbs: Past tense and past participle endings are generally: a) *-ed* after vowels and voiced consonants other than plosives; b) *-it* (S)/*-id* (O) after plosives; c) *-t* after other voiceless consonants.

- (1) *Somehoo he's never been da sam since he selled oot ta yon oil company* (S).  
 (2) *Kale and knockid corn* ('cabbage and crushed barley') (O).  
 (3) *He flipit* ('folded') *up his trousers* (S).

Irregular verbs include:

<i>aet</i> 'eat'	<i>öt</i>	<i>ötten/aeten</i>
<i>brak</i> 'break'	<i>brok/bruik</i>	<i>brakken/brokken</i>
<i>cast</i> 'cast'; 'dig peats'	<i>cöst/cuist</i>	<i>cassen</i>

- (4) *Her man was cassen awa* 'lost at sea' (S).  
*geng* 'go'      *göd* 'went'      *gien* 'gone'      *g(y)aan* 'going'  
 (5) *Der's a feerie* ('epidemic') *gyann aboot* (S).  
*gie* 'give'      *gied* 'gave'      *gien* 'given' (i.e. a merger with the above)

There is further variation in the forms of the above two verbs in Shetland and Orkney dialects.

<i>greet</i> 'cry'	<i>gret/grat</i>	<i>grutten/gritten</i>
<i>jump</i> 'jump'	<i>jamp</i>	<i>juppm</i> (S)
<i>rive</i> 'tear'	<i>rave</i>	<i>riven</i>
<i>shaer</i> 'shear'	<i>shör</i>	<i>shorn</i> (S)
<i>white</i> 'quit'	<i>whet</i>	<i>whet</i>

- (6) *Ah'm whet gaan tae the sea now* (O).  
*write*      *wret/wrat*      *wret/written*

Data from Shetland demonstrate a great deal of regional – and probably idiolectal – variation in irregular verb forms, e.g. *jamp* (past tense of *jump*) and *skrivan* 'written' from Fair Isle, and *beuk* (past tense of *bake*) from some places as documented by LSS. Not surprisingly, there is also considerable overlap/confusion between past and present participles: *skrivan* sometimes stands for 'writing', *gyann* for 'gone', and *pitten* could be either equivalent to 'putting' or the past participle form 'put', which may have played a part in the use of *be* as a perfective auxiliary (cf. section 3.3.).

In contrast with Standard English, a distinction in form is made between verbal adjectives/present participles on the one hand and verbal nouns on the other, as illustrated by the following Orkney examples:

- (7) *Sheu's knittan.*  
 (8) *Sheu's deuan her knitteen.*

Substantial evidence of this distinction – though not in all localities – is found in the (unpublished) Shetland and Orkney answers to Question 190 in LSS, eliciting local forms of *he likes singing* and *he is aye singing*.

(9) *He laeks singeen; He's aye singin* (S).

Presumably by analogy, words like *lesson*, *pudding* are sometimes pronounced as 'lesseen', 'puddeen'.

The present indicative:

Not only in the third person singular but also in the second – at least after the informal *du* (S) and *thul/thoo* (O) – are *-s* endings used in Shetland and Orkney:

(10) *Thoo kens whit hid's like wi a hooseful o folk* (O).

(11) *Du minds ('remind') me aafil o dee grandfaider* (S).

In the historic present, *-s* endings are also used in the first person singular:

(12) "So I grips and kerries her ta da hoose" (Graham 1993: 12).

The present- and past-tense paradigms of the verbs *ta be* ('to be') and *ta hae* ('to have') in Shetland dialect are:

<i>I am</i>	<i>we ir</i>	<i>I wis</i>	<i>we wir</i>
<i>du is</i>	<i>you ir</i>	<i>du wis</i>	<i>you wir</i>
<i>he is</i>	<i>dey ir</i>	<i>he wis</i>	<i>dey wir</i>
<i>I hae/hiv</i>	<i>we hae/hiv</i>	<i>I hed</i>	<i>we hed</i>
<i>du hes</i>	<i>you hae</i>	<i>du hed</i>	<i>you hed</i>
<i>he hes</i>	<i>dey hae</i>	<i>he hed</i>	<i>dey hed</i>

### 3.2. Agreement

Plural subject nouns combine with verbs ending in *-s*, not just *is* and *was* (cf. section 3.1. in the Scottish English chapter). In the unpublished LSS material, Question 191, investigating dialect constructions corresponding to Standard English *these horses pull well* and *they pull well*, is accompanied by the following note:

Shetland verbal usage is rather complicated, in some ways resembling Middle Scots. The third person plural present indicative has an *-s* ending if the subject is a noun or a pronoun separated from the verb: *Dem at comes oonbid sits oonsaired* ('Those who come uninvited get nothing').

Typical responses to the question in Shetland were:

(13) *dis (yon) horses pulls (poos) weel; dey pull (poo) weel*



Interestingly, an informant notes: “When we use *they*, *this* or *these* we are using English and would *never* say *these pulls* or *they pulls*”.

The following story related in Graham (2002: 6) provides further illustration of the LSS observation on Shetland verbal usage:

An owld Waas man commented: “We wir boarn ta help idders.”

Anidder character – a realist – said: “I winder what da idders wis boarn for?”

(*Waas* ‘Walls, a place in Shetland’, *idders* ‘others’)

In Shetland dialect, *der* corresponds to ‘there is’ as well as ‘there are’ (cf. the use of *there* in examples [5–7] in the chapter on Scottish English and Orkney *thir* as exemplified below):

- (14) *Der a boat hoose yonder.*
- (15) *Der folk here fae Sweden and Norway.*
- (16) *Der twa Women’s Guilds been pitten aff da night.*
- (17) *Thir a lock o fock here.*

This could be compared to the increasing use of grammaticalized *there is* in more standardlike varieties of English, as in *There’s sheep and there’s penguins* (Falkland English).

A “frozen” form is also used for the past tense, i.e. corresponding to ‘there was’, ‘there were’ in Orkney and Shetland dialect, viz. *they wir* (O), *dey wir* (S):

- (18) *They wir a coo lowse in the byre.*
- (19) *Dey wir no money dan.*

### 3.3. Tense

A remarkable feature unique to Orkney and Shetland is the use of *be* rather than *have* as a perfective auxiliary, not restricted to verbs of motion but categorically, as in:

- (20) *I war paid him afore that* (O).
- (21) *Hid’ll lickly be been shoved in a draar someway*  
‘It will probably have been put in a drawer somewhere’ (O).
- (22) *I’m seen (heard) it* (S).
- (23) *I’m been dere twartree* (‘a couple of’) *times* (S).

Although there is a parallel construction in one local dialect in Norway, this is probably not a Scandinavian feature. Jakobsen (1897: 113) characterizes it as a fea-

ture of “modern Shetlandic”, which is difficult to prove owing to the non-existence of reliable early dialect texts. Recent data from Shetland show that the *be* construction belongs to the “Shetland code” rather than “Shetland English”. It is possible that the use of *be* in Orkney and Shetland is due to ambiguity and confusion of expressions referring to transitivity vs. intransitivity and active vs. passive.

Another contributory factor might be that, at least in modern Shetland pronunciation, a realization of the participle form may often be identical with the gerund (cf. 3.1. above). In an example such as

- (24) *Yun onkerry* (‘carry on’) *was pitten* (‘put’) *her in a aafil flickament* (‘state of excitement’),

the pronunciation of the main verb would be identical with that of the form *putting*, which would be expected to be preceded by a form of *be*.

It is not unlikely that the general linguistic insecurity which must have resulted from the Norn/Scots contact situation, richly demonstrated in narrowing and extension of meaning in the lexicon and mergers in the phonological system, may have led to the overextended use of *be*. As Shetlanders were also exposed to Dutch and German influence from the Hanseatic period well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, resulting in a number of lexical borrowings, types of constructions such as *ich bin gewesen*, *ik ben geweest* cannot be excluded from playing a part in the simplification pattern.

### 3.4. Modality

In contrast with other varieties of Scots/Scottish English, there appears to be no evidence of double modals in Shetland and Orkney, with the exception of structures containing *can* in the sense of ‘be able to’ in Orkney dialect, as in:

- (25) *He’ll no can deu that.*

Robertson and Graham (1991: 9) list the following modal verbs: *böst* ‘had to, must’ (*buist*, the corresponding Orkney word, appears to be obsolete); *man* ‘must’ (also found in Orkney); *may*; *sall* (the first person singular form is often contracted to *I’s*; the past tense form is *sood*); *will*.

- (26) *He böst til a come* (‘must have come’) *alang da banks.*

- (27) *What man be man be* (‘it is inevitable’).

- (28) *Shü* (‘she’) *sood a hed a lamb.*

(26) and (28) exemplify the use of *a* [æ], a form of *hae* ‘have’, after certain modal verb forms.

It is not clear why the Robertson-Graham handbook excludes *can* (which is used in much the same way as in Scottish English generally), *must*, and *have to*, now commonly used to express conclusions as well as obligation.

The subjunctive form *bees* is reported from Orkney:

- (29) *Thoo'll git a sweetie if thoo bees good.*  
(30) *We'll can stert cuttan the morn if hid bees dry.*  
'We'll be able to start cutting tomorrow if it is dry'.

### 3.5. Negation

As in Scots/Scottish English generally, verbs tend to be negated by the independent word *no* or by the suffix *na(e)*, the latter typically found after modal verbs and *do*.

- (31) "*Da fok fae sooth aye mention at dey canna understaand ...*" (S)  
'People from south (i.e. outsiders) always mention that they can't understand ...'  
(32) *Soodna we try dat?* (S)  
(33) *A'm no ready yet.*

The last-mentioned example is taken from the Orkney and Shetland responses to Question 185 in the unpublished LSS material, eliciting 'I'm not ready yet' as well as 'I don't know'. Interestingly, the latter structure was realized as *I kenno/ken no/kno no/kjinna* by a number of Shetland informants. This structure was not elicited for Orkney but is mentioned by Flaws and Lamb (2001: 44) in connection with the intriguing entry *tae kenno* 'not to know'.

## 4. Nouns

### 4.1. Article usage

The indefinite article is always *a*, i.e. it is used before vowels as well as consonants (cf. also *a aafil* in [24] above):

- (34) *a uncan* 'strange' *man* (S)

As in Scots generally, the definite article, which is realized as *da* in Shetland and *they* in Ronaldsey, Orkney, is used with a number of nouns with which it would not be used in Standard English. Typical categories of such nouns are names of seasons, meals, illnesses and institutions.

- (35) *gaan tae the kirk/the skuil, makkan the dinner* (O)  
(36) *da gulsa* 'jaundice', *da brunt-rift* 'heartburn', *da caald, dan cam da hairst* 'autumn' (S)

For ‘today’, ‘tonight’, ‘tomorrow’, ‘tomorrow night’ etc., Orkney and Shetland dialect has *the/da day*, *the/da nicht*, *the/da mo(a)rn*, *the/da moarn’s nicht*. ‘Yesterday evening’ is *the/da streen*.

- (37) *Da moarns night der a beetle drive in da Whiteness an Weisdale Haal*  
(Shetland radio script).

#### 4.2. Plural forms

Irregular plural forms such as *breider* ‘brothers’, *een* ‘eyes’, *shön* ‘shoes’, *kye* ‘cows’ are still often heard, at least in Shetland dialect.

- (38) *We riggat wiz athin wir Sunday suits in polished wir shön.*  
‘We put on our Sunday clothes and polished our shoes’ (Alec Stout, Fair Isle).

An amusing example of cross-dialectal miscomprehension is reported from an incident during World War I, when the phrase *the kye, sir*, as said by a Shetlander, was interpreted as *the Kaiser* by an officer.

*Horse and beast* (S: *baess*) have unmarked plurality.

### 5. Pronouns

The subject, object, and possessive forms of the personal pronouns in Shetland dialect are:

<i>I</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>my/mi, mine(s)</i>
<i>du (you)</i>	<i>dee (you)</i>	<i>dy/di, dine(s) (your[s])</i>
<i>he</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>his</i>
<i>shui/shö</i>	<i>her</i>	<i>her(s)</i>
<i>hit</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hits</i>
<i>we</i>	<i>wis</i>	<i>wir(s)</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>your(s)</i>
<i>dey</i>	<i>dem</i>	<i>dir(s)</i>

Orkney dialect has a similar system, with certain realizational differences, such as *thu/thoo* and *hid*.

- (39) *Come doon alang some nicht, lass, an tak dy sock.*  
‘Come along some evening, girl, and bring your knitting.’ (S)
- (40) *Whar’s shoes is this? Mine’s.*  
‘Whose shoes are these? Mine.’ (O)

As shown in the table above, the second person singular can be realized either as *du/thu(thoo)* or *you*. The use of these forms is not random, but determined by subtle factors related to age, status, situation, familiarity, attitude etc. (cf. one of the Shetland recordings on the accompanying CD-ROM). This usage is reminiscent of the situation in Sweden and Norway, at least until quite recently. The significance of *you* as the formal variant is not quite clear, however, since its use may often simply be ascribed to the influence of Standard English.

The following results from an investigation of language attitudes carried out in the 1980s among 350 Shetland schoolchildren (cf. Melchers 1985) will illustrate some aspects of the *du/you* distinction:

- 7% of the children used *du* as the only form of address. This group was further characterized by their answers to other questions in the attitude questionnaire: they did not want to leave Shetland; if they moved to London, they would go on speaking the way they did; their parents spoke dialect; they thought that in some situations it is not proper for a Shetlander to speak Standard English.
- Many informants used *du* to everybody except teachers and certain shopkeepers.
- Age is mentioned as the most important factor. Children of Shetland origin will use *du* to all their friends, including incomers, even if they say *you* to their parents.

A general impression from the survey as well as participant observation is that the *du-you* variation is very often a conscious code-switching phenomenon, not reflecting equality-inferiority so much as accommodation to speakers of different dialects.

Natural gender is very much alive in pronominal reference to certain noun categories: tools, for example, tend to be viewed as masculine, as are some natural phenomena such as the tide, whereas *lamp, fish, kirk, world* and some time expressions are feminine:

(41) *Da tide farder nort, he streams on da west side* (S).

(42) *Da millennium is comin, but shö ...* (S).

Of particular interest is the generic use of *he* referring to the weather. This may well be a substratum effect; there are similar constructions in some Norwegian dialects.

(43) *He's blowan ap* 'the wind is rising' (S).

Reflexive pronouns are often identical with the object forms of personal pronouns:

(44) *Set dee doon* (S).

(45) *He wis restin him* (S).

Although not exclusively found in Shetland and Orkney, the demonstrative pronoun *yon* (*yun*) is widely used and has come to signal foreignness and a special feeling of remoteness, e.g. with reference to the massive influence of the oil companies, a threat to traditional life (cf. Melchers 1997).

(44) *Yon oil company; yon muckle Concorde; yon Southfork* (Dallas ranch) (S).

(45) *Du's no telling me at a Shetlander biggit yon, is du?*

The demonstrative pronouns *this/dis* and *that/dat* are used in the plural as well as the singular:

(46) *This eens is better as that eens* (O).

The relative pronoun is always *at*. A frequently used indefinite pronoun is *twartree* 'two or three', 'several'.

## 6. Word order

The pioneering work by Jonas (2002) demonstrates that traces of an old Scandinavian type of word order in the negated verb phrase, still existing in Icelandic and to some extent in Faroese, can be found in traditional Shetland dialect. She draws on literary sources, mostly from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the structure she discusses was also elicited by the LSS (cf. *I kenno* under 3.5. above). Attention should also be drawn to the fact that Shetland dialect still may display inverted word order and lack of *do*-support (47) as well as overt-subject imperatives (48):

(47) *Sees du yon, boy?*

(48) *Geng du my boy!*

## 7. A note on the lexicon

The best-known dialect word in the Northern Isles, immediately picked up by incomers, is *peerie* (S)/*pidie* (O) for 'small', derived from French *petit*. It is not clear why this word rather than *wee* has come to be used in Orkney and Shetland.

Yet the most striking component of traditional Orkney and Shetland vocabulary is clearly the Scandinavian element. As in the case of other levels of language, it is more alive in Shetland. A detailed study of the vocabulary investigated by the *Linguistic Survey of Scotland* shows that Orkney retains about two thirds of the Scandinavian-based vocabulary elicited for Shetland.

Words relating to the Scandinavian substratum are generally close to everyday life on the Northern Isles, including semantic fields such as:

- flora and fauna: *arvi* ‘chickweed’; *shalder* ‘oyster-catcher’, *scarf* ‘cormorant’
- traditional tools: *tushkar* ‘spade for cutting peats’, *owskerri* ‘scoop used for baling water out of a boat’
- weather terminology: *bonfrost* ‘very severe frost’
- colours and characteristics pertaining to sheep: *sholmet* ‘wearing a helmet’, *moorit* ‘light brown’
- emotive, characterizing adjectives: *döless* ‘indolent’, *inbigget* ‘stubborn’

A recent investigation of young schoolchildren’s knowledge of a selection of words representing the last category showed a remarkable competence in supplying Standard English synonyms.

## 8. Text samples

These texts have been included to add more flavour to the description of the unique traditional dialects in the Northern Isles.

### Orkney:

A’m sheur thoo’re haerd ower an ower again that the Orkney man is a paeceable quiet kind o’ body, an’ hid’s been that aften said that feth the Orkney folk’s beginnan tae believe ’id themsel’s. Right enouf, wir no folk that carries things tae extremes, lik’ sit doon strikes, or gaan merchan here an’ there, gittan in folk’s wey and livan aff o’ the Nation for six or eight weeks. Na, wae cheust geung wir ain gate. (Costie 1976: 51)  
(*feth* ‘indeed’, *merchan* ‘marching’, *cheust* ‘just’, *gate* ‘way’)

### Shetland:

Du minds du said at du wid never ken ae yowe fae anidder? Weel, I tocht da sam until I wan among dem, an boy I learned different den. Hit wisna juist da colours ida yowes at dey spak aboot; hit wis der hale laekly, der ancestors an der relations, an aa der past deeds an misanters, an even da wye at dey lookit at dee. Whit wid du tink if some ane axed dee, “Did du see a muckle twa-bletted shaela yowe risin an lyan at da back ida nort crü styaggie?” (Holbourn 1980: 7)  
(*yowe* ‘ewe’, *hale* ‘whole’, *laekly* ‘exact resemblance’, *misanter* ‘mishap’, *muckle* ‘big’, *twa-bletted* ‘two separate white patches on nose and forehead of sheep’, *shaela* ‘dark grey’, *risin* ‘getting up’, *crü* ‘sheep-fold’, *styaggie* ‘part of sheep-pen’)

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# Scottish English: morphology and syntax

Jim Miller

## 1. Introduction

Speakers in Scotland use a range of syntactic structures varying from Broad Scots at one end of a continuum to Standard English at the other. Different speakers make different choices in different situations. This paper focuses on structures towards and at the Broad Scots end of the range. Broad Scots is essentially a spoken variety, and spontaneous spoken language has its own structures and properties. (See the references to the work of Blanche-Benveniste, Chafe, Crystal, Halliday, Sornicola, Zemska and others in Miller and Weinert [1998].) The structures and properties are found in all non-standard varieties of English, but also in spontaneous spoken Standard English (and other languages) and must be included in a compendium of structures used by speakers of Broad Scots. Properties of spontaneous spoken language apart, many (morpho-)syntactic structures used by Scottish speakers occur in other varieties. The structures are described here as Scots, which is not to be read as 'unique to Scots'.

The data is from various sources: a 220,000 word digitised body of conversations collected in Edinburgh and East Lothian (the Edinburgh Corpus of Spoken Scottish English or ECOSSE); a 12,000 word subset of a body of task-related dialogues produced by West of Scotland speakers – the Map Task corpus or MTC; data from Macaulay (1991), which analyses a set of narratives collected in Ayr; excerpts from narratives in Bennett (1992), excluding the narratives from Highland speakers; data in Häcker (1999); and data obtained by elicitation tests. Murray (1873), and Wilson (1915) were consulted for structures used or recognised by the oldest speakers.

The audio tapes contain about 90 hours of conversation.

The paper steers clear of the question of literary Scots and focuses on current spoken language in the Central Lowlands. (Treating this as Scots is controversial but it is essential to avoid the myths and wishful thinking that vitiate some 'grammars of Scots'.) Examples from the Buchan area are excluded, as are examples from dialogue in nineteenth and early twentieth century novels set in various areas of Scotland. This approach yields a more coherent set of data than found in, e.g., Häcker (1999). Older constructions are cited from Murray (1873) and Wilson (1915); they might still be used or recognised by the oldest speakers but are otherwise now extinct.

The structures described here are part of the everyday language of many speakers in Scotland but differ greatly from the structures of standard written English. They form a different system – see Häcker (1999: 11–12, 241) on this matter. Their survival is worth recording, their role in the construction of Scottish identity and the identity of individuals is central even if sadly neglected by researchers, and they bear directly on education, employment and social exclusion. (This point is ignored by politicians and many educators).

## 2. Morphology

### 2.1. Irregular verbs

A given verb may have different irregular (strong) forms in Scots and Standard English – *seen* (Scots) vs *saw* (Standard English). A given verb may be strong in Standard English but weak in Scots – compare *sold* (Standard English) and *sellt* (Scots). The following lists of words are illustrative, not exhaustive.

#### 2.1.1. Past tense forms of verbs

<i>brung</i> ‘brought’	<i>driv</i> ‘drove’	<i>seen</i> ‘saw’	<i>taen</i> ‘took’
<i>come</i> ‘came’	<i>killt</i> ‘killed’	<i>sellt</i> ‘sold’	<i>tellt</i> ‘told’
<i>done</i> ‘did’	<i>run</i> ‘ran’	<i>sunk</i> ‘sank’	<i>writ</i> ‘wrote’

#### 2.1.2. Past participles

<i>beat</i> ‘beaten’	<i>feart</i> ‘frightened’	<i>gave</i> ‘given’	<i>saw</i> ‘seen’
<i>blew</i> ‘blown’	<i>fell</i> ‘fallen’	<i>gotten</i> ‘got’	<i>stole</i> ‘stolen’
<i>broke</i> ‘broken’	<i>forgot</i> ‘forgotten’	<i>knew</i> ‘known’	<i>took</i> ‘taken’
<i>came</i> ‘come’	<i>froze</i> ‘frozen’	<i>rose</i> ‘risen’	<i>went</i> ‘gone’

*Sellt* and *tellt* indicate that irregular verbs can be made regular. *Sellt* is simply *sell* + *ed* (*ed* → *t* after *l* and *n*). *Went* occurs as a participle in Dunbar’s poem *Celebrations* (late fifteenth century). *Gave* and *knew* are ‘incomers’; the original verbs are *gie*, with past tense *gied* and past participle *gien*, and *ken*, with *kent* as past tense and past participle.

### 2.2. Plural nouns

Plural forms such as *een* (‘eyes’) or *shin* (‘shoes’) are vanishing. The author last heard *shin* in West Lothian in 1963, *een* can still be heard, and *treen* is long gone.

Note the widely used *wifes*, *knifes*, *lifes*, *leafs*, *thiefs*, *dwarfs*, *loafs*, *wolfs*, all in a regular relationship with *wife*, etc.

### 2.3. Pronouns

Scots has a second person plural *yous* or *yous yins*, avoided by educated speakers. *Us* is informal but widespread instead of *me*, particularly with verbs such as *give*, *show*, and *lend* (e.g. *Can you lend us a quid?*). The possessive pronoun *mines* is analogous to *yours*, *his*, etc.; and *hisself* and *theirselves* are analogous to *yourself*, etc. In *me and Jimmy are on Monday our two selves* ('by ourselves'), *two* raises the question whether *myself*, etc. is one word or two.

### 2.4. Demonstrative adjectives

Scots has *thae* ('those') as in *thae cakes was awfy dear* ('awfully dear'). *Thae* is still alive but the most frequent form is now *them*: *them cakes was awfy dear*. Wilson (1915) gives *thir* as the plural of *this*. There is one occurrence in ECOSSE, from a young East Lothian speaker.

### 2.5. Adverbs

As in all Germanic languages (except Standard English), a given form can function as adjective and adverb: *they got on real good*, *drive slow* (on a sign at roadworks), *drive quick*. (With some exceptions, such as *fast*, Standard English adjectives and adverbs differ in form.)

## 3. Syntactic linkage

### 3.1. Number agreement

Plural subject nouns usually combine with *is* and *was*. Wilson (1915) gives *Ma glassiz iz broakun* ('My glasses are broken') and *Is they yours?* ('Are these yours?').

(1) *The windies wiz aw broken.*  
'The windows were all broken.'

(2) *The lambs is oot the field.*  
'The lambs are out of the field.'

*We was* is frequent. *We is* does not occur. Educated speakers avoid the structures in (1) and (2) but many use the existential construction in (3) and (4).

(3) *There's no bottles.*

(4) *Is there any biscuits left?*

Macafee (1983) cites *you was* and *goes* (and other verbs in *-s*) as a narrative form: *'Naw', I goes, near screaming, you know?* (Macafee 1983: 49–50). Macaulay (1991) gives examples of *there* ('there's') and *there were* ('there was'). Wilson (1915: 77) cites the example in (7), and *the're* (sic) is mentioned in passing in Grant and Main Dixon's 1921 *Manual of Modern Scots*.

(5) *There naebody going to force them.*

(6) *And there a gate just after you go ower the brig takes you intae this field.*

(7) *There no sic a thing hereaway.*

### 3.2. Measure phrases

Numerals from two upwards regularly combine with singular nouns: *five mile long, two foot high, weighs eight stone, two year old*. In Macaulay's data (1991: 110) forty-one out of ninety measure nouns are plural. *Minute, day, week, shilling, inch* and *yard* are always plural after numerals greater than 1. The percentage of inflected plurals for other nouns is *pound* – 89%, *month* – 86%, *year* – 68%, *ton* – 50%, *mile* – 17%. Wilson (1915: 62) cites *three gless o' whiskey, a guid wheen month* (*wheen* = 'few') and *five acre*, not to mention *broth, porridge* and *kail*, which were plural.

There is regularly no preposition between the measure nouns *bit* and *drop* and a following noun: *a bit paper, a bit steel, a drop water*. These constructions are typical Germanic. *Less* is normal with plural count nouns, as in *less cars*. Note too *much more cars* ('many more cars').

## 4. Syntax

### 4.1. Negation

In Scots verbs are negated by the independent words *no* and *not*, as in (8), or by the suffixes *-nae* and *-n't*, as in (9).

(8) a. *She's no leaving.*  
b. *She's not leaving.*

(9) a. *She isnae leaving.*  
b. *She isn't leaving.*

In ECOSSE *no* and *not* are most frequent with BE – *She's no 'phoned yet*, with 'll ('will') – *she'll no be coming to the party*, and with 've ('have') – *I've no seen him the day*. The *no/not* construction is in fact the norm with BE, WILL and HAVE in Scots and Scottish English among all speakers. *Nae* is added to all the modal

verbs and to *do* – *He doesnae help in the house, She cannae knit. Not and no* are the norm in negative interrogatives such as (10).

(10) *Are you not coming with us?*

The typical Scots tag question has *not* or *no*, as in (11). Educated speakers occasionally use *amn't*, as in (12).

(11) *That's miles away is it no?*

(12) *I'm coming with you amn't I?*

*Nae* is suffixed to modal verbs if *-nae* applies to the modal verb: *He cannae come to the party* ('he is unable...'). *No* and *not* do occur with modal verbs, but apply to the phrase following the modal: *will you not put too many on there in case they fall in the street please* (Macafee 1983: 47). *Not* applies to *put too many on there. Won't you put too many...* asks for too many to be put on.

Clauses without an auxiliary verb, as in *I got the job*, can be made negative with *didn't* or *didnae* but *never* is frequently used, as in (13).

(13) a. *...I could've got the job...but I telt them I couldnae leave till the end of May so I never got it.* [ECOSSE]

b. *I sat down to that tongue slips essay at 7 o'clock I never got it started till nine.* [ECOSSE]

*Never* is not emphatic. Speakers express the meaning 'at no time in general' with *never ever*. *Never* and *so* function as pro-verbs: *I added water and it fizzed I done it again and it never* ('didn't') (pupil to teacher); *You're not offended? – I am so!; you can't do that! – I can so!* (*I will so* and *I do so* are also frequent.)

There is an emphatic negative construction with *nane*, ('none') as in (14). The interpretation is that Rab is completely useless at singing.

(14) *Rab can sing nane.*

Finally, we turn to the relationship between *not*, *-n't*, etc. and the quantifiers *all*, *each* and *every*. Consider (15):

(15) a. *It is not democratic, because every member is not consulted on the decision.* [radio interview]

b. *We all don't have to be there.* [conversation]

In context, (15a) clearly meant that some members are consulted but not others; the written English version would be *Not every member is consulted....* (15b) was used as justification for not attending a meeting – colleagues of the speaker would be there. The corresponding standard constructions are *We don't all have to be there* and *Not all of us have to be there.*

## 4.2. Modal verbs

The system of modal verbs in Scots is massively different from that of Standard English.

- (a) ECOSSE has no occurrences of *shall*, *may* and *ought*, though these modal verbs do occur in writing and in formal announcements, as in the notice *This shop shall be open on Monday* and in announcements such as *This train shall stop at Paisley Gilmour Street, Johnstone,...* The source of this usage may be legal.

In spoken Scots *will* marks future tense – *We will arrive in the morning*, promises – *You will have the money tomorrow* ('I promise you'), and occurs in interrogatives – *Will I open the window?* Permission is expressed by *can*, *get to* and *get + gerund* as in (16).

- (16) a. *You can have this afternoon off.*  
 b. *The pupils get to come inside in rainy weather.*  
 c. *They got going to the match.*

*Should* and not *ought* is used, but *want* is frequent, as in (17), uttered by a judo instructor:

- (17) *You want to come out and attack right away.*

- (b) In Standard English *must* expresses conclusions, as in (18a), and obligation, as in (18b):

- (18) a. *You must be exhausted.*  
 'I conclude from your appearance that...'  
 b. *You must be at the airport by nine or you will lose your seat.*  
 'It is necessary for you to be at the airport by nine.'

In ECOSSE *must* expresses only the conclusion meaning; obligation is expressed by *have to* and *need to*. Many speakers of Scots (and Scottish English) use *have got to* for external compulsion and *will have to* for milder compulsion, which can even be self-compulsion, as in (19).

- (19) *I'll have to write to Carol because she wrote to us six months ago.*

*Have to* is less strong than *have got to*. It also expresses conclusions, as in (20).

- (20) *That has to be their worst display ever.*

- (c) *Need* behaves like a main verb – *Do you need to leave immediately* and *You don't need to leave immediately, They're needing to paint the windows*. It expresses obligation, and is equivalent to *have to*. (21a,b) are typical of answers

produced by university undergraduates who were asked to complete the sentence *I must be back at midnight because \_\_\_\_\_*.

- (21) a. *I must be back by midnight because I need to switch off my electric blanket.*  
 b. *I have to go to the library because I need to do my French essay today.*

*Need* can express external compulsion as in (22):

- (22) *You'd need to go down there and collect her and drop her.* [ECOSSE]

In Scots *mustn't* expresses 'I conclude that not', as in (23). Some grammars of Standard English prescribe *can't*:

- (23) a. *This mustn't be the place.*  
 b. *I mustn't have read the question properly.* [conversation]

Obligation is also expressed by *supposed to* or *meant to*, as in (24):

- (24) a. *You're supposed to leave your coat in the cloakroom.*  
 b. *You're meant to fill in the form first.*

*Meant to* also occurs with the meaning 'It is said that': *The new player is meant to be real fast.*

- (d) *Can't*, *cannot* and *cannae* all express 'not have permission to'. To express 'have permission not to', speakers of Scots use *don't need to*, *don't have to* and *are not allowed to*.

(e) Scots has double modals, as in (25):

- (25) a. *He'll can help us the morn/tomorrow.*  
 b. *They might could be working in the shop.*  
 c. *She might can get away early.*  
 d. *Wi his sair foot he would never could climb yon stairs.* (Purves 1997: 57)

Note the acceptable interrogative *Will he can help us the morn/tomorrow?* and the unacceptable *\*Might they could be working in the shop?* There are grounds for supposing that *might* in (25b,c) is developing into an adverb, syntactically equivalent to *maybe*: note sentences such as *They maybe could be working in the shop*, with *maybe* in the same position as *might*.

*Might* occasionally combines with *should* and *would*, as in (26). Here again *might* is equivalent in meaning and position to *maybe*. Note too the parallel between (27a) and (27b).

- (26) a. *You might would like to come with us.*  
 b. *You might should claim your expenses.* [both from informants from Prestonpans]

- (27) a. *He might no could do it.*  
 b. *He maybe no could do it.*

The double modal sequence *will can* is relatively old – Wilson (1915) mentions it – but may be in decline. In her 1997 Edinburgh University Honours dissertation McIver found that in Orkney the over-60s used the construction but the under-25s neither used it nor recognised all the combinations. However, in a television interview (BBC Scotland, 22/01/2002) a woman in her mid-thirties, born and brought up in Fife, declared *once I started I wouldnae could stop*.

(f) Modal verbs occur after the infinitive marker *to*, as shown in (28):

- (28) a. *You have to can drive a car to get that job.*  
 b. *I'd like to could do that.*

According to an informant born and brought up in Galloway, examples such as (29) are common:

- (29) *Ah would uh could uh done it.*  
 'I would have been able to do it.'

Apart from the two instances of *uh* – presumably equivalent to 've or *have*, the unusual feature is *could* preceded by *have*.

#### 4.3. Tense and aspect

##### 4.3.1. *Progressive*

Standard English stative verbs such as *know*, *like* or *want* do not occur in the Progressive.

- (30) a. \**Kirsty is knowing the answer.*  
 b. \**Archie is liking this book.*

*Know* behaves in the same way in Scots but other stative verbs occur regularly in the Progressive, as in (31):

- (31) a. *I wasnae liking it and the lassie I was going wi wasnae liking it.*  
 [ECOSSE]  
 b. *We werena really wanting to go last year but they sent us a lot of letters to come.* [ECOSSE]  
 c. *He's not understanding a single thing you say.* [TV programme]  
 d. *They're not intending opening the bottle tonight surely.* [informally recorded in conversation]

In Standard English *Soapy is washing the dishes* presents the action as in progress; *Soapy washes the dishes* presents the action as habitual or repeated. In Scots,



younger speakers and writers use the Progressive where older speakers, including the author, use the simple aspect. The examples in (32) are from essays and examination answers by undergraduates at Edinburgh University. The author would have to use *learn* in (32a), and *forget* in (32b). We may be seeing the beginning of a process whereby the Progressive changes into an Imperfective (a change that has affected many languages).

- (32) a. *Today, educational establishments are still trying to teach a standard. Many schoolchildren are not learning the standard outwith school.*  
 b. *The code is often changed and students are forgetting the new number.*  
 [minutes of Liaison Committee, written by a student]

#### 4.3.2. Past and Perfect

Combined with the Progressive, the Perfect refers to recent past time. *Kirsty has been working with the Royal Bank* is appropriate either if Kirsty is still working with the bank or was working with the bank until quite recently. Speakers of Scots can refer to a recent, completed event by the Past Progressive + *there*, as in (33):

- (33) a. *I was (just) speaking to John there.*  
 b. *I was speaking to John on Friday there.*

Deictics such as *there* point to entities or locations visible to speaker and hearer. In (33a) the speaker presents the event of speaking to John as metaphorically visible to the listener and therefore close in time. The Friday referred to in (33b) is the Friday in the past closest to the time of utterance.

The Standard English *The electrician has just phoned* puts an event in the immediate past. In Scots the same effect is conveyed by *The electrician just phoned*, with the Simple Past and *just*. (34) exemplifies the same usage. The person addresses Bob immediately after the latter has bought a round of drinks (Macaulay 1991: 197–198).

- (34) *And one of the men happened to comment he says “Bob” he says “you forgot the boy” “No” he says “I didnae forget the boy”.*

In Standard English the Perfect can refer to an event which someone has experienced at some indefinite time in the past, as in *I have visited Prague*. In Scots the Simple Past with *ever* also conveys this experiential meaning, as in (35):

- (35) *You said you enjoyed fishing – were you ever interested in football?*  
 [ECOSSE]

The Perfect in Standard English conveys the result of a past action. In Scots, results of past actions are often expressed by constructions other than the Perfect which

contain a resultative participle. (36) and (37) exemplify the resultative structure from which the Perfect is supposed to have developed.

- (36) *You have access to a vein gained and a cardiac analysis done within one minute.* [radio discussion]
- (37) I was wanting to borrow her Hoover but she'll have it put away.  
[conversation]

A common structure is *there's* plus resultative participle:

- (38) *There's something fallen down the sink.*

Speakers often report the completion of an action by referring to its result. The reverse cleft in (39), from A.L. Kennedy's 1994 novel *Looking for the Possible Dance*, refers to properties assigned to the letters as the result of a writing event and a posting event.

- (39) *That's the letters written and posted.*

Example (40), from Macaulay (1991), offers reverse clefts in which the noun phrase following *is* is the 'subject' of the action.

- (40) a. *But that's me seen it.*  
'I've seen it now.'
- b. *And he says "That you left the school now Andrew?"*  
'...Have you left school now...?'

The equivalent of a pluperfect is in (41):

- (41) *He just lay doon on the settee and turned over and that was him gone.*  
'...he had gone.'

Resultative participles also occur in the construction in (42):

- (42) a. *I need the car repaired by midday.* [conversation]  
b. *She needs collected at four o'clock.* [conversation]

#### 4.3.3. *Pluperfect tense*

The Pluperfect is rare in main clauses in Scots, and absent from certain subordinate clauses. The examples in (43) were written by secondary school pupils and 'corrected' to the Pluperfect by their teacher.

- (43) a. *He said his mum had brought him the fireworks but she really didn't.*  
[hadn't]
- b. *...he...was angry I didn't stay in the café.* [hadn't stayed]

## 4.3.4. Tense and aspect in conditional clauses

(44a,b) are typical of modern Scots:

- (44) a. *If she would come to see things for herself...*  
 b. *If she would have come to see things for herself...*

Compare *If she came to see things for herself she would understand our difficulties* and *If she had come to see things for herself, she would have understood our difficulties*. Interestingly, (44) was a regular construction in Early Modern English and appears to be making a comeback, as in (45), from *The Times*:

- (45) *Suppose further that all Conservative and Labour voters in England would have given the Alliance as their second choice...*

The Pluperfect is replaced with *had* + 've ('have') in conditional clauses and in the complements of verbs such as *wish*. See (46a) and (46b):

- (46) a. *I reckon I wouldnae have been able to dae it if I hadnae 've been able to read music.*  
 '...hadn't been able...'  
 b. *I wish he 'd 've complimented me, Roger.*  
 '...had complimented...'

Häcker (1999) discusses how anteriority (one event preceding another) is expressed by means of *once* + Simple Past, as in *once her children left home, she got a job*.

## 4.4. Interrogatives

(a) Scots regularly uses *how* where Standard English uses *why*:

- (47) a. A: *Susan, how's your ankle?*  
 B: *I can walk on it I think how? '...why?'*  
 b. *How did you not apply?*  
 'Why did you not apply?'

(b) *Whereabout* is used instead of *where* and is regularly split into *where* and *about*. *How* + *about* relates to quantity.

- (48) a. *Whereabout did you see him?*  
 b. *Where does she stay about?*  
 c. *How old was he about?*

(c) *What time...at?* frequently replaces *when?*, as in *What time does it finish at?*

(d) In Standard English, *which book?* asks about one of a set of known books; *what book?* asks about one out of the set of all books. In Scots *what* fulfils both functions, as in (49):

- (49) a. *What book have you been buying?* [addressee is carrying a book]  
 b. *What book is being published next year?*
- (e) In writing, indirect questions have the constituent order of declarative clauses, as in (50):

(50) *The teacher asked what book they had read.* (cf. *What book have you read?*)

In Scots, indirect questions have the constituent order of direct questions, as in (51), which involved no hesitations or changes in intonation but were uttered as one chunk:

- (51) a. *If they got an eight they had to decide where was the best place to put it.* [ECOSSE]  
 b. *What happens in the last fifteen minutes depends on how keen are Rumania to win.* [football commentary]

(f) Scots has various tag-questions. Speakers use the same tags with repeated auxiliary, as in Standard English, as in (52).

- (52) a. *John has left, has he no?*  
 b. *John's no left, has he?*

They also use *e*, added to both positive and negative declarative clauses, as in (53a,b). Occasionally *e no* is added to positive clauses.

- (53) a. *...we know him quite well by now e?*  
       *'... don't we' [recorded informally]*  
 b. *It's no too dear e?*  
       *'It's not too dear, is it?' [recorded informally]*

*E* occurs in imperatives, converting them to requests, even coaxing requests. In questions the tag asks the addressee to agree with the speaker's statement; in imperatives the tag asks the addressee to agree with (and act upon) the speaker's request, as in (54):

- (54) a. *Let me tie my lace e!* [conversation]  
 b. *Put it down there e!* [conversation]

When added to (54a,b) *won't you* makes a request sharper – *Let me tie my lace won't you*, *Put it down there won't you*, but *e* always makes a request less sharp and more polite. The author observed the following event in February 2002. A customer (male, over 50) came into a fish and chip shop in Leven, in Fife. The assistant asked what he would like; he replied *A mini fish supper e?* The *e* carried interrogative intonation and the Standard English equivalent is *Could I have a mini fish supper please?*, which is also an interrogative.

In July 2002 the author overheard a conversation in a barber's. The barber (male, 30ish) told his colleague he had gone to a particular pub at the weekend. He looked in the mirror at the author and said *I like Sambuca e?* The *eh* carried interrogative pitch but the barber could hardly have been asking about his own likes and dislikes. The utterance was interpreted by the author as equivalent to *I like Sambuca ken* ('you know', 'you see') or to *I like Sambuca* with the high rising terminal used by many speakers under 35. The author has heard the same usage from a male speaker in his forties and from a male speaker in his twenties. The latter was describing the location of a landfill site, saying that the Auchendinny to Penicuik road turned right at the bottom of a steep slope and that *I stay just opposite e?* Again the force of the utterance is *I stay opposite you know/you see* (and that's how I know all about the landfill site).

A positive clause can be followed by a positive tag, as in (55). The force of these tags in context seems to be that speakers expect a positive answer to their question.

- (55) A: *Aye that's cos I didnae use to go.*  
 B: *Did you start skiving did you?* [ECOSSE]

Other tags available in Scots are illustrated in (56). (56f) is from Bennett (1992: 115), (56a,b,f) are from ECOSSE, and the others are from conversation:

- (56) a. *You don't go for that sort, no?*  
 b. *You've mentioned this to him, yes?*  
 c. *They're not intending opening the bottle tonight surely?*  
 d. *He's not trying to make all of it, not really?*  
 e. *He's coming on Monday, right?*  
 f. *Have you not heard of rubber trees, no?*

(56a) expresses the speaker's strong confidence that the addressee does indeed not favour that sort of man. (56b) expresses the speaker's strong confidence that the addressee has mentioned 'it' to the other person. Particularly strong confidence is displayed by speakers who begin a declarative clause with *sure* or *e*, using interrogative intonation. Note that (57a,b) are not equivalent to 'Are you sure that Harry supports Celtic?' but 'I'm certain you can confirm my confident belief that Harry supports Celtic':

- (57) a. *Sure Harry supports Celtic?*  
 b. *E Harry supports Celtic?*

#### 4.5. The definite article and possessive pronouns

A well-known characteristic of Scots is the use of *the* with nouns denoting institutions, certain illnesses, certain periods of time, quantifiers such as *both*, *all*, *most*

and *one*, games, family relatives and modes of travel. The examples in (58) are merely hints. There are many more examples in Miller (1993: 128), Macaulay (1991: 70–71) and Wilson (1915). Examples of possessive pronouns are given in (59):

- (58) *the day* ‘today’; *the morn* ‘tomorrow’; *the now* ‘now’; *have the flu*; *be at the school*; *through the post* ‘by post’; *when the one supporter ran on the field*; *the both of them*
- (59) a. *Look Cathy, I’m off for my dinner.* ‘...to have dinner’  
 b. *to get ready to go up to your work* ‘...to work’

#### 4.6. Comparatives

*What* intervenes between *more than* and *as much as* and a following clause, as in (60):

- (60) a. *more than what you’d think actually* [ECOSSE]  
 b. *You’ve as much on your coat as what you have in your mouth.*  
 [conversation]

Macaulay (1991: 102) cites *and of coorse the traffic wasnae as strong as what it is noo* and gives two examples (uttered by his oldest speakers) with *nor* instead of *than*: *well it was better then nor what I think it is noo* and *you couldnae get any mair nor two pound*.

Comparative forms are used only before *than*: *Sue is bigger than Jane*. Elsewhere the superlative is used, as in *Who is biggest, Sue or Jane?*

#### 4.7. Reflexives

The reflexive pronoun *myself* is frequently used in speech and writing where Standard English requires just *me* or *I*.

- (61) a. *There wasn’t one policeman on duty at the time and if it hadn’t been for myself, no evidence either.* [radio discussion]  
 b. *Myself and Andy changed and ran onto the pitch.* [school essay]

#### 4.8. Prepositions and adverbs

The prepositional system of Scots has yet to be studied in detail, but the following points can be made.

- (a) The typical prepositions in passive clauses are *from*, *frae/fae* (‘from’), *off* (‘of’) and *with*.

- (62) a. *Heh, ah'm gonna get killt fae ma maw.* '...by my Mum'  
 b. *We were all petrified frae him.* [ECOSSE]  
 c. *Ah'd rather hae no job than bein beat frae pillar tae post aff a that man.* '...by that man' [radio interview 1992]  
 d. *I got helped with the midwife.* [radio interview 2001]
- (b) *Off*, not *from*, generally expresses the source of something – *I got the book off Alec* – and occasionally cause, as in *I'm crapping myself off you* ('...because of you'), uttered sarcastically.
- (c) *At*, *beside* and *next to* replace *by* in its location sense; *past* replaces *by* in its directional sense: *They drove past the house*. Elicitation examples such as *We went to Inverness \_\_\_\_\_ Stirling* elicited *via*.
- (d) *In* and *out* are not followed by *to* or *of* after verbs of movement – *She ran in the living room, ...because she's just walked out the shop with it*. Macaulay (1991: 111) gives similar examples.
- (e) Likewise, *down* and *up* do not require *to* – *We're going down the town, go down the shops*. After verbs of location they do not require *at* – *One day I was down the beach, They were up the town yesterday*.
- (f) *Outside* is followed by *of* – *outside of the school*.
- (g) Miscellaneous examples: *shout on someone* ('to someone'), *over the phone* ('by phone'), *through the post* ('by post'), *wait on someone* ('for someone'), *fair on someone* ('to someone'), *married on someone* ('to someone'), *think on something* ('think of/about'). Macaulay (1991) gives examples with *to* – *He worked to Wilson of Troon, I'm labouring to a bricklayer*.

## 5. Clause constructions

### 5.1. Clause structure and function

Clause structure poses two major problems. One is that in written language clauses combine into sentences. *When Morag arrived at the house, she found it locked and empty* is one sentence consisting of two clauses; *Morag arrived at the house – She found it locked and empty* is clearly two sentences, each consisting of a single clause. The Scots data described in this paper is informal and spoken and the unit of analysis called the sentence has been abandoned by most analysts of spoken language (see the discussion and references in Miller and Weinert [1998], chapter 2).

Clause complexes bring us to the second problem. Clauses are organised into clause complexes, which typically lack the tight syntactic links found in written

text. Their syntax is unintegrated (see discussion and references in Miller and Weinert [1998: 72–132]). This property is exemplified and discussed in relation to (63)–(64). Consider (63):

- (63) *You have a little keypad down here **which you can use your mouse to click on the keys.*** [presentation at University of Edinburgh]

The clause in bold looks like a relative clause as it apparently modifies *keypad* and is introduced by *which*. The clause, however, has no gaps, contains a full set of subject, direct object and oblique object noun phrases. This particular clause is not embedded in a noun phrase although it could be; the central fact is that it contains no gaps or pronouns linking with *keypad*. (64) exemplifies another construction:

- (64) *Everyone knows Helen Liddell how hard she works.* [radio discussion]

As the direct object of *knows*, *Helen Liddell* is central and salient in the clause complex. The clause *how hard she works* is syntactically optional but linked with *Helen Liddell* by *she*. A written text would have *Everyone knows how hard Helen Liddell works*. Another example is *I've been meaning to phone and ask about the new baby and Alan how they're getting on*.

The range of unintegrated constructions can be extended but the reader is invited to bear in mind Bernd Kortmann's introduction (see Kortmann, this volume) and to read Miller and Weinert (1998: 105–121) on relative clauses, WH clefts and headless relative clauses in English and other languages.

## 5.2. Relative clauses

- (a) Restrictive relative clauses are introduced by *that*, but also by *where*: *just about that other place where I started*. Relative clauses modifying time nouns such as *day*, *month*, etc. typically lack *that*, as in *the day she arrived* (which is the only construction in ECOSSE. Restrictive relative clauses in the Broad Scots of Glasgow are occasionally introduced by *what*: *like the other birds what takes Dexedrine*.)
- (b) Event relative clauses are introduced by *which*, never by *that*, as in *my Dad came to an Elton John concert with us which at the time we thought was great*. What was thought great was the event of the speaker's father coming to the concert.
- (c) Instead of *whose*, *that* + possessive pronoun is used: *the girl that her eighteenth birthday was on that day was stoned, couldnae stand up* (as opposed to *the girl whose eighteenth birthday was on that day*).
- (d) Shadow pronouns are typical of complex relative clauses such as *the spikes that you stick in the ground and throw rings over them* [conversation] but also



of simpler relative clauses such as *It's something that I keep returning to it and they're the ones that the teacher thinks they're going to misbehave* [both from radio discussions]. The possessive example in (c) is also an example of a shadow pronoun. The shadow pronoun construction is widespread in non-standard varieties throughout Europe.

- (e) Prepositions always occur at the end of the relative clause (*the shop I bought it in*, not *the shop in which I bought it*) but are frequently omitted: *of course there's a rope that you can pull the seat back up* (*with* omitted) [ECOSSE] and *I haven't been to a party yet that I haven't got home the same night* (*from* omitted) [radio discussion].
- (f) Existential constructions have no relative pronoun or conjunction; in writing, *that* or *who* would be in the square brackets in (65):
- (65) a. *My friend's got a brother [ ] used to be in the school.*  
 b. *There's only one of us [ ] been on a chopper before.*

- (g) Non-restrictive relative clauses are notably scarce. MTC and ECOSSE have no non-restrictive relative clauses with *who*. University undergraduates and 17-year-olds at an Edinburgh private school produced 19 non-restrictive relatives with *which*. Adults and 16–17-year-olds at state schools produced 3 such clauses. Macaulay (1991: 64) comments that in his middle-class interviews 20% of the relative clauses are non-restrictive, in the working class interviews 5%. Instead of non-restrictive relative clauses, speakers of Scots use coordinate clauses: *the boy I was talking to last night – and he actually works in the yard – was saying it's going to be closed down* (not *the boy..., who actually works in the yard,...*).

The relative complementiser *that* is a conjunction which developed historically from a pronoun. *Which* is following the same path. Consider the second *which* in (66).

- (66) *You can leave at Christmas if your birthday's in December to February which I think is wrong like my birthday's March and I have to stay on to May **which** when I'm 16 in March I could be looking for a job.*

The second *which*, in bold, does not link a relative clause to a noun but signals that the preceding chunk of text is connected to the following one. (This construction occurs in Dickens and in *Punch* throughout the nineteenth century.)

Finally in this section, we should note that shadow pronouns occur in another construction that can be heard on radio and television. Consider (67):

- (67) a. *In New York on Manhattan Island there is a theatre **there** that...* [radio report]  
 b. *Out of the three questions we got two **of them**.* [conversation]

## 5.3. Complement clauses

In English generally some verbs take infinitives, as in (68a), while others take gerunds, as in (68b). Other verbs may take either an infinitive or a gerund, as in (69):

- (68) a. *We hope to leave next week.* (not \**we hope leaving...*)  
 b. *Archie resents spending money on books.* (not \**Archie resents to spend...*)

(69) *The children started to quarrel/quarrelling.*

Verbs and adjectives that take either infinitives or gerunds in Scots are shown in (70).

- (70) a. *It's difficult to know/knowning how to start this letter.*  
 b. *They always continue to work/working until the bell goes.*  
 c. *He started to talk/talking to his friend.*  
 d. *It was daft to leave/leaving the puppy in the house.*  
 e. *Try to eat less/eating less if you are putting on weight.*

Elicitation tests showed that for (70a–e) Scottish pupils had (statistically) significant numbers of gerunds while the English pupils did not. Some Scottish pupils used only gerunds. Teachers preferred infinitives, with English teachers showing a stronger preference than Scottish teachers.

In Scots the infinitive is regularly marked by *for to*. Macaulay (1991: 106) gives the examples in (71):

- (71) a. *We had the clear road for to play on.* [infinitive relative]  
 b. *You don't need to faw ten thousand feet for to get killt.* [purpose/result]  
 c. *You werenae allowed at this time for to go and take another job on.* [verb complement]  
 d. *But my own brothers was all too old for to go.* [comparison]

His youngest working-class speakers have no *for to* infinitives, whereas the oldest two use them regularly. The construction may be in decline.

Some verbs are followed by *and* plus a verb phrase, as in (72):

- (72) a. *Try and do your homework by tomorrow.*  
 'try to do...'  
 b. *Remember and bring her back by 12 o'clock.*  
 c. *She tells us to mind and dae what we're tellt.*  
 '...to remember...'

The television comedy show *Chewing the fat* uses the catchphrase *gonna no dae that*, which is probably a distortion of *go and no dae that*, the negative of *go and*

*dae that (right the noo)*. Infinitives can follow *away*: *I'm away to the shops, I'm away to ask her to dance*.

#### 5.4. Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses in general are less frequent (in speech) than relative and complement clauses. The following specific points are important.

- (a) *Because* or *cause* clauses typically follow the main clause – *We lent them our car because the garage couldn't fix theirs right away*; in writing they both precede and follow the main clause – *Because the garage couldn't fix theirs right away we lent them our car*. Preceding *because* clauses act as signposts, whereas following the main clause they merely provide a reason (see the reference to Chafe in Miller and Weinert [1998]).
- (b) Clauses of condition and time also tend to follow the main clause. In ECOSSE and MTC many *if* clauses are not straightforward adverbial clauses of condition but convey an instruction – *if you just draw the line 2 cms below the cave* – and constitute a complete discourse. Conversely, imperative clauses can express conditions: *tell a lie an they'll believe you* (Häcker 1999: 119).
- (c) There are no concession clauses introduced by *although*. Speakers in ECOSSE concede points with *but* clauses or with clauses containing clause-final *though* – *They're not going to shut the factory – they're making a loss though*. Another construction for the conceding of points is exemplified in (73).
- (73) *But eh customs is a' changed noo. You still see them in Glasgow right enough.* (Bennett 1992: 110–111)
- (d) Consider *If Shona is coming to the party, I'm going to stay at home*. The *if* clause is starting point or theme and therefore prominent. Another common construction is *see if Shona is coming to the party – I'm going to stay at home* and *see when we get into the gardens, can we go up the tower?* This construction highlights the time or condition and breaks the integration of subordinate and main clause; the *if* and *when* clauses are complements of *see*.
- (e) Adverbial clauses of time can be introduced by *frae* or *fae* ('from') instead of *since*, as in (74) from Macaulay (1991). The author has heard similar examples in West Lothian.
- (74) a. *My it's a while fae I heard that.* '...since I heard that'  
 b. *The first time I ever was idle fae I left the school.* '...since I left the school'

(f) Time clauses can be introduced by *tae* ('to') instead of *till*, as in (75a), from Macaulay (1991). *To* or *tae* can also replace *till* as a preposition, as in (75b):

- (75) a. *Wait here tae I come oot.* '...till I come out'  
 b. *Well you can hear her aw over the shop she just says you've nae right cos i cannae come in to this time.* [ECOSSE]

Häcker (1999: 172–173) suggests that adverbial time clauses introduced by *till* have a purposive meaning, as in (76):

- (76) a. *Turn on the wireless till we hear the news.*  
 b. *An that wis wait till I think where that [was].*  
 '...wait so that I can think where that was.'

*Wait* in (76b) is an atelic verb and the *till* clause can be interpreted as a time clause setting a limit to a stretch of time. *Turn on* in (76a) is telic but has the interpretation 'turn on and leave turned on for a certain length of time' – note the (devised) example *they turned on the water till everyone got their buckets filled (and then they turned it off again)*. The purposive component of the interpretation can be seen as coming from a felicity condition on commands: the speaker(s) really want a situation to be brought about.

(g) Häcker (1999: 161, 192) comments on the use of gerunds introduced by *with* to express reason, manner or accompanying circumstances. (77) is from ECOSSE:

- (77) *But he didnae like to take it [a job] with him being a friend.*

### 5.5. Non-finite main or adverbial clauses

Surprise, disappointment or a strong emotion can be expressed by non-finite clauses introduced by *and*: *He wouldn't help and him a minister too!*, *She's taking in lodgers and the house not even hers*, *He's gone off on holiday and her still in the hospital*. It is unclear whether these clauses are main or adverbial.

## 6. Organisation of discourse

Scots has a range of devices for highlighting items. The devices belong to speech and many are not unique to Scots.

- (a) Speakers often announce a new topic, possibly contrasting with another topic, by means of left-dislocation, a noun phrase followed by a complete clause. Left-dislocation is not primarily associated with planning problems; it occurs frequently

with simple noun phrases with no pause between the noun phrase and the clause. The noun phrase may be introduced in an existential clause, as in (78c):

- (78) a. *It's not bad – **ma Dad** he doesn't say a lot.* [ECOSSE]  
 b. *And **the minister**, ye just gave him five shillings. But on the way out we met a wee girl and we gave her the christening piece.* [Bennett 1992: 69–70]  
 c. *And **there's one girl** she's a real extrovert.* [ECOSSE]

The initial noun phrase can be quite complex – well **another maths teacher that I dinnae get** he must've corrected my papers – or may be separated from the main clause by a subordinate clause, as in (79):

- (79) *But a lot of people, **although they didnae have a gift**, it was a coin that they would give them.* [Bennett 1992: 48]

(b) English possesses the IT cleft, WH cleft and reverse WH cleft constructions exemplified in (80):

- (80) a. *It was Aongais that left.* [IT cleft]  
 b. *What I want is a large cup of coffee.* [WH cleft]  
 c. *That's what you should read.* [Reverse WH cleft]  
 d. *What he does is interrupt all the time.* [WH cleft]

The IT cleft picks out an entity from a set of possible candidates – Aongais as opposed to Ruaridh. The second clause, *that left*, is a relative clause.

There may be no complementiser, as in (81), from Macaulay (1991: 121).

- (81) a. *It was **Jimmy Brown** was the fireman.*  
 b. *And it was **my mother** was daein it.*

77% of Macaulay's IT clefts are in the working class interviews. IT clefts in general are rare in ECOSSE and MTC but interrogative IT-clefts occur regularly in ECOSSE in WH questions, as in (82):

- (82) a. *Where is it he works again?*  
 b. *Who is it that's been murdered?*  
 c. *Which part of Leith is it you're from?*  
 d. *What was it he did? Was doing law or something.*

The IT clefts both make the question less abrupt and highlight the WH word. (82a–d) are not contrastive, though other examples are, such as *Was that Malcolm that did it?* [ECOSSE]. One example is a YES-NO question – *Is that you skive skipping off this afternoon?* The construction awaits detailed investigation.

The most common WH cleft in the data has the structure of *What we're doing we're hanging them up to drouth* (= 'dry'). A headless relative clause – *what*

*we're doing* is followed by a complete main clause *we're hanging them up to drouth*. In MTC WH clefts finish off a section of discussion and point forward. In ECOSSE WH clefts finish off a section of narrative and move it on to the next section.

Reverse WH clefts are frequent in MTC and occur in ECOSSE. They highlight some point that has been agreed and draw a line under a section of discussion but do not point forward. (For a detailed discussion of clefts see Weinert and Miller [1996] and Miller and Weinert [1998: 263–306].) Many discussions in MTC close with remarks such as *that's where you should go*. In Macaulay (1991: 78–79) sections of narrative are closed by reverse clefts introduced by *that* or *this* followed by a pronoun and a modifying phrase, as in (83):

- (83) a. *So that was me on the rope-splicing.*  
 b. *That was him idle. 'laid off work'*  
 c. *And this was him landed with a broken leg.*

Macaulay (1991: 91) discusses right-dislocation but its discourse function is unclear and there seem to be two constructions. One is exemplified in (84):

- (84) a. *In fact he offered me a job Mr Cunningham.*  
 b. *I was asking John if he ever heard of it Cabbies Kirk.*

In (84a–b) the right-dislocated noun phrases, *Mr Cunningham*, and *Cabbies Kirk*, appear to confirm the referents of pronouns inside the clause rather than highlight them. In the other construction, exemplified in (85), the right-dislocated noun phrase is a pronoun repeating a pronoun inside the clause. The referent is not only confirmed but reinforced and highlighted:

- (85) a. *He was some man him.*  
 b. *But she was a harer her.*  
 c. *Oh it was a loss it.*

Right-dislocation is less frequent than left-dislocation and almost absent from Macaulay's middle-class interviews. Macaulay suggests that middle-class speakers are more likely to use emphatic stress than the repeated pronouns.

- (c) Various focusing devices highlight items (or propositions) being introduced into the discourse. *See* in (86a) is close in meaning to the perception verb *see*, more distant in meaning in (86b):

- (86) a. *See those old houses...this area was all houses like that right round.*  
 [ECOSSE]  
 b. A: *There's a car park.*  
 B: *Aye – see I hate going in there.* [ECOSSE]

See highlights *those old houses* in (86a) and *I hate going in there* in (86b). In the MTC, examples such as *see the bridge below the forest* are always understood as questions: the reply is *uhuh* or *aye* or *right*. *See* does not normally occur in the imperative except in special phrases such as *see here! I've had enough of this nonsense!*

In the MTC speakers use *see* when they treat a landmark as given. *See* always takes a definite noun phrase: *see the fast-flowing river* but not *\*see a fast-flowing river*. Items treated as new are introduced by *a*, e.g. *Can you see a fast-flowing river?* or *Do you see a fast-flowing river?* *See* can also highlight entire clauses, as in 5.4.d. Example (87) is from the MTC.

- (87) *See if you go straight down but not go straight to the aeroplane right see where the see where the pilot would go that wee bit.*

In the MTC, given items are introduced by means of interrogative clauses with *know*: *know the bridge across the fast-flowing river*. *\*Know a bridge...* is not possible. *Know* is equivalent to the Scots *ken* ('know'); you can *ken* someone and *ken* how to do something. *Ken* can highlight new items, including new topics of conversation:

- (88) a. *Ken John Ewan – he breeds spaniels.* [conversation]  
 b. *The estate up at Macmerry – ken there's a big estate there – it's got a gamekeeper.* [ECOSSE]

*Ken* in (89) introduces a proposition by way of explanation.

- (89) *She's on the machine until they can get another kidney for her – ken to have a transplant.* [ECOSSE]

Macaulay (1991: 160) says that *ken* often accompanies background or orientation clauses (as in 89) and marks interactional solidarity. That is, checking that your partner in conversation knows what you are talking about is a good way of bringing them into the conversation. Macaulay (1991: 145) notes that *you know* occurs at almost the same rate in the speech of his middle-class and working-class speakers.

*The thing is* and *thing is* highlight properties and propositions.

- (90) a. *But the thing is – at our age what is there what sort of facilities can you provide.*  
 b. *Thing is he's watching the man he's not watching the ball.*  
 c. *The thing about school is that you can get them to relax.*

(d) There are two constructions with *like*, both discussed in detail in Miller and Weinert (1998). The older construction has *like* in clause-final position and is used by speakers to provide explanations and forestall objections as in (91):

- (91) *You had a wooden spile – you bored on the top of the barrel...and then you had ready a spile, which was a wooden cone about that length...and*

*a soft wood naturally was porous and it would help to get this froth to let it work down – you had to be very careful you didn't take it right down like/it went flat. [ECOSSE]*

The inference being countered by the *like* in (91) is “Surely the beer would go flat if you bored a hole in the top of the barrel?”. The speaker points out that this inference is incorrect, because the operation was carried out very carefully, precisely to prevent the beer going flat. Similar *like*-final clauses are uttered by characters speaking non-standard English in Trollope’s novels (1860 and 1870s) and in Dorothy Sayer’s novels, set in East Anglia in the thirties.

*Like* occurs in interrogative clauses, as in (92):

- (92) A1: *Got a bairn have you?*  
 B1: *Aye – Nicole’s eh three.*  
 A2: *Three?*  
 B2: *Aye – I was married young.*  
 A3: *Aye – you must have been – how old are you like?*

(92) has emphatic stress on *are*. A receives the surprising information that B’s daughter is three and suddenly suspects that he has wrongly inferred B’s age. Other examples of interrogatives with *like* can be paraphrased as IT clefts: *did you stick it down with Gloy like?* (‘was it with Gloy that you stuck it down?’).

ECOSSE has one occurrence of *likesae*, used by the research assistant’s brother. Both were from north Edinburgh (not Leith itself but close to Leith). In his novel *Trainspotting* Irvine Welsh consistently uses the above construction with *likesae* instead of *like*.

In the second, more recent construction *like* occurs in any position except at the end of clauses.

- (93) a. *I mean and like you’ve not got any obstacles here have you? [MTC]*  
 b. *To the lefthand side of East Lake? Like the very far end of East Lake?*

*Like* does not occur at pauses or where the speaker has planning problems. It is regularly equivalent to WH or IT clefts – note *what I want to ask is – you’ve not got any obstacles here?* and *is it the very far end of East Lake I go to? Like* regularly highlights items constituting an explanation, as in (94):

- (94) *Like I knew I couldnae apply for Edinburgh because I didnae have an O level language so I just didnae do it.*

## 7. Conclusion

This paper has set out the major syntactic and discourse structures of modern Scots. Unfortunately there has been little study of Scots grammar since the late seven-



ties. New bodies of data on computer, such as the SCOTS archive at the University of Glasgow, have to be exploited. The systematic collection of data by cassette recorder and elicitation techniques has yet to be undertaken. Map Task dialogues help to build up our knowledge of structures currently in use but represent a different genre from spontaneous conversation. Some accounts of Scots are based on dialogues in novels; it is essential to determine which structures are peculiar to such dialogues and which are still in active use.

But in active use where? There are no detailed accounts of the morphology and syntax of current Buchan Scots nor about the grammatical differences between, say, the Scots spoken in Edinburgh and the Lothians, Glasgow, Ayrshire, the Borders, and Dumfries and Galloway. What is the linguistic situation in cities, towns and villages? How is grammar and discourse organisation affected by variation in setting and in topic and in the socio-economic status, age and gender of speakers? The participants in the ECOSSE conversations and the MTC are now approaching forty and thirty respectively. What is the spoken language of the 15–25 age group? What do people write in diaries, in personal letters, in work reports and so on? There is a small army of questions; where is the small army of researchers?

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# Irish English: morphology and syntax

Markku Filppula

## 1. Introduction

The morphology and syntax of Irish English (IrE) follow in the main the patterns found in the other British Isles Englishes. This is particularly true of ‘educated’ IrE, which is not surprising considering that (British) Standard English has traditionally provided the principal norm for the teaching of English in Irish schools. However, the regional dialects and also urban working-class varieties present a very different picture. They contain many features which distinguish these varieties from most other regional or social dialects of British English (BrE). This is due to four main factors which have affected the development of both southern and northern IrE:

1. Conservatism, which means retention of some features of earlier ‘mainstream’ English, now mostly archaic or defunct in BrE;
2. dialect contact with other varieties of English spoken especially in the British Isles; of particular importance here is the diffusion of influences from the Scottish varieties of English to northern IrE (some of these are also found in the southern varieties);
3. contact influences from Irish, the indigenous language of Ireland, which is still spoken in some parts of Ireland and has for centuries exercised a considerable amount of ‘substratal’ influence upon IrE; though gradually fading away, the vestiges of this influence can still be heard even in the urban varieties of IrE but, naturally, they are better preserved in those dialects which are spoken in, or close to, the earlier and present-day Irish-speaking areas;
4. universal features associated with second-language acquisition in the kind of intense language shift conditions which existed in Ireland especially from the early nineteenth century onwards and which were characterised by a fairly rapid shift involving large numbers of speakers and general lack of formal schooling up until the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The combined effect of these factors makes IrE an interesting mixture of linguistic features derived from one or the other of the mentioned sources. As will be seen, the distinctive nature of IrE is much more visible in syntax than in morphology (which stands to reason in view of the relative poverty of English morphology).

The following discussion of the syntax and morphology of IrE is based on data drawn from a number of sources, all representing authentic speech recorded from

Irishmen and Irishwomen in various parts of Ireland. The main source for what is here called ‘southern’ IrE consists of recordings made by myself and a number of other people in four different areas: Dublin City, Co. Wicklow, Co. Clare and Co. Kerry (for details of the corpus, see Filppula 1999, chapter 4). For the ‘northern’ IrE varieties, which comprise different varieties of Ulster English and Ulster Scots, I have relied on the so-called Northern Ireland Transcribed Corpus of Speech (henceforth ‘NITCS’ for short; see Kirk 1992 for details). In addition to these, previous studies of IrE, either spoken or written, and my own informal observations on language usage in Ireland over the years have provided useful data for the description undertaken below.

## 2. Tense-aspect-modality systems

The tense-aspect-modality (TMA for short) systems form an area which perhaps most clearly distinguishes IrE from the other British Isles Englishes. This is what could be expected, given the general cross-linguistic evidence from other varieties which have emerged in conditions of intense language contact and shift. The following discussion will focus on four TMA subsystems which all involve features deviating from Standard English (StE), and to varying degrees, from other varieties of English: perfective aspect, progressive aspect, habitual aspect, and imperatives.

### 2.1. Perfective aspect

The overall coding of tense-aspect distinctions in IrE is more complex than, for example, in StE. On the one hand, IrE makes prominent use of the present and past tenses for perfective aspect meanings which are in other dialects expressed by distinct forms such as the so-called periphrastic *have* perfect. On the other, IrE has developed, or preserves from earlier English, separate forms for some temporal and aspectual meanings; some of these forms are either not found or no longer used in other varieties.

One can distinguish as many as six different categories of IrE perfects, which are described and illustrated below with examples drawn from the above-mentioned databases. The localities and name of the database as well as speaker-initials are given in brackets after each example. Note further that curly brackets are here used to indicate questions or other contributions by the interviewer.

- (i) the indefinite anterior perfect, which denotes events or states of affairs which take place at an unspecified point in a period leading up to the moment of utterance:
  - (1) *Were you ever in Kenmare?* (Kerry: J.F.)  
‘Have you ever been...?’

- (2) *{And do you go up to see it [a car race]?}*  
*I **never went** till it yet.* (NITCS: CM119)
- (ii) the *after* perfect, which typically refers to events or states in the (more or less) recent past:
- (3) *You're **after ruinin'** me.* (Dublin: M.L.)  
 'You have (just) ruined me.'
- (4) *And when the bell goes at six you just think you **were only after going** over, and you get out and up again.* (NITCS: OM53)
- (iii) the medial-object perfect, which focuses on the result, or resulting state, of an action rather than the action itself; verbs used in this way are typically dynamic and transitive, as in (5) from northern IrE, but occasional instances of other types also occur especially in the conservative rural varieties, such as the verb of 'inert perception' or 'intellectual activity' in (6):
- (5) *Take your shoes off then {aye}, and go round the stations on your bare feet. And you... you eat nothing till you're, **have the stations made**.*  
 (NITCS: OM51)
- (6) *I **have it forgot**.* (Wicklow: T.F.)  
 'I have forgotten it.'
- (iv) the *be* perfect, which is the intransitive counterpart of the resultative medial-object perfect described above, and is used with verbs of motion or change such as *go*, *change*, *leave* or *die*:
- (7) *I think the younger generations **are gone** idle over it.* (Kerry: M.C.)
- (8) *...particularly the valley up the, mm, Cranagh road {mm}, **is drastically changed**, and **improved** for the better.* (NITCS: JM51)
- (9) *{How many brothers and sisters you have, and what they're all doing?}*  
*They're not **left** school yet.* (NITCS: EM20)
- (v) the extended-now perfect, which refers to events or states initiated in the past but continuing at the moment of utterance:
- (10) *I'm **not** in this [caravan] long... Only **have** this here a few year.*  
 (Wicklow: D.M.)  
 'I haven't been/lived...'
- (11) *{Well, how long are you [have you been] in here now?}*  
*Oh, I'm in, I'm in here about four months.* (NITCS: I PT91)
- (vi) the standard *have* perfect, which can express all of the above meanings and is so used in StE as well as in educated, especially written, IrE:

(12) *And we **haven't seen** one for years round here.* (Wicklow: J.N.)

Note that perfective aspect has here been understood as being based on both forms and meanings. Thus, although the indefinite anterior perfect, for example, assumes the form of the past tense, the kind of uses illustrated under (i) are here considered to belong to the category of perfects and perfective aspect on the basis of their meanings; there is that link between the present and the past which is normally considered a defining criterion for perfects. Similarly, the IrE extended-now perfect, although it formally coincides with the present tense, which in StE normally refers to present time, differs from the latter in that the extended-now perfect refers to some state of affairs or process which has been initiated in the past but which continues up to the present moment (or moment of utterance). The presence of a durative time adverbial further contributes to the perfective aspect reading.

Of the Irish English perfects, the *after* perfect is clearly the most stereotypical and is avoided by educated speakers at least in formal contexts; on the other hand, it is freely used in informal contexts and by working-class and rural speakers in all parts of the country. As regards its origins, it is more than likely modelled on the corresponding Irish *tar éis/tréis* construction. By contrast, both the indefinite anterior and the extended-now perfects are quite common even in educated speech, and occasionally occur even in writing, e.g. in newspapers. Both have Irish parallels but can also derive from similar perfects used in earlier English. In the written mode, the standard *have* perfect is of course the norm and is also used increasingly in present-day spoken 'common' or 'supraregional' IrE. Finally, the medial-object perfect and especially the *be* perfect are clearly recessive features; both are paralleled by Irish usages, but again may equally be retentions from early Modern English. (For further discussion, see Harris 1984a, 1993; Kallen 1989, 1994; Filppula 1999.)

## 2.2. Progressive aspect

Turning next to progressive aspect and the uses of the so-called progressive or *-ing* form (PF for short) in IrE, one is struck by the relative freedom with which the PF can be used in IrE dialects, both as a marker of progressivity (as in StE) and in a number of other contexts. Of the latter, the most striking is the use of the PF with stative verbs, such as those denoting 'intellectual states' (or 'cognition'), 'states of emotion or attitude', other states of 'being' and 'having' (so-called relational verbs), and 'stance'. These are illustrated in the following:

(i) intellectual states (or 'cognition'):

(13) *There was a lot about fairies long ago... but I'm **thinkin'** that most of 'em are vanished.* (Clare: M.R.)  
'...but I think/believe that...'

- (14) *They're not believin' it.* (North Roscommon; cited in Henry 1957: 169)  
 (15) *I was knowing your face.* (North Roscommon; cited in Henry 1957: 169)

(ii) states of emotion or attitude:

- (16) *Well, of course, Semperit is a, an Austrian firm... They are not caring about the Irish people, they are only looking after their own interest, ...* (Dublin: M.L.)  
 (17) *There was a school in Ballynew, and they were wantin' to build a new school.* (Clare: C.O'B.)

(iii) other states of being and having ('relational verbs'):

- (18) *I think two of the lads was lost at sea during the War. They were belonging to the, them men here.* (Dublin: P.L.)  
 (19) *The money that they had saved they were actually waiting on it then... They were depending on it.* (NITCS: PT14)  
 (20) *I think they're more or less to blame themselves, because they're keeping far too man(y), much stock.* (NITCS: BC24)

(iv) stance:

- (21) *[They] call it the Golf Stream... And that's flowing into the Atlantic. It is flowing into the Atlantic Ocean.* (Kerry: M.C.)  
 (22) *And it [a road] is going a way up...Up into the mountain. And it is leading up to this...old graveyard.* (Kerry: M.McG.)

Besides stative verbs, another important context of use of the PF is with inherently *dynamic* verbs in contexts where StE would use the simple present- or past-tense form or (in past-time contexts) *used to* + infinitive. The meaning in these is clearly one of *habitual* activity, as in (23) below.

(v) habitual activity (with dynamic verbs):

- (23) *...but there, there's no bogland here now.  
 {Yeah. And do people go up there to cut turf?}  
 They were going there long ago but the roads got the, like everything else, they got a bit too-o rich and... (Kerry: M.C.)*

Thirdly, the PF is commonly found after the auxiliaries *would/'d/ used (to)* indicating habitual activity. In StE and in other regional varieties of English English (EngE), the simple infinitive is clearly preferred in these contexts. For example:

- (24) *So, when the young lads'd be going to bathing, like, they'd have to go by his house, and they used to all... (Clare: M.F.)*

- (25) *But they, I heard my father and uncle saying they **used be dancing** there long ago, like, you know.* (Clare: M.F.)

Fourthly, the PF is frequently used with other auxiliaries, such as *do/does* and *will/’ll*. The former usage is generally considered unique to IrE and will be discussed in greater detail in the next section. The latter, exemplified in (26), is a general vernacular feature found in other varieties, too.

- (26) *...this fellow now, Jack Lynch, that’s going to come into power now, that he’ll, **he’ll be forgetting** the North.* (Wicklow: M.K.)

Fifthly, in IrE – like in many other varieties of English today – , the PF is extremely common with verbs of saying and telling, especially in past-time contexts:

- (27) *Ah, they were great old days. But now, anyhow, things went on, and I got wiser meself, and as I **was saying** you, I start selling for meself.* (Dublin: M.L.)
- (28) *And that was his fault, and he went off then, I heard since that, I **wasn’t talking** to him since. And he has bought two pups.* (Wicklow: J.F.)

The free use of the PF in IrE quite plausibly derives from Irish, which relies heavily on the so-called verbal noun construction in similar contexts; another factor promoting its use is the continually increasing use of the PF in English itself. The ‘substratum’ hypothesis gains further support from the fact that some Welsh English (WeE) and Scottish English dialects (ScE; especially those spoken in the Hebrides) display the same tendency, probably triggered by the same kind of substratum influence from Welsh and Scottish Gaelic.

### 2.3. Habitual aspect

Habitual aspect is here understood as a general concept, which subsumes under it iterative, frequentative, and generic states or activities. All involve situations which are viewed as being characteristic of an extended period of time rather than incidental properties of any given moment. Some means of expression of habitual aspect have already been touched on in the previous section, namely the use of the progressive form with dynamic verbs, the auxiliaries *would/’d/ used [to]* followed by the *-ing* form, and the auxiliary *do/does* used with the same form. An example of the last-mentioned is given in (29):

- (29) *Yeah, that’s, that’s the camp. Military camp they call it... They **do be shooting** there couple of times a week or so.* (Wicklow: D.M.)

As noted above, this construction is one of the hallmarks of vernacular IrE and not found in other varieties spoken in the British Isles (it does occur, though, in some Caribbean varieties). Besides the *be + V-ing* pattern, as in (29), another common



pattern consists of *do(es)* followed by the infinitive form of a lexical verb, as in (30), or by *be* + an adjective or a noun, as in (31):

(30) *Two lorries of them [turf] now in the year we **do burn**.* (Kerry: M.C.)

(31) *They **does be** lonesome by night, the priest does, surely.* (Clare: M.R.)

All of these forms are highly stigmatised and carefully avoided in educated speech. Yet they can be regularly heard in the speech of urban working-class people and in southern rural dialects of IrE. Northern IrE dialects, including Ulster Scots, favour somewhat different constructions: *be* or *be's* (sometimes also spelt *bees*) followed either by the *-ing* form or by an adjective or a noun. As with the *do (be)* constructions, the meaning is habitual or generic (see Harris 1984b; Kallen 1989; Robinson 1997). Examples from the NITCS are:

(32) *{Where do they [tourists] stay, and what kind of pastimes do they have?} Well, they stay, some of them, in the forestry caravan sites. They bring caravans. They **be shooting**, and **fishing** out at the forestry lakes.* (NITCS: MC16)

(33) *{And who brings you in [to Mass]?} We get, Mrs Cullen to leave us in {ahah}. She **be's going**, and she leaves us in, too.* (NITCS: EM70)

(34) *{And what do you do in your play centre? Do you think it's a good idea in the holidays?} It's better, because you **be's bored** doing nothing {mm} at home.* (NITCS: KO121)

In both southern and northern IrE, the negated forms involve non-standard use of the auxiliary *do*, as can be seen from the following examples:

(35) *Well, it's [oats] generally cut, but sometimes it gets, it **doesn't be** up, to the mark, don't you know, it'd be bad, like oats, if you met a bad year...* (Wicklow: J.F.)

(36) *And they k(eep), they always keep the horse up above. It **doesn't be** usually down in the field now.* (NITCS: SM109)

While the southern IrE forms have by many scholars been ascribed to the influence of Irish (see especially Henry 1957; Bliss 1972), there is less agreement about the origins of the northern *be/bees* forms, with dialect diffusion from the Scottish dialects presenting itself as another possible source (for discussion, see e.g. Montgomery and Gregg 1997). Further parallels to the IrE patterns can be found in Welsh English and in some conservative south-western dialects of EngE, but in contrast to IrE, they generally involve the uninflected form of *do* followed by the infinitive. The possible Celtic influence on all of these varieties has long been a

subject of debate but has turned out to be hard to substantiate (for discussion, see Filppula 1999, section 6.3.).

#### 2.4. Imperatives

IrE dialects follow, with some exceptions, the ‘mainstream’ or standard patterns to express the imperative mood. The most salient feature of IrE in this category is the so-called overt subject imperative with inversion. This appears to be a special feature of northern IrE and especially Belfast English, as is shown by Henry (1995). Her examples include the following:

(37) **Go you there.** (Henry 1995: 52)

(38) **Read you that book.** (Henry 1995: 55)

As Henry notes, some northern IrE speakers accept only examples like (37), which involves an intransitive verb of motion, whereas others also find transitive examples such as (38) usable. This she explains by the existence of different ‘grammars’ with slightly different ‘verb-raising’ properties or ‘settings’ even within Belfast English.

Another noteworthy feature is the imperative construction with *let*. However, this is rare in present-day speech and, in fact, did not occur in my databases at all. Bliss (1972) discusses this feature, which he considers to be unique to IrE and most probably modelled on the corresponding Irish imperative paradigm. As an illustration, he provides examples like (39):

(39) **Let ye listen to what he said.** (Bliss 1972: 72)

Finally, mention should be made of the negative imperative construction involving the use of the auxiliary *do*, followed by *be* + V-*ing* (cf. the discussion on the auxiliary *do* above). As the following examples show, it occurs in both southern and northern IrE:

(40) *Whether it is Lutherarians or Protestant or Catholics, live up to it. **Don’t be guessing, or don’t be doubting.*** (Kerry: M.C.)

(41) *Oh, I enjoyed every minute of it. Lord, we used to have some times. Oh, **don’t be talking** {LAUGHS}.* (NITCS: LD5)

### 3. Auxiliaries

The most distinctive feature of both north and south IrE in the modal auxiliary system is the almost complete non-occurrence of *shall* (and *shan’t*) in vernacular forms of speech; even in educated speech *shall* occurs only rarely. Against this

background, it was not surprising that there were no occurrences of *shall* in the NITCS and only one in the southern IrE corpus. This was to be expected on the basis of the previous studies of IrE, going back to the famous late nineteenth-century treatise by Dr. Molloy, entitled *The Irish Difficulty, Shall and Will* (Molloy 1897). The perennial problems faced by the Irish in the ‘correct’ use of these auxiliaries are also treated by P.W. Joyce ([1910] 1988), who mentions the Irish predilection for *will* even in interrogative phrases like *Will I sing you a song?* Joyce refers here to the similar American usage, which he considers to derive from the influence of the Irish immigrants to America (Joyce 1988: 77).

As a predictable corollary to the avoidance of *shall*, there is a clear preference for *would* at the expense of *should* in any other than the obligation meaning. Thus, instead of phrases like *I should think/say* most Irish people, north and south, would say *I would think/say*, as in the following example from the NITCS:

- (42) *Well, they have table tennis, and they have bowls, and, eh, darts. That’s the three main sports, I would think.* (NITCS: BC44)

In some northern IrE dialects the negation forms take the suffix *-nae* (*shouldnae/wouldnae* etc.), which will be discussed below in section 4.3.

*Ought (to)* is another auxiliary which is virtually non-existent in vernacular IrE dialects, including Ulster Scots (see Robinson 1997: 171 on the latter). No instances were found in the NITCS nor in my southern IrE materials, which suggests that *ought (to)* is confined to the more formal, written styles.

The so-called primary verbs *be*, *have*, and *do* also exhibit some features peculiar to the Irish dialects of English. *Be* and *do* have already been dealt with in the section on habitual aspect above. Of their other, main-verb uses, suffice it to mention here that IrE allows the interrogative form *amn’t (I)* in tag questions. *Have* as a main verb is in conservative IrE often used on its own without *got*, and in interrogative or negative contexts, without the *do*-auxiliary, as in the following example from the NITCS where not even the interviewer’s use of *do*-support prompts the informant to use the same pattern:

- (43) *{What kind of farms do they have, mostly?}*  
*They haven’t all that much. They just have cows, and...* (NITCS: SM99)

#### 4. Negation

Three features can be singled out as ones which lend vernacular forms of IrE some distinctive flavour. The first is, in fact, the least distinctive, as it is shared by most non-standard varieties of English, namely multiple negation or ‘negative concord’, as it will be called here. By contrast, the two others are phenomena which have a much more restricted geographical distribution. One will here be labelled as ‘fail-

ure of negative attraction’; as will be seen below, it probably has its roots in Irish. The other is something which testifies to the old linguistic connections between Scotland and Ireland and has to do with the northern IrE uses of the negative word or suffix (-)nae.

#### 4.1. Negative concord

IrE dialects are no different from other non-standard varieties with respect to the use of negative concord. Thus, two or more negative items may occur in the same clause, as in the following examples drawn from the northern and southern dialects:

(44) *Och, I don't know just, they're just not the same, **nor never** will be like the old people.* (NITCS: LD77)

(45) *You've **not** heard of that **nothing**?* (Kerry: M.C.)

Rather than being a retention from the earlier stages of English, which allowed negative concord, or a result of transfer from Irish, this feature of IrE is best considered a general vernacular feature widespread in other varieties of English, too.

#### 4.2. Failure of negative attraction

The term ‘negative attraction’ refers to a phenomenon of StE which concerns the behaviour of so-called non-assertive and universal pronouns or determiners such as *any(-body/-one/-thing* etc.) and *every(-body/-one/-thing* etc.) under negation: whenever such a pronoun/determiner is (part of) the subject of a clause (or sometimes even the object), the negation element is ‘attracted’ to it, instead of being left in its usual position after the verb. Thus, in StE negating a structure like *anyone goes* yields *no-one goes*, and not *\*anyone doesn't go*. The latter fails to observe the rule of negative attraction, hence the description of this phenomenon as “failure of negative attraction” (Harris 1984a: 305). Note that ‘failure’ is here used in a purely technical sense without any negative social or other implications.

Though not a particularly frequent phenomenon, failure of negative attraction occurs in both southern and northern varieties of IrE. Examples of non-assertive pronouns or determiners from the databases include the following:

(46) *There is great pity for this, what they call the students now, but I'd have no pity for them, because they're only howling for a good time, howling... **Any** country **couldn't** stand that.* (Kerry: M.C.)  
‘No country could stand that.’

- (47) *Now, a, **anything** is **no** sin. But I think myself that the day's coming fast, in every one of us, when we'll know whether it is a sin or not.* (Kerry: M.C.)
- (48) *Boxing, or football, something like that. But **anything** else I **wouldn't** lend it eyesight {mm}, you know. I like the boxing.* (NITCS: JM90)

Of the universal pronouns, *every* with its derivative forms seems the most liable to trigger this phenomenon; witness (49) and (50).

- (49) *There seems, people seem to have a, a fair share of money, and getting on [...] Though, I say, you know, we don't, hmh, err, err, **everybody** **doesn't** use it to a good advantage, I s'pose.* (Wicklow: M.K.)  
'...not everybody uses it...'
- (50) ***Everybody** **hadn't** a hayshed, they talked about piking the hay.* (NITCS: IP57)

In my southern IrE database, most of the tokens of this feature occurred in the (south-)western dialects, which are generally conservative and retain many Irishisms. Indeed, an obvious explanation for the IrE usage is to be found in the similar behaviour of Irish expressions containing negation either with the indefinite determiner *aon* 'any' or its universal counterpart *gach aon* 'every'. The Irish negative particle *ní/níor* always stays in a position before the verb and is not attracted to an indefinite subject, as in English. Thus, the indefinite subject retains the same form in both affirmative and negative contexts, which is then carried over to conservative IrE (for further discussion, see Harris 1984a: 305).

It is interesting to note that failure of negative attraction occurs in some other varieties of the British Isles Englishes, too. It has been recorded, e.g., in Tyneside speech where it is possibly due to IrE influence, transmitted by the large-scale immigration of Irish people to the north-east of England starting in the nineteenth century. The same feature has also been observed for ScE, including the Gaelic-influenced varieties spoken in the Hebrides (see Filppula 1999, section 7.4., for further discussion and references).

#### 4.3. Negation with (-)nae

The Scottish heritage in northern IrE manifests itself particularly clearly in the occasional use of negation forms with the originally Scots negation word *nae*, which can be used on its own as a negative determiner, as in (51), or as a suffix attached to the primary auxiliaries BE, HAVE, and DO, and to the modal auxiliaries SHALL/SHOULD, WILL/WOULD, CAN/COULD, as in (52)–(57):

- (51) *Aye, there were **nae** motors, or...* (NITCS: JA4)
- (52) *He **isnae** interested.* (NITCS: MC22)

- (53) *No, I **havenae** got one [a harvester] yet.* (NITCS: JM25)
- (54) *...but at the same time, at the back of your mind, you think that, maybe they **dinnae** [do not] want you at all, you know.* (NITCS: JM114)
- (55) *Och, I **wouldnae** mind if she was good enough to me [as a wife].* (NITCS: JM194)
- (56) *..., and they **cannae** sell it [an estate] till she dies, know, she has her day o' it...so they **cannae** sell it.* (NITCS: JM181)
- (57) *...my father maybe remembers it done, I **couldnae** say, he might have.* (NITCS: AM53)

The (colloquial) standard forms *isn't/haven't/doesn't* etc. and *shouldn't/wouldn't/couldn't* etc. are by far the most common in northern IrE, too, but the usages illustrated above are preserved especially in areas where Ulster Scots is at its strongest (cf. Robinson 1997: 145).

## 5. Relativisation

Like many other non-standard varieties, IrE dialects north (including Ulster Scots) and south are known for their avoidance of the so-called WH-relatives (*who, whose, whom, which*). Instead, the most commonly used means of relativisation are *that*, the so-called zero relative construction (also known as the 'contact-clause'), and the conjunction *and*. The last-mentioned is particularly common in informal spoken language. It is sometimes labelled as a 'quasi-relative' construction, as it does not involve a 'proper' relative pronoun (see, e.g. Harris 1993: 149). The following examples illustrate the typical IrE usages:

- (58) *They don't take in boys **that** haven't got the eleven plus.* (NITCS: MK76)
- (59) *...there's older people Ø tell me that they were 13 different families Ø lived in it.* (NITCS: AM50)
- (60) *There was this man **and** he lived, himself and his wife, they lived, and they had one only son.* (Clare: F.K.)

Of the WH-relatives, especially *whose* and *whom* are extremely rare in all dialects, while *who* and *which* are slightly more frequent. WH-forms do occur in written IrE, but even in that mode the Irish have a noticeable predilection for *that* at the expense of the WH-forms. Ulster Scots generally follows the same patterns as the other Irish dialects, with *at* (a shortened form of *that*; possessive form *ats*) or the zero-relative being the most common means of relativisation (Robinson 1997: 77–78).

Another noteworthy feature of IrE relative structures is the occasional use of so-called resumptive (or ‘shadow’) pronouns. These are ‘additional’ pronominal or other elements usually appearing at the end of the relative clause, especially in those contexts where StE would use a locative or possessive prepositional relative. Their function seems to be one of making sure that the point of reference becomes clear to the hearer. For example:

- (61) *They jumped banks that time on the race-course that they wouldn't hunt over **them** today.* (Wicklow: D.M.)

The resumptive element can also be an adverb, as in the following example:

- (62) *But the course was there in the sandhills of Lahinch, now, across from the golf-course, where the Sluagh hall is **there**, a grand flat, a grand, grand course.* (Clare: F.K.)

These kinds of structures have long been known to be part of IrE vernacular and are discussed, for example, by Joyce (1988: 52–53), Henry (1957: 209–210), Harris (1993: 150–151), and Filppula (1999, section 8.2.). Joyce ascribes them to the parallel structures in Irish, one of his illustrative examples being *there's a man that **his** wife leaves him whenever she pleases*. A similar usage is recorded by Robinson (1997: 78) from conservative Ulster Scots dialects. It is possible, indeed, that resumptive pronouns have been much more common in the past when the influence of Irish on IrE was at its strongest. Be that as it may, it is interesting to note that similar patterns are also found in some Welsh and Scottish English dialects, which gives further support for the Celtic hypothesis.

## 6. Complementation

### 6.1. *For to* - infinitives

A common feature shared by most vernacular forms of IrE is the use of *for to* instead of *to* or *in order to* in infinitival clauses expressing purpose. This usage is illustrated by the following examples from northern and southern IrE:

- (63) *And there was always one man selected **for to** make the tea.* (NITCS: PM11)
- (64) *I think it was a penny or halfpenny we used to bring to school **for to** see the Punch an' Judy Show.* (Dublin: P.L.)

While this construction is by no means unique to IrE because of its general occurrence in earlier forms of English and in other regional dialects, there are other usages especially in northern IrE dialects which appear to be peculiar to them. Such is, for example, the use of *for to* after an ‘intentional’ verb like *try*, as in (65):

(65) *And the father, he would try **for to** tell her, like...* (NITCS: LM7)

Certain kinds of adjectives in predicate position can also lead to *for to* being used instead of *to*; witness (66):

(66) *It's very important, you know, **for to** have such a man {ahah} like him.*  
(NITCS: PL23)

A detailed description of the *for to* phenomena in northern IrE, and especially Belfast speech, is provided by Henry (1995), who distinguishes between 'weak' and 'strong' Belfast English varieties in this respect. Speakers representing the former variety restrict the use of *for to* to purpose clauses, whereas representatives of the latter group use it in a wider variety of contexts, including the usages exemplified in (65) and (66) above. To these, Henry (1995: 83–84) adds exclamations such as *For to tell her like that!*, infinitives in subject position, as in *For to stay here would be just as expensive*, and so-called object-control verbs, as in *I persuaded John for to go home*.

## 6.2. 'Narrative' infinitive with *to*

Other infinitival structures with *to* include the so-called narrative infinitive. This term was perhaps first used by Joyce (1988), who describes this construction as an Irishism, which usually occurs in responses to questions. One of Joyce's examples is as follows:

(67) *How did the mare get that hurt? – Oh Tom Cody **to leap** her over the garden wall yesterday, and she **to fall** on her knees on the stones.* (Joyce 1988: 45–46)

On the basis of the data from present-day IrE varieties, this feature is hardly used at all and can be considered old-fashioned and poetic. Henry (1957: 188–190) and Bliss (1984: 147–148) provide some examples from some conservative IrE dialects. Filppula (1999: 184) cites the following example from a nineteenth-century emigrant's letter:

(68) *I was very sorry to hear of you to let your old chapel to be chifted [shifted] to (Ballydaffeen). O poor Derry [the townland of Caheraderry in Co. Clare] is gone and **to let** them grow over yea.* (*The Normile Letters*, No. 12, 1862; cited in Filppula 1999: 184)

## 6.3. Other features of complementation

Further under the heading of complementation, IrE displays some features which are less conspicuous but nevertheless characteristic of especially the present-day



usage. The first concerns omission of *to* after certain verbs such as *be allowed* and *help*. IrE is not alone in this tendency, which seems to be on the increase in many other varieties of English, too. The same is true of another current trend, namely frequent omission of the preposition with originally prepositional verbs such as *agree*: one *agrees a deal*, instead of *agrees on a deal*, as in StE. Again, this is probably part of a more general process of ‘transitivisation’, which is under way in other varieties as well.

Finally, IrE speakers typically omit the reflexive pronoun with certain reflexive verbs. Hence, one *avails of something* instead of *avails oneself of something*, as in the following example from the NITCS where, interestingly, both the interviewer and the informant use the same non-standard expression:

- (69) {*And do you find young people **avail of it?***}  
*Young people do **avail of it**, you know, ...* (NITCS: PP11)

## 7. Subordination

In complex sentences, one of the most distinctive features of conservative IrE is the use of the conjunction *and* to introduce a subordinate instead of the usual coordinate clause. The subordinate clause most often contains a subject noun or pronoun (either in the objective or nominative form) followed by the *-ing* form of a verb, as in (70) and (71):

- (70) *I mind [remember] whenever [when] we were wee, **and my mother rearing us**, hey, she had to wash all with, just with a, steep them in a tub and...* (NITCS: JM201)
- (71) *I only thought of him there **and I cooking** my dinner. (Dublin: P.L.)*  
 ‘...while I was cooking...’

A past participle form, an adjective, and even an adverbial phrase are also possible in this position, as is seen from the following examples:

- (72) *I often got them [pheasants] dead out in the middle of the field **and they not torn up** or anything. There wasn’ a fox got them. (Wicklow: D.M.)*
- (73) *’Twas in harvest time **and the weather bad**. (Clare: F.K.)*
- (74) *He said you could hear them [strange noises] yet, inside in his own house **and he in bed**. (Clare: M.R.)*

The same construction type, often termed ‘subordinating *and*’, is also used in Ulster Scots:

(75) *Hè cum in an me in thà middle o ma dinnèr.*

'He came in as I was eating my dinner.' (Ulster Scots; cited in Robinson 1997: 111)

Besides IrE, subordinating *and* is also found in Scottish dialects of English. It is plausible to assume that the origins of this feature are to be found in the parallel constructions in Irish and Scottish Gaelic (see Filppula 1999, section 8.3., for a detailed discussion).

A special feature of northern IrE and especially Ulster Scots is the use of *whenever* to refer to a single event or state in the past, instead of indicating 'indefinite frequency' as in StE. Montgomery and Gregg (1997: 610), who label this usage as 'punctual *whenever*', describe it as "something of a shibboleth for Ulster". According to them, it is of Scottish origin, though this is not generally recognised, as they point out (Montgomery and Gregg 1997: 610). A good example from the NITCS occurs in (70) above (*I mind **whenever** we were wee...*).

## 8. Subject-verb concord

Subject-verb concord is an area of English grammar which generally distinguishes non-standard varieties from StE, and IrE is no exception to this. A well-known feature of the northern IrE dialects is what Milroy (1981: 12–13) has labelled as the 'Singular Concord rule' or the 'SING-CON rule'. Other terms used in subsequent research on the same phenomenon (including various other English dialects) are 'Subject-Type Constraint' and 'Northern Subject Rule'. Briefly, this rule states that the verbal *-s* suffix can be used with plural noun subjects as well as with demonstrative pronoun subjects, but not with a plural personal pronoun, unless there are some other sentence elements between the subject and the verb. Thus, Milroy notes that sentences like *them eggs is cracked* can freely occur in Ulster speech alongside the standard *those eggs are cracked*. Even *them's cracked* is possible, because *them* is construed as the demonstrative 'those' rather than as a personal pronoun. By contrast, *they's cracked* is never used, as is predicted by the SING-CON rule. This rule, as Milroy points out, is in no way unique to Ulster speech but can be traced back to Middle Scots and even further back in history (Milroy 1981: 13). The Scottish influence on this feature of northern IrE is also confirmed by Montgomery and Gregg (1997: 610). In other recent research on northern IrE, Henry (1995) has studied subject-verb concord in Belfast English. She points out the optional nature of singular concord in Belfast English; in other words, a plural subject can also take the plural form of the verb.

As regards the southern IrE dialects, the picture is not at all so clear. Of the earliest writers on IrE (north and south), Hume (1878) is the only one who discusses S-V concord with plural subjects. He puts forward evidence which seems to confirm

the existence of the Northern Subject Rule in what he subsumes under the general heading of ‘the Irish dialect [of English]’. He states that “[t]he third person singular of verbs is invariably used, unless when immediately preceded by the pronoun *they*”, adding that “[i]n the uneducated circles, the verb is invariably singular with nouns, whether one plural or several of the same or different numbers form the subject of the verb” (Hume 1878: 25–26). In his *Linguistic Survey of Ireland*, P.L. Henry briefly discusses the use of verbal *-s* but does not deal with the question of the historical or other background. His principal observation is that in Anglo-Irish dialects “*-s* is the common ending of the present pl.” (Henry 1958: 130–131). He then provides examples of verbs taking the *-s* suffix with different types of subject. These include collective nouns, as in *people goes*, ‘ordinary’ plural nouns, as in *the wee things [children] catches*, and – what seems to work against the Northern Subject Rule – personal pronouns, as in *they learns it/we bakes it*. Existential *there*-sentences with plural NPs, such as *there is accidents*, form yet another category which exhibits the same feature.

My southern IrE data contain plenty of examples illustrating lack of standard concord with different types of plural noun or pronoun subjects. The following are the major categories:

Conjoined NP as subject:

(76) *Oh, my mother and father was born and reared in Dublin.* (Dublin M.L.)

*There \_\_\_ NP:*

(77) *There was four boys of us, and there’s three of them dead.* (Wicklow: J.F.)

Collective NP as subject:

(78) *...and I think, at the pace the people is going they are not going to stick it.* (Wicklow: M.K.)

Other NP:

(79) *...but then, sons of theirs comes over here, an odd time has come.* (Wicklow: J.F.)

(80) *‘Course he signed the Treaty, and some was for it and some again’ it.* (Dublin: W.H.)

*They:*

(81) *Oh well, only, they gets pensions, you know and I get the old-age pension.* (Kerry: J.F.)

(82) *...when they was about three months old, or four, like, ...* (Clare: F.K.)

*Them:*

(83) **Them is all reclaimed** [land]. (Wicklow: D.M.)

(84) *And you know what wages **them was** getting that time in thirty-nine?*  
(Wicklow: J.F.)

Other personal pronoun:

(85) *We **keeps** about ten cows that way, you know, and few cattle.* (Kerry: J.F.)

(86) *...I happened to be, we **was** just getting our tea.* (Wicklow: J.F.)

However, these are counterbalanced by the even more frequent occurrence of standard S-V concord, which means that, all things considered, plural S-V concord in southern IrE represents a mixture of elements drawn from the ‘northern’, originally northern Middle English and Scots type, which follows the Northern Subject Rule, and from the ‘southern’ British type, which has ‘universal -s’ throughout the plural paradigm regardless of the type of subject. There may have been some influence from the concord system of Irish, which in this case would have promoted lack of concord with plural subjects and thus worked against the pressures from StE. As yet another factor explaining lack of concord, one should bear in mind the general trend in all kinds of Englishes to ignore concord especially in existential *there*-sentences.

## 9. Noun phrase structure

Perhaps the most notable feature of the IrE noun phrase is frequent use of the definite article in contexts where it is not used in StE. In this respect, IrE is very similar to ScE and also WelE. This feature has been known for long and is commented on, for example, in the early work by Joyce (1988: 82–83) and later works, such as Henry (1957: 117), Bliss (1984: 149) and Harris (1993: 144–145).

Non-standard uses tend to cluster around certain categories or groups of words and expressions. The major ones, and popularly the most widely known, include the following:

(i) names of languages and branches of learning:

(87) *And err, when I do be listen’ to **the Irish** here, I do be sorry now, when you’re in a local having a drink, nobody seems to understand it. Whoever is speaking **the Irish**, might as well be, as the saying says, speaking Dutch...* (Dublin: P.T.)

(88) *Oh, **the maths**, **the maths** nowadays seems to be complicated.* (NITCS: RF21)

(ii) (unpleasant) physical sensations or states:

(89) *I think Jim Larkin, Big Jim, err, brought it [a ship] here, called The Heir, with food ... for this, this is the poor people were starved with **the hunger**.* (Dublin: W.H.)

(iii) names of diseases and ailments:

(90) *And that cured **the whooping cough**.... Some children does be terrible bad with it, whooping cough.* (Wicklow: T.F.)

(91) *But he's **the measles**, and he, he's off school for a while.* (NITCS: NK43)

(iv) names of social institutions:

(92) *I left **the school** in early age, nearly fourteen, you know.* (Dublin: W.H.)

(93) *...mm, best singer now, he's away in, in, the present time in **the hospital**.* (NITCS: CM129)

(v) quantifying expressions involving *most*, *both*, *half* followed by a postmodifying of phrase:

(94) *Oh, well, down round Arboe **the most** of them was all small kind of farms,...* (NITCS: FC73)

(95) *I had more brothers, two more brothers there with 'im at the time. And **the both** of them is dead.* (Wicklow: J.F.)

(96) *Now Lough Melvin's a good salmon place. It's down here, **the half** of it's in, eh, Eire, you know, in the Free State.* (NITCS: JH80)

Less noticeable, but also characteristic of the vernacular forms of IrE, are the following categories:

(vi) names of festive days or seasons:

(97) *Yes. The wren, the wren, the King of all birds, Saint Stephen's day was caught in the bush. You see, they chased him up here **the Saint Stephen's Day**, the chap, boys.* (Wicklow: T.F.)

(vii) plural count nouns with generic reference:

(98) *Do they keep **the goats**?* (Kerry: D.B.)

(viii) non-count abstract nouns and concrete mass nouns:

(99) *I don't know when **the coffee** came. I s'pose it did, came later. **The tea, the tea, the tea** weren't there at all.* (Kerry: M.C.)

(ix) expressions involving reference to body parts:

(100) *Well, John Doolan cut a branch off it, and a crowd of birds come and they nearly took **the head** off him. They all collected round his head.*  
(Wicklow: T.F.)

(x) names of geographical areas and localities:

(101) *But I'm sure now, if you went out to Glendalough, you would get people that'd give you a good deal of the lowdown of **the County Wicklow**.*  
(Wicklow: M.K.)

Most of the usages described above have parallels in Irish and may have been transferred from there directly or at least reinforced by the Irish substratum in those cases in which there are similar earlier or dialectal English usages (for a detailed discussion of these, see Filppula 1999, section 5.2.).

## 10. Pronominal systems

### 10.1. Personal pronouns

Two features of IrE personal pronouns deserve to be mentioned here. The first is the frequent use of *them* as a determiner or 'demonstrative adjective' in colloquial speech, as in (102), or on its own as subject, as in (103) (see Harris 1993: 145). This feature is not, however, unique to IrE. Research on other varieties has shown that *them* in this function is one of the most commonly occurring features of non-standard British English dialects, both urban and rural.

(102) *...that time the people were rich that used to live in **them** houses.* (Dublin: J.O'B.)

(103) *{Mm. And those were cornstacks?}  
**Them** was cornstacks... (NITCS: WC15)*

The distinction between singular *you* and plural *yous* (sometimes spelt *youse* or *yez/yiz*) is another well-known characteristic of IrE vernacular, and was already commented on in the early description by Hayden and Hartog (1909: 781). Interestingly, the same usage is also found in other varieties like Tyneside English, Scots, and Liverpool dialect, all of which have been influenced by the speech of the large numbers of Irish immigrants (see, for example Beal, this volume)

### 10.2. 'Absolute' uses of reflexive pronouns

It is a rule of StE that reflexive pronouns normally require the presence in the same clause or sentence of another nominal element, the so-called antecedent, with which they stand in a coreferential relation. In IrE dialects, however, reflexives can be used on their own, without such an antecedent. They can occur, for

example, in subject position, in object position, or as prepositional complement in adverbial prepositional phrases. These types are illustrated by the following examples:

- (104) *And by God, he said, ... he'd be the devil, if **himself** wouldn't make him laugh.* (Kerry: M.C.)
- (105) *And d'you hear me, you didn't know the minute they'd burn **yourself** an' the house.* (Clare: J.N.)
- (106) *... when Cromwell came over here... he was s'posed to say, he'd drive the Irish to hell or Connacht... The Irish used to say... the Irish went to Connacht and left hell **for himself**.* (Dublin: W.H.)

This IrE feature has attracted the attention of many scholars in the past. Thus, Hayden and Hartog (1909: 941) speak of the 'absolute' use of the reflexive pronouns, a term which they obviously adopt from the Latin grammatical tradition. Other commentators include Henry (1958: 92), who uses the same term, Bliss (1979) and Harris (1993: 147). It is interesting to note that, although this feature is mainly found in vernacular and colloquial styles, occurrences can be spotted even in 'educated' varieties, including written language (see Filppula 1999: 81 for examples).

While the function of an absolute reflexive like *himself* is sometimes described as a polite form of reference to the 'man of the house', in actual usage there appear to be other functions, too. For instance, an absolute reflexive is often used with reference to that person or those persons who constitute the 'topic' of the conversation in some way or another. Of the examples cited above, this interpretation seems to suit the subject and prepositional complement reflexives in (104) and (106), though not so well the object reflexive in (105).

As regards the origins of absolute reflexives, it is hard to ascertain the exact source of the IrE usage because of parallels in both Irish and earlier English. Thus, Henry (1957: 120) points out that the Irish system of pronouns allows the same type of usage involving the emphatic pronoun *féin*. However, he implicitly notes the possibility of superstratal influence from earlier English by citing examples from Shakespeare's works to show that absolute reflexives occurred in earlier English, too (Henry 1957: 120–121; see also Hayden and Hartog 1909: 941; Harris 1993: 147).

## 11. Word order and information structure

### 11.1. Inverted word order in indirect questions

Along with Welsh and Scottish varieties of English, IrE dialects are well-known for their tendency to use inverted word order in indirect questions. This feature,

which is here called ‘embedded inversion’, occurs in both Yes/No and WH- embedded questions in all regional varieties of IrE (see Bliss 1984; Henry 1995). The following examples illustrate the typical main-clause verbs triggering this phenomenon:

- (107) *I don't know **was it** a priest or who went in there one time with a horse-collar put over his neck.* (Kerry: C.D.)
- (108) *I wonder what is **he** like at all. The leprechaun. I don't know what **is it** at all.* (Clare: M.V.)
- (109) *...oh, how long, wait till I see how long **would it be**?* (Dublin: P.L.)
- (110) *...and the brogue was put in under somebody's knees this way, but you didn't... see where it was, and you could shuffle it on here to somebody else. And you were asked where **was the brogue**.* (NITCS: PH17)
- (111) *{You know they had a roof, and they were square at the bottom, and they had a, they weren't...}*  
*Wonder **were those** actually hay, or **was that** corn?* (NITCS: PH61)

It has long been thought that Irish substratal influence has been at work here. Thus, writing almost a century ago, Hayden and Hartog (1909: 938) note that “[t]he indirect question preceded by ‘whether’ or ‘if’ does not exist in Gaelic; and it is rare in the mouth of an Irishman, who will say ‘I wondered was the horse well bred?’”

Indeed, it is true that Irish has no equivalent of the English conjunctions *if/whether* but retains the interrogative word order in indirect questions just as IrE does. This also holds for the Irish counterparts of the WH-questions, although the parallelism is less obvious there because of the relative clause structure required by the Irish WH-questions. Though nowadays primarily a feature of informal spoken language, embedded inversion was a frequent phenomenon even in written texts in earlier IrE, as is shown by the following extract from a mid-nineteenth-century letter written by an Irishman to a Liverpool-based shipping agent:

- (112) *Dear Sir i am writing to you to let you know that i am to embark on the 24th. day of september in which i hope your amiable Honour will be sure to keep room for me in the ship there is a friend of mine to be along with me that day a young Girl and she wants to know how much **will you charge** her from liverpool to newyork and herself to buy 1/2 provision please to write to me sir **will you keep** room for her in the ship. i am told that there are very sharp people in liverpool. i want to know how **will i know** them sir... (Grimshaw Papers, 1865; National Library of Ireland MS 15,784)*

Besides substratal influence, it is possible that embedded inversion is inherited from earlier English. Visser (1963–1973: 780–781) cites some parallels from



Early Modern English texts but notes that “instances [of embedded inversion] do not seem to occur with great frequency before the eighteenth century”. Others have suggested that embedded inversion is a phenomenon of ‘learner English’ or of colloquial, simplified fast speech regardless of the variety. Yet another, formal-syntactic and ‘universalist’, approach sees it as a reflex of the more general ‘verb-second’ (V2) properties of English and other Germanic languages. Despite their merits, these accounts fail to explain the geographical distribution of embedded inversion among the dialects of English spoken in the British Isles, and more specifically, its prominence in the western, north-western and northern varieties such as IrE, ScE, and WeE. Thus, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the Celtic substrate languages have had some role in promoting the use of embedded inversion in the said varieties (for further discussion, see Filppula 1999, section 7.3.).

### 11.2. Focusing devices

Focusing devices are so called because they serve to give emphasis or prominence to some element(s) of an utterance or a clause. In other words, some part or parts of an utterance, conceived of as a message purporting to convey the communicative intentions of the speaker, stand out from the rest as being more important than them. Prominence can in English (as in other languages) be achieved by various means, which include, first, prosodic ones: the speaker can highlight some word(s) by assigning it the primary sentence stress and thereby indicating the location of the main ‘information focus’ of his/her utterance. Secondly, various kinds of structural means can be used along with sentence stress to achieve the same effect. Such are, e.g. the so-called cleft construction (or ‘clefting’ for short), ‘pseudo-clefting’, and ‘fronting’ (sometimes also termed ‘topicalisation’). These three can be exemplified by sentences such as *It was **the window** John broke* (not the door), *What John broke was **the window*** (not the door), and ***The window** John broke* (not the door), respectively (the information foci are emboldened).

Where IrE dialects clearly differ from StE and most other regional varieties is in their tendency to favour clefting and fronting over ‘simple’ sentence stress. This is particularly salient in those dialects which have been in closest contact with Irish as a living community language, and can be explained by the central role that clefting and fronting play in the grammatical system of Irish. Just like the other Celtic languages, Irish uses almost exclusively structural means such as clefting (often called the ‘copula construction’ in the Celtic grammatical tradition) or simple fronting instead of sentence stress for marking prominence, e.g. contrast or emphasis. Their functions are not, however, restricted to these special contexts: they are also used for introducing answers to specific questions, and more generally, for distinguishing between ‘new’ and ‘old’ information.

Besides frequencies of use, another factor speaking for Irish influence on IrE dialects is the special syntactic characteristics of clefting and, to some extent, front-

ing; these are either rare or not attested in other dialects of English. Thus, IrE (like Irish) allows part of a VP in the focus position of clefts (so-called VP-clefting), as in (113) from the southern IrE corpus. Similarly, subject complement adjectives and certain types of adverbial expressions such as those in (114) and (115), and ‘absolute’ reflexive pronouns, as in (116) from the NITCS, can occur in the same position in IrE vernacular. In StE, these would be at least odd, if not unacceptable even.

- (113) *{Have many people left this area at all, or = or given up farming at all or?}*  
*Ah, very little’s give up farming round this area. It’s **looking for more land** a lot of them are. (Wicklow: J.N.)*
- (114) *It’s **flat** it was. (Henry 1957: 193)*
- (115) *It’s **badly** she’d do it, now. (Henry 1957: 193)*
- (116) *I don’t know why it was now {I know}. I’ll not say that it was {I know} **myself** was the cause of that... (NITCS: PT86)*

Clefting is also a common device in starting responses to questions, which is yet another reflex of the Irish tendency to front new information by means of the copula (cleft) construction. This is illustrated in (117) from the NITCS:

- (117) *{And what kind of work do you do?}*  
*It’s **mostly missionary** work we do in the Mothers’ Union. (NITCS: HN38)*

Simple fronting is slightly less common in IrE than clefting, but it is noteworthy that it can likewise be used in contexts in which StE would prefer ‘straight’ word order. Thus, in the following examples the primary motivation for the use of fronting seems to be highlighting the new information in the utterance rather than contrast or emphasis:

- (118) *My brother that’s over in England, ...when he was young, **a story** now he told me, when he was young. (Kerry: M.McG.)*
- (119) *Indeed, I walked it myself when I young... all the way from here to Cahirciveen with cattle and with sheep. Oh, **about a distance of twenty and three or four miles** it were. (Kerry: M.McG.)*

As said above, both clefting and fronting are part of StE grammar but their syntactic and functional ranges are more limited there than in IrE dialects. It should also be noted that clefting is a relatively recent construction in English and had not fully developed until late in the Early Modern English period. A further factor suggesting Irish substratal influence on IrE dialects is the abundant use of similar focusing devices in the heavily Gaelic-influenced varieties of Hebridean English.

Welsh English also has a predilection for structural means, but where IrE and Hebridean English use clefting, WeE prefers simple fronting, which can be explained by a parallel feature of Welsh (see Filppula 1999, chapter 10 for further discussion).

## 12. Prepositional usage

IrE abounds in turns of expression which involve prepositional usages which are not found in other regional dialects or in StE. Again, many of these can be explained by parallel expressions in Irish and, more generally, by the prominent role that prepositions play in Irish syntax: meanings which in other languages, including StE, are expressed by verbs, adjectives or adverbs, are often rendered by various types of prepositional phrases in Irish (see Henry 1957: 132; Harris 1993: 172).

The preposition *on* has been described as a “preposition-of-all-work” in IrE (Hayden and Hartog 1909: 939). Particularly well-known is its use in contexts which imply a disadvantage of some kind or another from the point of view of the speaker or some other person. This is illustrated in the following conversation where the informant describes how a fox managed to kill half of her flock of hens:

(120) *One year then he took the half of them **on me**.* (Wicklow: Mrs. F.)

The same relation of disadvantage, often termed the ‘dative of disadvantage’, can also be conveyed by a combination of a verb + particle + preposition, as in (121):

(121) *But eh, there was some island, like, where there was a man living. And he was marooned, like, and there was no one in it but himself, like. And this day the fire went out **on him**, like.* (Clare: F.K.)

A second major function of *on* in IrE is its use to express various physical and mental sensations, states or processes. These are most often negative, as can be seen from (122):

(122) *...and Colonel Tottenham had a gamekeeper. Begor, the gamekeeper saw him huntin’ an’ he made after ‘im. And they ran. And this blacksmith was runnin’ too, and begor, the breath was gettin’ short **on him**.* (Clare: C.O’B.)

‘...he was getting short of breath.’

Thirdly, *on* is used to express possession of an inherent physical or other property of a person or some other referent. It is usually of the ‘inalienable’ type, as in (123) and (124):

(123) *All the cattle had the horns **on them** that time.* (Kerry: C.D.)

(124) *There was another old lad used to clean windows. But I can't think the name that was **on him**.* (Dublin: P.L.)

The preposition *in* has also developed several usages which are distinctive of IrE. Most of these involve the prepositional phrase *in it*, which has generally been considered a calque on the Irish *ann* (lit.) 'in it' or 'in existence' (see e.g. Henry 1957: 144–147). In the following example, *in it* clearly conveys the idea of existence in the general sense:

(125) *But she learned the deaf and dumb alphabet out of Moore's Almanac, that there used to be **in it** at the time, and...* (Clare: F.K.)

Like *on*, the preposition *in* can express some inherent quality or property of something, as in (126):

(126) *{Do you have to train them [i.e. sheep-dogs] especially for this purpose or?} Well, you do, ah, if it's in a dog he'll train himself, if the goodness is **in im**.* (Wicklow: C.C.)

The uses of the preposition *with* have also been moulded by contact effects. Thus, in conservative varieties of IrE, *with* can be used for the expression of the duration of a state or an activity. For instance, in (127) *with* has the temporal meaning 'for', 'for the duration of', or 'X time ago':

(127) *I didn't hear him playin' **with years an' years**. Maybe he isn't able to play at all now.* (Clare: C.O'B.)  
'I haven't heard him playing for years and years.'

The origin of the temporal meaning of *with*, which appears to be unique to the Irish dialects of English, lies in the corresponding Irish expressions involving the preposition *le* 'with; for the duration of' (Joyce 1988: 27).

Besides time, *with* is used to express agency in passive constructions. This usage, which has parallels in both earlier English and Irish, is illustrated in (128):

(128) *That was his ration, a trout and a half a day.  
{And the other half?}  
Yeah, the other half would be, be ate, you see, **with the monster or the serpent**.* (Clare: F.K.)  
'...by the monster or the serpent.'

Like the prepositions discussed so far, IrE *of* displays some special characteristics. Most of these are common to vernacular forms of speech throughout the British Isles, e.g. the temporal use in such expressions as *of a Saturday* 'on Saturday(s)', which has been recorded in a wide range of localities in Scotland, the north of Eng-

land, the southwest and the east. Of greater interest in this connection is the intensifying construction known as ‘attributive *of*’, which is illustrated in (129) and (130):

- (129) *And there was a young fella that, his father an’ mother was buried, he was right orphaned and he was **a good hardy step of a boy**, and he was hurlin’.* (Clare: M.R.)
- (130) *If it’s there, it’s there, and they’ll [sheep-dogs] do the work with very little training. So they will. You get more **fools of dogs**, they are as useless... put sheep away on you, breaking, going through them, and...* (Wicklow: J.N.)

As Joyce (1988: 42) points out, idiomatic Irish parallels for these kinds of expressions exist in the form of constructions such as *amadán fir* ‘a fool of a man’ (where *fir* is the genitive form of *fear* ‘man’). At the same time, he notes the existence of attributive *of* in EngE, which suggests two possible sources for the IrE attributive *of*.

Finally, the originally Scandinavian-derived preposition *till* in the directional sense ‘to’ can be mentioned as a feature which is still preserved in some northern IrE and especially Ulster Scots dialects, as is shown by (131) and (132) from the NITCS (cf. Joyce 1988: 84; Robinson 1997: 106):

- (131) *I used to go down **till the aerodrome**, Ballykelly, the time the airport were down there,...* (NITCS: TF57)
- (132) *...when I got up in years then, and went **till the dance**, I couldn’t dance.* (NITCS: WC3)

### 13. Conclusion

As the foregoing discussion has shown, vernacular forms of IrE display a wide range of distinctive features in most areas of syntax, though much less in their morphology. Some of these features are shared with other regional or non-standard varieties of English and can thus be considered either retentions from earlier forms of English or ‘general vernacular’ patterns characteristic of most varieties spoken in the British Isles and Ireland. Then there are many others which have their origins in corresponding syntactic structures in Irish, which has over the last few centuries exercised considerable substratal influence on IrE. This influence, though clearly on the wane in the present-day urban varieties, is surprisingly persistent in some domains of syntax, such as the tense and aspect systems of IrE, and is still reflected to some extent even in educated informal speech; written IrE, on the other hand, mostly follows the StE norm. In rural dialects, both northern and southern, the presence of Irish-derived features is

very noticeable, as can be predicted. Finally, the Scottish input to Ulster Scots and northern IrE in general forms yet another interesting strand in the linguistic make-up of IrE.

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# Welsh English: morphology and syntax

Robert Penhallurick

## 1. Introduction

This chapter describes the more notable and significant non-standard features of Welsh English morphology and syntax. It is divided into four sections: section 2 looks at features which seemingly arise as a result of Welsh-language influence; section 3 looks at influence on Welsh English grammar from non-standard English English; sections 4 and 5 consider phenomena worthy of highlighting, that is, predicate fronting, periphrastic verb phrases and periphrastic progressive verb phrases respectively, both already the subject of comparatively lengthy consideration in the scholarly literature on Welsh English.

The chief sources for the present chapter are as follows:

- Parry (1999), which is the most recent major publication of the *Survey of Anglo-Welsh Dialects* (SAWD), and which draws together data collected between 1968–1982 for Phase 1 of the *Survey*, on the English speech of the 60-plus age-group in rural Wales. Parry (1999) incorporates material from the other main SAWD and SAWD-associated publications, Parry (1977, 1979a) and Penhallurick (1991).
- Penhallurick (1994), which includes amongst its numerous historical sources pre- and early-SAWD material collected by David Parry and by Clive Upton in the 1960s.
- Penhallurick (1996), which adds to the data and findings published in Penhallurick (1991).
- Pitkänen (2003), which draws on her substantial doctoral research (University of Joensuu, in progress) into Welsh English syntax. Pitkänen uses four corpora in her apparent-time study, two of which she collected herself, in south-west Wales and north Wales during 1995–2000, and two from the SAWD archives (housed at the Department of English, University of Wales Swansea). Her SAWD material consists of, firstly, data from a selection of south-western and northern localities in the SAWD Phase 1 rural network, and, secondly, hitherto unpublished and indeed unused data from the intended urban Phase 2 of SAWD, for which fieldwork was carried out in Grangetown (Cardiff), Caernarfon, Wrexham, and Carmarthen during 1985–1987. Unlike the rural informants, Phase 2 informants covered all age-groups, as also did Pitkänen's own informants.
- Williams (2000), which also includes the SAWD archives amongst its sources.



For an outline of the cultural and sociohistorical background to Welsh English, see the companion chapter on Welsh English phonology (Penhallurick, other volume).

## 2. Welsh-language influence in Welsh English grammar

Welsh-language influence, although not as pervasive as in Welsh English phonology, is prominently evident in some areas of Welsh English morphology and syntax. The discussions under 4 and 5 below, on predicate fronting and periphrastic and progressive verb phrases, also refer to Welsh-language influence.

### 2.1. Verbs

Generalized *isn't it* as a confirmatory interrogative tag, applying to the whole of a preceding statement, irrespective of the main verb, is common in Welsh English. Parry (1999: 115) states that it is “fairly widespread” throughout Wales, except for Monmouthshire. Penhallurick (1991: 204–205) records fourteen examples from the Welsh-speaking heartland of the north-west, including the following:

- (1) *you have to rig him up in his clothes, isn't it*
- (2) *I've heard the word, isn't it*
- (3) *we say “clean under the grate”, isn't it*
- (4) *we saw some the other day, isn't it*
- (5) *they had them in their hair, isn't it*

In these examples, pronunciation is frequently truncated to forms of the type [ɪnɪ] or [nɪ]. This tag no doubt arises as a result of the transfer of the Welsh generalized confirmatory interrogative *ydy fe?* ‘isn't it?’. It should be noted, however, that *innit* forms are common in English English, including that of the south-west and south-east of England (see, for example, Anderwald, this volume), and it is entirely possible that this more general trend might have a reinforcing effect on Welsh English.

### 2.2. Adverbs

As Parry (1999: 120) reports, Standard English *how* + adjective as an introductory adverbial phrase in exclamations is commonly expressed in Welsh English by *there's* + adjective:

- (6) *there's funny questions*
- (7) *there's twp ('stupid') I've been*

(8) *there's nice to see you*

Although Parry has one example from north Wales, his others are all from south Wales, and this feature is associated more with southern Welsh English than with northern. It is to be heard frequently in the longer-anglicised regions of the south-east, but can be firmly linked with a corresponding formation in the Welsh language: *dyna* 'there is' + adjective.

## 2.3. Prepositions

Penhallurick (1991: 207) records several examples of *on* in the phrase *the name/term on* in north Wales (though not in the anglicised border region), such as:

(9) *I don't know the English term on that*

(10) *there's a special name on that*

(11) *there's a word on that*

Parry (1999: 119) records similar expressions mainly in mid-Wales. Like a good proportion of non-standard grammatical material in SAWD sources, these examples occurred in 'incidental material', that is, not as direct responses to any question in the SAWD questionnaire, so that any attempt to gauge the regional spread of such forms is, strictly speaking, tentative. However, it is noticeable that almost all of the instances in Parry (1999) and Penhallurick (1991) occur in traditional Welsh-speaking regions, which adds weight to the pretty clear connection with the Welsh syntagm *yr enw ar*, 'the name on'.

## 2.4. Indirect question word order

There are recorded instances in Parry (1999: 119) and Penhallurick (1991: 209–210) of indirect questions retaining the inversion of subject and verb characteristic of direct questions, for example:

(12) *I don't know what time is it*

(13) *I don't know what is that*

(14) *I'm not sure is it Caerleon or not* (Parry 1999: 119)

This appears to be a Welsh-influenced construction. In Welsh we find that the verb + immediately following form is identical in direct questions and their equivalent indirect ones. The SAWD examples come from incidental material and are few in number, but are almost exclusively from south-west Wales. Thomas (1985: 217) says that the elision of the conjunction (such as *if* or *whether*) in some examples is assisted by the practice in Welsh "of regularly eliding the corresponding conjunc-

tion (*a/os*) in similar environments in the vernacular". Filppula (1999: 167–172) notes the occurrence of such word orders in Hiberno-English (or Irish English), Scottish English, Hebridean English and Tyneside English, suggesting a general Celtic influence at work.

### 3. Non-standard English English influence in Welsh English grammar

In this section, a summary is provided of morphological and syntactic items recorded in Welsh English which seem to have travelled from the neighbouring dialects of English English. The traditional varieties of the borders, south Pembrokeshire, and the Gower Peninsula (i.e. areas subject to anglicization since the twelfth century and the aftermath of the Norman invasion of Wales) have been especially affected by this influence. Non-standard forms which illustrate less specific influence, such as double negation and demonstrative *them*, are not considered, although they may well indicate a more general 'vernacularization' of Welsh English, as Thomas (1985: 219) suggests. Parry (1999: 105–120) has a summary of such forms in SAWD data.

#### 3.1. Pronouns

- (15) *thee* – subjective and objective 2nd person singular personal pronoun;
- (16) *thou* – subjective 2nd person singular personal pronoun;
- (17) *a* – subjective 3rd person singular masculine personal pronoun, unstressed;
- (18) *'en/un/n* – objective 3rd person singular masculine and neuter personal pronoun, unstressed;
- (19) *thy* – 2nd person singular possessive adjective;
- (20) *thine* – 2nd person singular possessive pronoun;
- (21) *yourn* – 2nd person singular possessive pronoun;
- (22) *ourn* – 1st person plural possessive pronoun;
- (23) *theirn* – 3rd person plural possessive pronoun

These are forms recorded in SAWD and in material collected by David Parry in the early 1960s prior to SAWD (see Parry 1967, 1977, and 1999: 108–110), in the borders, south Pembrokeshire and the Gower Peninsula, and also attested widely in the *Survey of English Dialects* (SED) in the west and south-west of England. There is no doubt that they illustrate historical English English influence on Welsh

English. However, in Welsh English most have a sporadic occurrence and the remainder are sporadic, and what is open to considerable doubt is whether they remain in current use.

Writing in 1979, Parry commented:

*Thee* is still used among the older generation at Bishopston [Gower Peninsula, investigated by Parry in 1960, and again for SAWD in 1969], Middleton [Gower, investigated by Parry in 1960] and Llantwit [Vale of Glamorgan, investigated for SAWD in 1970]. But it is used only between equals and familiars. The form *a* (pronounced as in the first syllable of *about* [ə]) is used for 'he' in unemphatic positions in the sentence at Bishopston and Middleton. And at these same localities, *un* (pronounced as in the first syllable of *untidy* [ən], as in *button*) may be used for the direct-object pronouns 'him' and 'it'. This is a reduced form of the Old English pronoun *hine* that meant 'him', and that was pronounced something like the word *inner* with an *h* added at the beginning. (Parry 1979a: 15)

He goes on to record that, in addition to these personal pronouns, the possessive forms *thy* and *thine* "survive amongst older-generation speakers" at Llangennith (Gower, investigated in 1969 for SAWD), Bishopston and Middleton, with their use again confined to equals and familiars. Elsewhere (Parry 1967: 135), he also records the personal pronoun *thou* as being in use in 1960 in Bishopston and Middleton. My own judgement, at least regarding the English of the Gower Peninsula, is that the late 1970s/early 1980s at best mark the dying moments of these forms. Indeed by that time they were probably little-used relics in the speech of the elderly generation. *Gowerland and its Language* (Penhallurick 1994) charts, through sources dating from the late seventeenth century to the late twentieth, the history of the traditional English dialect of the Gower Peninsula, a dialect having much in common in grammar, lexis and phonology with the dialects of the south-west of England. The coast of England is visible across the Bristol Channel from Gower and it seems that there was significant settlement of south-west Englanders in Gower from the Norman invasion onwards. Throughout the history of scholarly investigation of this traditional Gower English, writers regularly declared it both an active variety and one on the verge of extinction. My conclusion in 1994 was that most of its historical characteristics had been swept away by the influx of a more general southern Welsh English. Certainly, the pronoun forms above are no longer current in Gower.

### 3.2. Verbs

Parry (1999: 112–118), summarizing information gathered by SAWD, records many instances of non-standard forms of *be*, *do* and *have* in Welsh English which can be connected with the traditional dialects of the west and south-west of England. Examples include:

- (24) *I be/you am/thee art/thee bist/she be/we am/we be/they am/they be/them be*, all present tense, unstressed;
- (25) *he do/he doth*, auxiliary, present tense, stressed;
- (26) *he have/he hath*, auxiliary, present tense, stressed

Parry also records numerous examples of non-standard forms of other verbs, though these tend towards connections with a more general English English. With regard to the more specific west and south-west English English influence, as with 3.2. above it is the border, south Pembrokeshire, and Gower varieties of Welsh English that are affected, and, as above, there is the question of how current these forms are. Again, the example of the Gower Peninsula is arguably a useful indicator.

Penhallurick (1994: 165–168) presents a plethora of examples from traditional Gower English, including (27) to (32) from sources published between 1886 and 1957.

- (27) *I be, art thee, yee binna* ‘you be not’;
- (28) *thee casn’t* ‘you can’t’;
- (29) *thee cust* ‘you could’;
- (30) *it doth*;
- (31) *I’th* ‘I hath’, *ye’th* ‘you hath’, *we hath*;
- (32) *we makth*

In Parry (1977: 161–178, 1979a: 16–17), we find a fuller listing of such verb forms for Gower than in Parry (1999), and some commentary on their currency:

In the present tense, forms such as *he goeth*, *he look’th* and *he cometh* were occasionally to be heard from older generation speakers at Middleton in 1960, when investigations were first carried out in that locality. Joseph Wright (*English Dialect Grammar*, section 435) said in 1905 that such forms were still used by elderly speakers in Somerset. (Parry 1979a: 16)

Research for *Gowerland and its Language* (Penhallurick 1994) indicated firmly that these south-west-English-English-derived verb forms were obsolescent by the 1960s and a disappearing folk-memory by the 1980s.

Ultimately, however, it would be a mistake to generalize too confidently from the Gower example. Gower English was rather isolated for centuries, bounded by a Welsh-speaking community in mainland south Wales. As that community became English-speaking, the grammar of Gower English, particularly during the twentieth century, merged with that of general southern Welsh English. South Pembrokeshire English is still bounded by a Welsh-speaking community, and Welsh English along the border has of course continually been in contact with west English English.

With the exception of Gower English, the erosion (or not) of dialectal English English influence in varieties of Welsh English is a neglected topic of study.

### 3.3. Prepositions

The SAWD questionnaire elicited purposive *for to* ‘in order to’ as in (33) in south Pembrokeshire, Gower, and a couple of times in border localities.

(33) *I went to town for to see the doctor.*

SAWD incidental material provides a few more examples (see Parry 1999: 118, and Penhallurick 1991: 208), including, interestingly, one in Welsh-speaking north-west Wales (at Ynys, Gwynedd). Close inspection of the biographical details of the informant who provided this example (Penhallurick 1999: 16) shows that, whilst she was born locally, resident locally for most of her life, and had Welsh as her first language, she had lived in Dorset between the ages of 24–35. Dorset is one of the counties in which the SED records this syntagm. It is recorded widely across England by the SED, though its occurrence in Irish English should also be noted (Filppula 1999: 185).

## 4. Predicate fronting

Thomas (1985: 215) notes that “[o]ne of the more familiar distinctive features of sentence structure in Welsh English is the fronting of a constituent, when attention is focussed upon it: the fronted constituent is accompanied by emphatic stress”. Examples of this feature are rare in SAWD data, because they are restricted to incidental material. Parry (1999: 119–120) records eight, under the heading *sentence-initial emphasis*, including:

(34) *A weed it is*

(35) *Coal they’re getting out mostly*

(36) *A horse, ‘t was*

Thomas compares this Welsh English fronting with clefted and pseudo-clefted sentences in other varieties of English (in which clauses are divided into two separate sections), but argues that, in Welsh English, this feature is “best accounted for as an instance of interference from Welsh” (Thomas 1985: 216). In the Welsh language, ‘clefting’ is a simpler, blunter process than in English: any constituent of a sentence can be moved forward in a sentence (fronted) for emphasis. Tristram (2002) takes the case for Welsh influence further, arguing that clefting is one of a number of features exemplifying historical transference from Welsh to varieties of English.

Williams (2000) provides a detailed analysis of this phenomenon in Welsh English, which he terms *predicate fronting*. He detects two types of predicate fronting, distinguished according to the amount of new information contained in the fronted constituent. He argues that predicate fronting as it occurs in the now-English-speaking valley communities of south-east Wales “appears to be distinguished by a relatively small ‘quantity’ of new information appearing in the fronted constituent and consisting mainly of a reformulation of previous, immediately accessible textual material for modal purposes” (Williams 2000: 226). In his other data, however, collected in bilingual Llandeilo in west Wales, “The ‘fronted’ element is textually and situationally new, and there is no modal component” (Williams 2000: 227). Williams suggests that the first type is the more ‘anglicised’ kind of Welsh English predicate fronting, where a modal component has been added to a structure transferred from the Welsh language in which the “pragmatic function” (Williams 2000: 224) of the fronted constituent is merely to provide new information. It is a subtle but interesting distinction.

## 5. Periphrastic verb phrases and periphrastic progressive verb phrases

Here we have a fascinating area of variation in Welsh English syntax, in which there is, to an extent, competition between non-standard constructions caused by Welsh-language influence, non-standard constructions caused by dialectal English influence, and Standard English constructions. The first type are periphrastic (that is, involving the use of separate words rather than inflections) progressive *be* verb phrases, and the second are periphrastic *do* verb phrases.

Taking the second type first, a periphrastic *do* verb phrase in Welsh English consists of unstressed and uninflected auxiliary *do* and the base form of a main verb. There is also a corresponding past tense structure: unstressed auxiliary *did* + base form of main verb. Ihalainen (1976) investigated and discussed such phrases in traditional East Somerset English, in which they are used to refer to repeated or habitual activity. The assumption has been that, where they occur in Welsh English, these *do* phrases are the result of influence from and contact with the dialects of the west and south-west of England. Klemola (2002) updates the discussion of periphrastic *do* in English English, and adds another perspective to Welsh and English contact in this matter, to which I will return shortly.

Unlike these *do* phrases, periphrastic progressive *be* verb phrases can be found in present-day British Standard English. Take, for example, the present progressive: unstressed and inflected auxiliary *be* + *-ing* form of main verb, which refers to an event or action in progress in present time; or the past progressive: unstressed and inflected past tense auxiliary *be* + *-ing* form of main verb, referring to an event or action in progress in past time. The ‘nonstandardness’ of such constructions in Welsh English arises because they can be used to express different (from standard)

meanings, and it seems clear that the explanation for this lies in Welsh-language influence.

This area of Welsh English syntax is discussed in detail in Penhallurick (1996) and in Pitkänen (2003), but it was Thomas (1985) who set the template. Focusing on southern Welsh English, he identified the following “parallel occurrences” (1985: 214) in the present habitual:

- (37) *He goes to the cinema every week* – inflected present (standard);  
 (38) *He do go to the cinema every week* – uninflected *do* (unstressed) + uninflected main verb;  
 (39) *He's going to the cinema every week* – inflected *be* (unstressed) + inflected main verb (*-ing* form)

Thomas's view (1985: 215) was that “the *do* pattern is characteristic of dialects which have a relatively long historical connection with the English dialects of the West Midlands – i.e. they fit into a dialect subcontinuum which reaches out from neighbouring English counties”, whilst “the *be* pattern is characteristic of the speech of those who have a dominant Welsh-language influence”. Thomas pointed out that there is a direct correlation of *be* forms with a present habitual construction in the Welsh language, for example in *Mae ef yn mynd i'r sinema bob wythnos*, which translates literally as ‘He is going to the cinema every week’. The structure is: *bod* (realized as *mae*) ‘be’ + subject nominal (*ef* ‘he’) + linking *yn* + uninflected main verb (*mynd* ‘go’), the truly literal translation thus being ‘Is he in go to the cinema every week’. Thomas noted also (1985: 214) that there was a matching set of past habitual contrasts:

- (40) *He went/used to go to the cinema every week*  
 (41) *He did go to the cinema every week*  
 (42) *He was going to the cinema every week*

SAWD data for south Wales, as summarized in Parry (1999: 110–112), shows *do* forms sporadically across the south: in south Pembrokeshire, the Gower Peninsula, and south-east Wales. The presence of these forms in south Pembrokeshire and Gower, on the face of it, implies that their point of origin should not be restricted to the West Midlands of England, but should encompass south-west England, too (though precisely how and when these forms arrived in these areas is open to debate). Klemola's maps (reproduced in 2002: 201–202) show that the geographical distribution of “unstressed periphrastic *DO* in affirmative statements” in traditional dialects, from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth, encompasses all of the south-western corner of England, from Herefordshire to Dorset to Cornwall, with the exception of Devonshire. Klemola also makes a case, cautiously, for the idea that periphrastic *do* arose in English English as a result (or perhaps partly as



a result) of Celtic influence: “the geographical distribution of periphrastic DO supports the conclusion that Celtic, especially Brythonic, contact influence may be a factor in explaining the origin of periphrastic DO in English” (Klemola 2002: 208). Klemola mentions (2002: 206) a Welsh construction “with a verb corresponding to periphrastic DO” attested before the late thirteenth century, the period when it seems that periphrastic DO appeared in English. This raises the intriguing but no doubt unprovable possibility that the *do* forms in Welsh English derive ultimately from Welsh influence. Pitkänen (2003) suggests the further possibility that auxiliary *gwneud* ‘do’ in Welsh might have reinforced (rather than caused) the use of periphrastic *do* in Welsh English.

Returning to SAWD data (Parry 1999: 110–111), and moving north in Wales, we see *do* forms petering out whilst periphrastic progressive *be* phrases become more common. The most complete listing of *be* constructions is in Penhallurick (1996), in which the data from northern Wales confirms the association of *be* forms with strong Welsh-language influence and reinforces Thomas’s perception of the association of *do* forms with longerstanding anglicization. Penhallurick (1996) lists 112 examples: 110 instances of non-standard periphrastic progressive *be* phrases, and two of non-standard periphrastic *do* phrases. The overwhelming majority of *be* items were obtained in localities where the first language of the 60-plus age-group was Welsh, and indeed all but three of the 110 were obtained from first-language-Welsh informants. The northern Welsh English data exhibits considerable heterogeneity in the *be* forms, with the progressive tendency spreading beyond the habitual aspects (just as there is a present habitual construction in the Welsh language that can be translated into an English progressive construction, so are there similar types of construction in Welsh representing the past habitual, the present perfective and the future tense). Penhallurick (1996) presents a comprehensive classification of the *be* items, making use of five main semantic categories in addition to the present habitual and past habitual:

- (i) *-ing* form of northern Welsh English verb corresponding to a Standard English base form: *you got to put this sharp side ... to cut the mouth ... to make it bleeding* (referring to breaking in a horse, using a special bit);
- (ii) reference to future time: *if they don’t receive the first time she’s (h)avin’ another chance* (referring to a cow not ‘taking’ to a bull);
- (iii) state present, for example: *those that are keeping wild birds*;
- (iv) present perfective, for example: *I have been using it myself*;
- (v) state past, for example: *thirty years ago Lord Harlech was rearing them* (i.e. pheasants)

Pitkänen’s work attempts to update the picture by assessing the frequency of occurrence of non-standard progressive forms in her south-west Wales, north Wales, and SAWD Phase 2 corpora compared with rural SAWD. What she finds overall is that the use of the progressive forms in their ‘basic’ non-standard habitual as-

pect remains pretty consistent throughout her corpora, but also that standard forms are used more in her newer corpora, apparently at the expense of progressive forms in the other semantic categories.

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# English dialects in the North of England: morphology and syntax

Joan Beal

## 1. Introduction

Typologies of English dialects have tended to be based mainly on phonetic and phonological criteria. Both Wakelin (1983) and Trudgill (1999) classify dialects entirely according to phonological/phonetic criteria, whilst Ellis (1869), includes only one feature which might be considered morphological: the form of the definite article. In our chapter on the phonology of the dialects in the North (see Beal, other volume) we discussed the fact that only two phonological features, /ʊ/ in STRUT/FOOT, and short /a/ in BATH, unite the whole of the North (albeit including much of the Midlands as well). All other features discussed in that chapter differentiate part or parts of the North from others: for instance, /h/ retention is confined to the far Northeast and lack of /ŋ/ as a distinctive phoneme to the far South-west of the region.

As far as morphology and syntax are concerned, there are likewise very few features which both distinguish Northern dialects from those of the South and Midlands, and can be found throughout the North. With regard to morphology, syntax and lexis, the differences between Northern dialects are more transparently linked to the external histories of the regions and cities. In the far North, there is a continuum of morphological and syntactic features stretching from Tyneside to beyond the Scottish border, a testimony both to the shared history of these regions, formerly united in Anglo-Saxon Bernicia, and to continuing migration from the Central belt of Scotland to Tyneside (see Beal 1993, 1997). Further South, the “Scandinavian belt”, stretching North-west to South-east from Cumbria to East Anglia, taking in all of Yorkshire and part of Durham, but excluding Northumberland, is evidenced in morphological features such as the *at* relative (Poussa 2002), and the presence of many lexical items of Scandinavian origin (e.g. *beck*, contrasting with Anglo-Saxon *burn* in Northumberland, *brook* in Lancashire and Cheshire). More recent evidence of contact can be found in the use of second plural *yous* in areas of high Irish immigration from the 19<sup>th</sup> century: Liverpool, Newcastle and inner-city Manchester within this area, as well as Glasgow, New York and urban Australia outside England.

Wherever possible, illustrative examples used in this chapter are taken from corpora of Northern English dialects, all collected within the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two of these, the *Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English*

(NECTE) and the *Corpus of Sheffield Usage (CSU)* are currently being prepared for online access ([www.ncl.ac.uk/necte](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/necte), [www.shef.ac.uk/english/natcect](http://www.shef.ac.uk/english/natcect)). The other corpora used here are those collected by Petyt (1985) in West Yorkshire, Cave (2001) in South Yorkshire and Shorrocks (1999) in Bolton, Greater Manchester. These corpora do not cover the whole of the North of England, but this is inevitable given the patchy nature of dialect studies carried out in this area. Anderwald (2002) acknowledges that the geographical coverage of the *British National Corpus* is likewise uneven. A more even distribution is provided by the *Survey of English Dialects (SED)* and by Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1993), but in both these cases the information on geographical distribution of non-standard features of syntax and morphology is obtained from questionnaire responses rather than actual utterances, and as such may reflect the speakers' passive knowledge of those features rather than actual usage. Reference will be made to the SED 'Basic Material' volumes (Orton and Halliday 1962), in order to illustrate patterns of usage in more 'traditional' and/or rural dialects, since all the corpora referred to above were collected in urban areas.

## 2. Morphology

### 2.1. Irregular verbs

Several verbs have different past tense and/or past participle forms in Northern dialects. The *-en* ending for the past participle is more common in Northern dialects than in Standard English. Examples of such forms are *getten*, *putten*, and *squozen* (compared to Standard English *got*, *put*, *squeezed*). Of these, *getten* and *putten* are attested in the North-east (McDonald 1981), and *putten* and *squozen* in Bolton (Shorrocks 1999: 135–148), but such forms could well be more widespread, given that these two studies are from opposite ends of the North. In a number of cases, the past tense and past participle forms are identical. Examples of this can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Verbs with 'levelled' past tense and past participle forms in Northern English dialects

Base	Past Tense	Past Participle
<i>bite</i>	<i>bit</i>	<i>bit</i>
<i>break</i>	<i>broke</i>	<i>broke</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>done</i>	<i>done</i>
<i>fall</i>	<i>fell</i>	<i>fell</i>
<i>freeze</i>	<i>froze</i> / <i>fro:z</i> /	<i>froze</i> / <i>froz</i> /
<i>hang</i> ('to execute')	<i>hung</i>	<i>hung</i>

Table 1. (continued)

Base	Past Tense	Past Participle
<i>go</i>	<i>went</i>	<i>went</i>
<i>ring</i>	<i>rang/rung</i>	<i>rang/rung*</i>
<i>sing</i>	<i>sang/sung</i>	<i>sang/sung*</i>
<i>speak</i>	<i>spoke</i>	<i>spoke</i>
<i>swim</i>	<i>swam/swum</i>	<i>swam/swum*</i>
<i>take</i>	<i>took</i>	<i>took</i>
<i>write</i>	<i>wrote</i>	<i>wrote</i>

\* In all cases, the *a* forms are found in the North-east, and the *u* forms in Bolton. The same patterns would be found with *wring*.

In some cases, the same form is used for present tense, past tense and past participle: examples of this are *come* and *give*. The forms in Table 1 have either the past tense or the past participle form identical with that of Standard English. However, other verbs with 'levelled' paradigms have a non-standard form for both past tense and past participle in Northern English dialects. *Tret* for Standard English *treated* is found in Tyneside (Beal 1993), and West Yorkshire (Petyt 1985: 232), but not in Bolton (Shorrocks 1999). Others, such as *telled*, *selled* (pronounced / telt, selt / in the North-east, teld, seld / elsewhere), have 'regular' forms where the Standard English equivalent is irregular *told*, *sold*.

## 2.2. Nouns

### 2.2.1. Plural forms

A few instances of non-standard, irregular plural forms are found in Northern English dialects. *Childer* is found in both Bolton (Shorrocks 1999: 62) and West Yorkshire, but in the latter case, Petyt tells us that this was restricted to "two elderly Huddersfield informants" (1985: 231). In the North-east, the word *child* is less likely to be used by speakers of traditional dialect, who would use *bairn*. Shorrocks (1999: 63) also gives *een* and *shoon* for Standard English *eyes* and *shoes*. A more widespread pattern is the regularisation in Northern English dialects of the paradigm in which Standard English has an alternation between voiceless and voiced fricatives in singular and plural. Thus *knifes*, *roofs*, *wifes*, are found in contrast to Standard English *hooves*, *knives*, *wives*, and *wreaths* is pronounced /ri:θs/ as opposed to Standard English /ri:ðz/ (Shorrocks 1999: 60). After numerals, nouns of weight, measure and quantity, often lack the plural marker in Northern dialects, as in other non-standard dialects of British English. An example from the NECTE corpus is:

- (1) *I lived in with my mother for not quite two year.*

### 2.2.2. Possessive forms

Plurals and proper nouns ending in *-s* take the possessive ending *'s* (pronounced /ɪz/) in Northern English dialects. Thus the disinfectant is called *Jeyes's Fluid*, and *Marks and Spencer* is popularly referred to as *Marks's* in the North. An example of a plural with this form is *it's other folks's* (Shorrocks 1999: 64).

## 2.3. Pronouns

Personal pronouns in Northern dialects differ from those in Standard English at several points in the paradigm.

### 2.3.1. First person pronouns

The first person singular object form is often *us*, rather than *me*. In the North-east, *us* is used as both direct and indirect object, thus in the following examples from the NECTE corpus, the context makes it clear that the speaker is referring to herself in (2) and quoting a taxi-driver referring to himself in (3):

- (2) *He telt us he was having a party, but he didn't tell us like... when.*

- (3) *Oh, thanks pal. Thanks, you're the first person that's give us a tip.*

However, examples from Bolton and West Yorkshire show it only as indirect object: *Lend it us* (Shorrocks 1999: 76) and *give us a sweet* (Petyt 1985: 231).

Where the pronoun is conjoined with another pronoun or a noun, *me* is used throughout the North, thus:

- (4) *So he says to me and our Jack* (Shorrocks 1999: 77)

- (5) *They used to lock me and my mum in the top bedrooms.* (NECTE)

*Me* is also used throughout the North for the first person subject form when the pronoun is conjoined with another pronoun or a noun, thus:

- (6) *Me and my mam and dad are going out for a meal.* (NECTE)

- (7) *Him and me were there* (Shorrocks 1999: 78).

As shown in (7), this rule applies to all personal pronouns.

In the North-east, 'pronoun-exchange' occurs in the first person plural, with *we* /wə/ used for the object form, and, less frequently, *us* for the subject form. This contradicts the view stated in Ihalainen (1994: 231) that pronoun exchange is confined to western dialects of English. Examples are:

(8) *You can come with we to that as well.* (NECTE)

(9) *Us 'll do it* (Macdonald 1980).

The first person plural possessive pronoun takes various forms in different Northern dialects. In the North-east, *wor* is found, as in:

(10) *Wor Thomas 'll be fourteen on Christmas Day, and wor little Steven, that's the seventh; he 'll be ten.* (NECTE)

This was formerly more widespread as Wright (1892) records it in Windhill, West Yorkshire. The most common form in West and South Yorkshire now is *us* as in:

(11) *We all take us cars to work nowadays* (Petyt 1985: 190).

### 2.3.2. *Second person pronouns*

In Northern dialects, two different strategies are used to retain the earlier English distinction between singular and plural in the second person.

In most of the North, excluding only Tyneside, Northumberland and Liverpool, singular *thou* and *thee* are retained in more traditional dialects. The subject/object distinction is often neutralised in /ðə/, and use of *thou/thee* forms often depends on the addressee, as in Early Modern English. In South Yorkshire, the term *thee-ing* and *tha-ing* is used (cf. French *tutoyer*) to describe inappropriate use of the *thou* form, thus:

(12) *Thee thee and tha thyself and see how thou likes it.* (CSU)

Cave (2001) conducted an ethnographic study of the language of the former mining community in Barnsley, South Yorkshire. He found that use of *thou/thee* forms was confined to men in the corpus he collected, but that the wives of the former miners admitted to using these forms to their husbands in their homes. Shorrocks also finds *thou/thee* forms used for the second person singular in Bolton, and some evidence that *you* is still used as a polite form in the singular: "there are still sons in the Bolton area who appear to use only the *yo* form when addressing their fathers" (1999: 74).

In the North-east, *thou* is still used by older speakers as far north as county Durham, but not north of the Tyne. Northumberland lacked *thou* even in traditional dialects. Here *ye* was found for second person singular subject in the SED. This usage continues throughout the North-east today, as in:

(13) *Well ye haven't got any.* (NECTE)

In the Tyneside conurbation, as in Liverpool and inner-city Manchester, the plural form *yous* is used.

(14) *Yous 'll have Thomas next year.* (referring to the whole class) (NECTE)



Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1993) demonstrate that plural *yous* appears to be diffusing from inner-city areas, but it would appear that the ultimate origin of this form is in Irish English. The *English Dialect Dictionary* (Wright 1898–1905) cites it as occurring in Ireland, the USA and Australia, but not in England or Scotland.

### 2.3.3. Third person pronouns

There is less variation both between Northern dialects and Standard English, and between dialects in the North, with regard to third person pronouns. The objective form is used for the subject when this is either conjoined (as in [7] above) or when it is separated from the verb or is emphatic, as in

(15) *I think she likes getting bathed her.* (NECTE)

(16) *Her and her son are still living there.* (NECTE)

(17) *You-know, her that's always late.* (NECTE)

In other positions, North-eastern dialects have the subjective form, as in (15), but in Bolton, *her* is used here as well for the feminine form. The earlier form of this pronoun in Lancashire was *hoo*, but Shorrocks notes that this is now recessive (1999: 72–73).

### 2.3.4. Reflexive pronouns

Throughout the North, the paradigm of reflexives is regularised, so that all persons consist of the possessive + *-self/selves*. Thus, as well as *myself, yourself, thyself*, we have *hissself, theirselves*. *Self/selves* are realised as *-sel/sels*, or (mainly in Yorkshire.) *-sen/sens*. In Bolton, the objective form of the pronoun may also be used as a reflexive (see Shorrocks 1999: 91–94 for a full explanation of this). Examples from Shorrocks are:

(18) *they did it theirsel*

(19) *he codded 'issel* (= 'deceived')

(20) *he wouldn't shift 'im* (= 'move')

## 2.4. Demonstratives

The most common forms of the demonstrative throughout the North are *this, these, that and them*. Only the latter differs from Standard English. In the North-east, *they* is used (cf. Scots *thae*), but even here, *them* is more common. There are traces of the three-term deictic system in Northern dialects, the third term usually being *yon* or *yonder*. This is shown to be quite extensive in the SED, but Shorrocks (1999: 54)

notes that *yon* refers, not to something distant, but to a ‘known referent’, so that *yon mon* may refer to a man not present, but known to all interlocutors, or easily identified from the preceding conversation. In this way, it is similar to Irish English *your man*. Emphasis can also be added by adding *here* to *this* and *there* to *that*, and, at least in Lancashire and Yorkshire *tother* is also used as a third deictic term.

## 2.5. Definite and indefinite articles

### 2.5.1. *Reduction of the definite article*

In the North-east, definite and indefinite articles have the same form as in Standard English. The syntactic constructions in which they are used differ from Standard English, but this will be discussed in 4.4.1. and 4.4.2. below. In the rest of the North, especially in Lancashire and Yorkshire, there is variation between full and reduced or zero forms of the definite and indefinite articles. Jones (2002: 325) notes that reduction of the definite article “is perhaps the most stereotypical feature of northern British English dialects, especially those of Yorkshire and Lancashire”. The reduction may take the form of /t/, /ʔ/, /θ/ a preglottalised plosive, or zero. In the semi-phonetic spellings used in dialect literature and popular representations of Northern dialect, these are usually presented as *t’* or *th’* or the article is simply omitted. The distribution of these variants differs across dialects, age groups and social classes. Petyt (1985: 196–200) notes that the commonest reduced form in his data was the glottal stop, and that fricative forms were rare, confined to Huddersfield and part of Halifax (as opposed to Bradford) and only occurred prevocally. Shorrocks gives a more detailed phonetic analysis of the variants in his Bolton corpus (1999: 23–31). Before consonants, the definite article is realised as a glottal stop or preglottalised consonant, depending on the phonetic environment, whilst before vowels, the /θ/ realisation is much more common than in Petyt’s West Yorkshire data (which was collected at about the same time, in the early 1970s). Whilst this was a minority usage in Petyt’s data, Shorrocks notes “there are no exceptions to the use of /θ/ before a vowel/diphthong” (1999: 29). In Bolton, zero forms of the definite article occur in certain phonetic contexts, notably after a fortis fricative, as in *across (the) road*. Zero forms are, however, more widely distributed in East Yorkshire, and Tagliamonte and Ito (2002: 245–246) report that the “zero definite article” is one of a number of dialect features “widely represented” in Tagliamonte’s corpus of York English. Jones (2002: 342) suggests that this represents the final stage in a historical process of reduction from /θ/ → /t/ → /ʔ/ → zero.

### 2.5.2. *Loss of the indefinite article*

The indefinite article may be realised as zero in some Northern dialects. I have not found any instances of this in the NECTE corpus, and would suspect that the geo-

graphical distribution of this is similar to that of reduced forms of the definite article discussed in 2.6.1. above. Shorrocks notes that “in the dialect of the Bolton area, the indefinite article is very often not used at all by comparison with S[tandard].E[nGLISH]. – or it frequently has a zero realisation. There is no rule to predict any individual case.” (1999: 47). There are also instances of zero realisation in the CSU data, so we can conclude that this is found in Yorkshire as well as Lancashire. Examples are:

- (21) *It were lovely summer* (Shorrocks 1999: 47).
- (22) *Aye, but he were ironmonger* (Shorrocks 1999: 47).
- (23) *I'd buy house there if I'd got t' money.* (CSU)

## 2.6. Adjectives

In Northern dialects, as in most non-Standard dialects of British English, comparative and superlative forms of adjectives may be doubly marked. Examples are:

- (24) *Because you were more fitter* (Shorrocks 1999).
- (25) *She's got the most loveliest clothes* (Beal 1993: 209).

## 2.7. Adverbs

Shorrocks notes that “a great many adverbs in the dialect have the same form as the adjective” (1999: 199). This also applies to adverbials used as degree modifiers. Examples (all from Shorrocks 1999) are:

- (26) *I told thee confidential.*
- (27) *Do it good.*
- (28) *A high technical job.*

Tagliamonte and Ito (2002) report that this phenomenon is found in all dialects of British English (as well as many outside Britain), but that the constraints on variation between zero and *-ly* forms are more conservative in Northern dialects such as that of York.

## 3. Syntactic linkage

### 3.1. Number agreement

#### 3.1.1. The ‘Northern Subject Rule’

Traditionally, all Northern English dialects observe the ‘Northern Subject Rule’, according to which the verb takes *-s* in the plural where the subject is a noun or

noun phrase, but not when it is a pronoun. Beal and Corrigan (2000) found that this rule still operates in Tyneside English with lexical verbs, though not with *be*. Examples from the NECTE corpus are:

(29) *Our young one's mates talks something like you.*

(30) *We visit her mam.*

The constraint against using the *-s* form after pronouns was particularly strong, but the use of *-s* after plural noun subjects was found to be more common after conjoined nouns, as in:

(31) *Aye, and your sister and your mam comes out.* (NECTE)

### 3.1.2. *Was/were*

With regard to the past tense of the verb *be*, Northern English dialects show a variety of patterns. Accounts of the traditional dialects of Yorkshire and Lancashire (Wright 1892; Ellis 1869–1889) suggest that the typical pattern in these areas was one in which *were* occurred with all subjects, singular and plural. Shorrocks (1999: 168) states that *were* is used throughout his Bolton corpus, but Petyt (1985: 196) finds this pattern confined to working-class speech in his corpus of West Yorkshire. Tagliamonte (1998) found that, in York, the tendency was for *was* to be used in positive clauses, and *were* in negative clauses, such as:

(32) *I was, weren't I?*

(33) *You was, weren't you?*

The more usual pattern in the North-east is for *was* to be used throughout, even with the pronouns *we*, *you*, *they* where the Northern Subject Rule would normally prohibit use of the *-s* forms. However, some examples of *were* with singular subjects have been found in the NECTE corpus. The following two examples are from the same informant:

(34) *When I were about fourteen... or fifteen.*

(35) *I was dropped in at the deep end.*

### 3.1.3. *Existentials*

Beal and Corrigan (2000) note that the use of the singular verb form after existential *there* is categorical for working-class males in the NECTE corpus, and becoming near categorical for working-class females. Examples from the corpus are:

(36) *There was quite a few mines.*

(37) *There is more women coming into bus driving.*

### 3.1.4. Relic forms

Apart from the patterns discussed above, there are a few non-standard patterns of agreement which can still be heard as ‘relic’ forms, mostly from older speakers. These include *thou art* in dialects which retain second person singular *thou* (see 2.3.2. above), i.e. South Lancashire and South-west Yorkshire. *Is* is found throughout the North in the SED material (Upton, Parry and Widdowson 1994: 494), but does not occur in any of the modern corpora used here. However, Shorrocks (1999: 116) notes the use of *-s* endings for first person singular “when describing habitual behaviour”. Shorrocks also notes a few instances of plural *-en* in his Bolton corpus, but points out that “the use of these endings (which go back to Middle English) must now be accounted highly residual” (1999: 114).

## 4. Syntax

### 4.1. Negation

#### 4.1.1. Auxiliary contraction

As in Scots, *have*, *be* and *will* (*’ll*) may be negated by uncontracted *not* in Northern dialects. In the North-east, *can* is also negated in this way, but the *not* is unstressed, so that the negated form is pronounced /’kanɪt/. In more conservative dialects of the North-east, the form /wɪnɪt/ or /wɪnət/ for *will* + *not* is also used. Trudgill (1984: 33) suggests that the frequency of this pattern of auxiliary contraction increases “the further north one goes” in Britain. However, Anderwald (2002: 75–78) notes that *be* favours auxiliary contraction in all dialects of British English. Her study, based on the *British National Corpus*, shows that auxiliary contraction is neither as common in Northern dialects, nor as restricted to the North, as Trudgill suggested. This may be due to the limitations of the *BNC* material, though, for, as the following examples from the *NECTE* corpus demonstrate, auxiliary contraction is found with a range of modal and auxiliary verbs in the North-east. Even here, though, as in (39), negative contraction is more common with *have*.

(38) *Neil’s not letting you go.*

(39) *Definitely haven’t got sea-legs like.*

Examples of other modal verbs with uncontracted *not*, all from the *NECTE* corpus are:

(40) *Yous’ll not be in town this Saturday.*

(41) *We cannot let like a group of twelve lads in all at once.*

The modals *would* and *could* take negative contraction, as in:

(42) *Well you said we couldn't all come in at once.*

(43) *You wouldn't get one in there.*

In dialects of the 'lower north', notably Lancashire and Yorkshire, there is also a pattern of secondary contraction, where both the auxiliary and the negator are contracted. Here, forms such as *isn't*, *couldn't*, *shouldn't* are contracted to /ɪnt, kʌnt, ʃʌnt/ etc. and *hasn't/hadn't* become homophonous as /ant/. These forms are attested by both Petyt (1985: 179–189) and Shorrocks (1999: 153, 167, 172, 177).

In the North-east, the negative of *do* can be *divvent*, or *don't* for first and second person singular and all persons in the plural, with *doesn't* for third person singular. Examples from the NECTE corpus are:

(44) *Divvent get us confused.*

(45) *I don't know who.*

These two examples are consecutive utterances from the same speaker.

#### 4.1.2. Negation in interrogatives

In some Northern English dialects, negation in interrogatives and tags shows systematic variation between forms with contracted and uncontracted negators. Shorrocks (1999: 180–181) states that, in the Bolton dialect, a negative tag following a positive proposition is contracted, but following a negative proposition is uncontracted, as in:

(46) *It rained, didn't it?*

(47) *It didn't rain, did it not?*

In the North-east, an even more complex pattern is found. A negative clause followed by auxiliary + subject + *not* is used when information is sought, as in:

(48) *She can't come, can she not?*

A negative clause followed by auxiliary + *n't* + subject + *not* is used when confirmation of the negative is sought, as in:

(49) *She can't come, can't she not?*

This pattern is also used in negative questions, where the speaker knows very well that the answer is *no*, but requires confirmation, possibly to settle a dispute with a third party. It is often used by children appealing to adult arbitration. An example would be:

(50) *Can't Jack not swim?*

Here, what is implied is that everybody knows that Jack can't swim, but Jack is denying this.

A similar contrast occurs between two patterns for negative tags following positive clauses, with auxiliary + subject + *not* used when asking for information, and auxiliary + *n't* + subject, when asking for confirmation. Examples of these would be:

(51) *She can come, can she not?*

(52) *She can come, can't she?*

Examples 49–52 are taken from McDonald and Beal (1987), but examples from the NECTE corpus are:

(53) *Had they not?*

(54) *Oh, will you not be nice to her for once?*

(55) *Did you not see the teeth?*

In all of these, there is an element of surprise or exasperation, suggesting that the uncontracted negative in an interrogative or tag has an emphatic force.

#### 4.1.3. Multiple negation

Some of the patterns discussed in 4.1.2. involve multiple negation. This is generally assumed to be a feature of non-standard English which is common to all regional dialects. However, Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1993) and Anderwald (2002) find that, whilst multiple negation is indeed found in all dialects of British English, it is less frequent in the North. The exception to this pattern in Anderwald's study is the North-east, where the frequency of multiple negation is similar to that found in the South. Anderwald attributes this to the innovative nature of the dialect of Tyneside, but it is possible that the higher frequency in Tyneside could be in part due to patterns such as those in (49) and (50) above. Multiple negation is found in Bolton, in West Yorkshire, and in the North-east. Examples are:

(56) *I'm not never going to do nowt more for thee* (Shorrocks 1999: 193–194).

(57) *He couldn't get a job nowhere* (Petyt 1985: 238).

(58) *You're not getting none off me.* (NECTE)

#### 4.1.4. Non-emphatic never

Throughout the North, *never* is used as a general negator, with reference to a single occasion. Examples are:

- (59) *I never eat (ate) no dinner* (referring to one specific occasion) (Shorrocks 1999: 193).
- (60) *He never dropped like a set... against anybody.* (referring to a specific tennis match) (NECTE)

As in Scots, *never ever* is used to express unambiguously the meaning ‘at no time’ as in:

- (61) *They never ever talk about stuff like that...never.* (NECTE)

## 4.2. Modal verbs

The system of modal verbs in the North-east, especially Tyneside and Northumberland, is more like that of Scots than that of Standard English and English dialects in the South and Midlands. Some features of the modal system are shared by all northern dialects, but others are only found in the far North-east.

### 4.2.1. Shall, may and ought

These three modal verbs are hardly used at all in the North-east. *May* is rare in northern dialects generally (Shorrocks 1999: 154), but, whilst Shorrocks demonstrates (see examples 62 and 63) that both *shall* and *ought* are used in Bolton, albeit in dialectal forms, they are very rare in the NECTE corpus. In the North-east, *will* is used even in the one context in which it is compulsory for speakers of other English dialects, in first person questions, as in (64). Instead of *may*, *can* is used in the sense of ‘permission’ (65) and *might* in the sense of ‘possibility’ (66).

- (62) *Theawst (= thou shalt) have one if we can manage it.*
- (63) *He didn't ought to have done it.*
- (64) *Will I put the kettle on?*
- (65) *He's busy at the moment. Can I get him to call you later?*
- (66) *Oh, well my spirit might be there but...guarantee I'll never get back in there*

### 4.2.2. Must, have to and (have) got to

In North-eastern dialects of English, *must* is used to express conclusions, not obligation. This applies to both positive and negative clauses. Examples are:

- (67) *She was, she ... must have been drunk.* (NECTE)
- (68) *The lift mustn't be working* (McDonald and Beal 1987).



Shorrocks (1999: 157) notes that *mustn't* to express conclusions is also 'permitted' in Bolton. There seems to be a North-South gradient here: in Scots and North-eastern English dialects, *must* is only used with the meaning of conclusion, in the 'middle North', both conclusion and obligation meanings are possible, and in the South (and Standard English), the 'conclusion' meaning is not permitted in the negative.

In North-eastern dialects, obligation is expressed by *have to* or *(have) got to*. In the negative, this gives *haven't got to* a different meaning from that of Standard English: in the North-east, this means 'you are obliged not to', i.e. *you mustn't*, whereas further South, it means 'you are not obliged to'.

(69) *They have to keep ... extending and-that. They keep building.* (NECTE)

(70) *We've got to stay awake.* (NECTE)

(71) *Well you played the game, you got to pay the consequences.* (NECTE)

#### 4.2.3. Double modals

There is a 'rule' of Standard English that only one modal verb can appear in a single verb phrase. Thus, *He must be able to do it* is 'grammatical' whilst *\*He must can do it* is not. In North-eastern dialects of English, this rule does not apply so long as the second modal is *can* or *could*. Thus the asterisked sentence would be grammatical in these dialects. More combinations of modals are allowed in Scots than in North-eastern English dialects, and more are allowed in the dialect of rural Northumberland than in that of urban Tyneside. For instance, the combination of *would* and *could* only appears in the urban area if a negative is involved, but also appears in the positive in rural Northumberland. Examples from McDonald (1981: 186–187) are:

(72) *I can't play on a Friday. I work late. I might could get it changed, though.*

(73) *The girls usually make me some (toasted sandwiches) but they mustn't could have made any today.*

(74) *He wouldn't could've worked, even if you had asked him.* (Tyneside)

(75) *A good machine clipper would could do it in half a day.*  
(Northumberland)

Whilst these double modal constructions are found in Scots and in some dialects of the southern USA, the only area of England in which they occur is Northumberland and Tyneside. Even here, they are rare and probably recessive: the only example found in the NECTE corpus is:

(76) *You'll probably not can remember, but during the war there wasn't wool.*

The rarity of these constructions in corpora may be due to the fact that the need to use them only arises in certain circumstances. I have witnessed first-hand the

consternation caused when my (Northumbrian) husband announced to a dinner-party of linguists *We might could do with some more potatoes up here*. However, elicitation tests do seem to confirm that double modals are recessive in the North-east of England. McDonald (1981) found that 15.42% of respondents from north of Durham found sentences with double modals were either wholly acceptable and normal or somewhere between. In a later survey, Beal and Corrigan (2000) found that only 9.37% of a sample of 16–17-year-olds from Bedlington, Northumberland, found the same sentences either ‘natural’ or ‘familiar’, whilst 90.63% found them ‘alien’. The acceptability of the constructions was higher amongst working-class children, who may well still hear them used by their grandparents.

#### 4.2.4. *Can and could*

We saw in 4.2.3. above, that in the ‘double modal’ constructions used in the North-east of England, the second verb is always *can* or *could*. These two verbs behave less like other modal verbs in other ways. In Standard English, certain adverbs are placed before main verbs but after modals, thus *I only swam two lengths* but *I could only swim two lengths*. In the North-east, these adverbs are placed before *can* and *could*, as in the following examples from McDonald (1981: 214):

(77) *That’s what I say to people. If they only could walk a little, they should thank God.*

(78) *She just can reach the gate.*

These two verbs are also used in perfective constructions, where Standard English would require *be able to*:

(79) *He cannot get a job since he’s left school. (Standard English hasn’t been able to)*

(80) *I says it’s a bit of a disappointment, nurse. I thought I could’ve brought it back again. (Standard English ‘would have been able to’; both examples from McDonald 1981: 215–216).*

Even in Standard English, *can* and *could* are less ‘modal’ than the other modal verbs, since they are the only pair with a genuine present/past tense relationship. In North-eastern dialects, they are even less ‘modal’, which perhaps accounts for the survival of ‘double modal’ constructions only with these verbs in second place.

#### 4.3. Interrogatives

Dialects of the North-east have certain interrogative constructions in common with Scots. There is no evidence in either Shorrocks (1999) or Petyt (1985) for these constructions occurring further south.

In both Scotland and the North-east of England *how* is used for Standard English *why*, so *how's that?* is a request for an explanation of a previous statement. In both these dialects, it is also common for indirect questions to have the same constituent order as direct questions, as in:

(81) *I asked him did he want some tea.*

In all Northern dialects, *what* is used more frequently than *which* in interrogatives, and prepositions are placed at the end of interrogative clauses. An example is:

(82) *What pit did t'work at?* (Standard English 'At which pit did you work?') (Shorrocks 1999: 55).

#### 4.4. Non-standard distribution of articles and possessives

##### 4.4.1. *The definite article*

In dialects of the North-east of England, as in Scots, the definite article is used with a range of nouns which would not take it in Standard English. These are names of institutions, illnesses, periods of time, games, relatives and even numerals. Examples from the NECTE corpus are:

(83) *Going over to the girlfriend's concert first though.*

(84) *So what are you doing in college the morrow?*

(85) *I think Karen and Kell are going down there the-night.*

(86) *So I never really started work 'til I was about the fifteen.*

(87) *Well, I've got a little laddie that gans to the Beacon Lough.* ('Beacon Lough' is the name of a school)

There is no mention of such uses of the definite article in Petyt (1985), but Shorrocks (1999: 31–42) gives examples in all the categories mentioned above. It would appear that such non-standard uses of the definite article are more widespread in the North of England than had been supposed, since they occur in the southern part of this region (Greater Manchester) as well as the far North.

##### 4.4.2. *The indefinite article*

In the North-east, the indefinite article is used with *one*. In Standard English, this can occur if an adjective is interposed as in:

(88) *Would you like a drink? Yes, I'll have a small one.*

In dialects of the North-east of England, this constraint does not apply, thus:

(89) *Would you like a drink? Aye, I'll have a one.*

#### 4.4.3. Possessives

It is common throughout the North to use the first person plural possessive pronoun with the names of, or nouns denoting, family members. Examples are:

(90) *Like wor lass wears a ring on that finger.* (NECTE)

(91) *Wor Thomas 'll be fourteen on Christmas Day, and wor little Steven, that's the seventh; he 'll be ten.* (NECTE)

Here, the Tyneside pronoun *wor* corresponds to *our* elsewhere in the North. A (younger) sibling will be referred to as *our kid*, especially in Liverpool and Lancashire, where this phrase is also used to address a close friend (cf. *brother/sister* in African American Vernacular English).

As in Scots, possessive pronouns are used throughout the North to refer to anything very familiar. Examples from Shorrocks (1999: 49–50) are:

(92) *Oh aye, I mun go to my Bingo.*

(93) *They came to their tea.*

#### 4.5. Prepositions

As Shorrocks (1999: 211) says, a full account of prepositional usage in Northern dialects would involve a large-scale investigation, such as has not yet been carried out even for individual dialects. Here, I can only point out a number of prepositions which are used differently in Northern English dialects. Where Standard English uses *by* to express agency, Northern dialects use *off* or *with*.

(94) *I won't do nothing unless I get paid for it. Not off my mam and dad anyway.* (NECTE)

(95) *Geet (got) taught with the teachers* (Shorrocks 1999: 197).

*Off* is also used where Standard English would use *from* as in the following examples from NECTE:

(96) *I got blood tablets off the doctor.*

(97) *Well, my father come off a hawking family.*

(98) *Aye, my sister tapes some canny songs off the charts like.*

In Yorkshire, *while* is used where Standard English and, indeed, other Northern dialects, would use (*un*)*til*. If you ask any service worker in Yorkshire about the opening hours of their workplace, the reply will be, e.g. *Nine while five*. Examples are:

(99) *eight in a morning while eight at night* (CSU)

(100) *I'm stopping while Monday* (Petyt 1985: 236).

*Down* is used immediately before place-names, where Standard English would require another preposition, such as *in* or *to*. Examples are:

(101) *I normally just stay down the Bigg Market now or gan* ('go') *down the Quay Side*. (NECTE)

(102) *He works down Manchester* (Shorrocks 1999: 218).

In the North-east, *bit* is followed immediately by a noun, without *of* as in *a bit cheese* (cf. German *Ein bisschen Käse*). As example from the NECTE corpus is:

(103) *I felt awful, because it was a bit lassie ye know; 'cos she was ower thin*.

## 5. Clause constructions

### 5.1. Relative clauses

Romaine (1982) argues that, in the history of English, the *wh*-relative markers (*who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*) enter the written language from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. They occur first in more formal (particularly Latinate) styles and the nominative type (*who*, *which*) is confined to formal usage for longer than the object or genitive types. Romaine goes on to assert that "infiltration of WH into the relative system [...] has not really affected the spoken language" (1982: 212). We might, therefore, expect to find little use of the *wh*-relatives in Northern dialects.

In the traditional dialects of the North of England, as exemplified in the SED, the '*wh*-relatives' (*who*, *which*) are not used at all where the antecedent is subject. The question designed to elicit subject relative constructions was: *The woman next door says: The work in this garden is getting me down. You say: Well, get some help in. I know a man \_\_\_ will do it for you*. In Northumberland, in five locations, the zero ( $\emptyset$ ) strategy was used, i.e. 'a chap would do it'; in three *at* was used; and in one location *that* was used, whilst, elsewhere in the North, zero, *as*, *at* and *that* were all used, with a tendency for *at* to prevail in Yorkshire and *as* in Lancashire (Orton and Halliday 1963: 1083–1084). Considering the distribution of responses to this question throughout England, Poussa writes:

[W]e might argue that the development from the OE *se* [...] the relative to the modern system in the spoken language has generally passed through a ZERO stage, and that these areas [the extreme north and south] are relicts of that development (1986: 101).

On the other hand, the SED responses to the question eliciting the genitive relative show some use of *whose*, especially in Northumberland and Durham. In response to the question *That man's uncle was drowned last week. In other words, you might say, that's the chap \_\_\_\_\_, wh-* in the form of /hwe:z/ or /wi:z/ was given in seven locations in Northumberland, *at his uncle was ...* in one location and *as his uncle was ...* in the remaining one location. Elsewhere in the North, informants tend to avoid the relativisation strategy altogether in answering this question. For instance, in the Sheffield area, informant 32 from Ecclesfield, then a village just outside Sheffield, uses the following circumlocution:

- (104) *That's the chap thou knows, his uncle drowned hissen* (Orton and Halliday 1963: 1086).

The distribution of relative markers in traditional dialects thus seems to confirm Romaine's view, since *wh*-relatives are only used in the genitive. More recent studies of relativisation in Northern English dialects (Beal and Corrigan 2002) indicate that, whilst *wh*-forms are becoming more common, zero relatives are still used with subject antecedents throughout the North, as the following examples show:

- (105) *There's about twenty of them are walking along.* (NECTE)  
 (106) *We have a coach comes down, he's very good* (Petyt 1985: 238).  
 (107) *He may know a friend works in a blacksmith's* (Shorrocks 1999: 97).

However, *who* was found in both the NECTE and CSU corpora:

- (108) *There'll be a canny few six formers there who'll be starting the year anyway.* (NECTE)  
 (109) *Everybody who lived there did something towards it.* (CSU)

In the SED material, instances of *what* as a relative were confined to Lancashire and Yorkshire as far as the 'Northern Counties' are concerned (Upton, Parry and Widdowson 1994: 489). More recently, though, Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle found that, in a survey conducted in schools throughout Britain, *what* was reported "far more frequently than any of the other non-standard relative pronoun forms" and "was reported just as frequently in the North of England as in the South". They conclude that "*What* [...] appears to be the preferred relative pronoun in the urban centres of Britain today" (1993: 68). Shorrocks (1999: 101) finds the use of relative *what* in 'modified' (i.e. more standardised) speech, and Petyt (1985: 238) notes that it is used with both human and non-human antecedents in West

Yorkshire. This suggests that the *what* relative has indeed become more common in Northern dialects in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, Beal and Corrigan (2002) demonstrate that, whilst *what* is, indeed, common in the CSU corpus, it is much rarer in NECTE. Examples from CSU are:

(110) *You know t' gully what goes down river what runs down Millinger Street?*

(111) *He was a German what run this shop what I worked for.*

Throughout North of England, *that* is used as a relative marker with both human and non-human antecedents. In Yorkshire, *that* appears to be taking over from traditional *at*. The only example found in a subsample of the CSU is:

(112) *Kelvin at my first husband came out of.*

*At* looks and sounds like a reduced form of *that*, but Wright (1892: 91) argues that it is an independent form of Norse origin. Petyt (1985: 201) notes that in his corpus of West Yorkshire speech “[ðət] occurred 1250 times altogether in conversational styles, while the non-standard [ət] and [əz] were heard 234 and 21 times respectively”. In the NECTE corpus, there is a slight (52.1%) preference for *wh-* with animate antecedents in subject position, but in the CSU corpus, *that* is preferred even in this context. Examples from CSU are:

(113) *There were a schoolteacher that lived in here in this house.*

(114) *I've got two other sisters that are both working.*

Rather than *at* being a reduced form of *that*, it is more likely that, in the Danelaw, modern dialects have artificially ‘restored’ *that* in place of the Norse *at* under the influence of Standard English.

In Standard English, only *wh*-relatives can be used in non-restrictive relative clauses. Whilst the vast majority of non-restrictive relative clauses in both the NECTE and CSU corpora have *wh*-relatives, there are exceptions, suggesting that this rule is not categorical in Northern dialects. Examples are (115) to (117). The word *that* was not stressed in any of them.

(115) *The old grammar school on Durham Road, that was a co-educational school. (NECTE)*

(116) *This is Louise, that was meant to come. (NECTE)*

(117) *You know Mr. Hill, that you got down there. (CSU)*

Throughout the North, *which* is used as a sentential relative. In these constructions, a whole clause or sentence constitutes the antecedent of *which*. Examples are:

(118) *He said that...er...Anthony Eden was going the wrong way, which to me was ridiculous. (NECTE)*

- (119) *They're busy wondering where their next meal's going to come in and stuff, which I think is really sad.* (NECTE)
- (120) *If it's say like at Doncaster or wherever he goes, which he's got t' car so it's no problem.* (CSU)

Shorrocks also finds this use of *which* in his corpus. He writes of "a most remarkable and extensive use of *which* [...] whereby it may refer to an antecedent, often of clausal proportions [...] or predict a following predicate [...] in some cases, the referent can be so difficult to define, that *which* often appears simply to link clauses." (1999: 104)

Accounts of Standard English such as Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 380) suggest that *where* is only used with antecedents of place. However, in both the CSU and NECTE corpora there are several examples in which *where* is used with antecedents other than those of place.

- (121) *A mortgage where we'd be paying t' same for twenty years.* (CSU)
- (122) *He's just going through a phase where his reports are absolutely lousy.* (CSU)
- (123) *Perhaps when she reaches an age where she can differentiate and realise that there is a dialect, she can use it if she wants to.* (NECTE)
- (124) *Apart from that it's, you-know, the cases where you're washing the car, or gardening or something.* (NECTE)

In all these cases, *where* fulfills the same function as 'preposition + *which*' in Standard English.

## 5.2. Complement clauses

In Northern English dialects, as in Scots, complement clauses can be introduced by *for to*. This is not reported everywhere in the North: Petyt (1985) does not mention having found this construction in West Yorkshire. It is, however, reported both in the far north of the region (NECTE) and the south (Bolton). Shorrocks (1999: 248) notes that "*for to* is used extensively in the dialect as an infinitive marker". He goes on to point out that there were a number of instances of *for to* in the Northern Region recorded in the Incidental Material of the SED. There are also several examples of *for to* in the NECTE corpus.

- (125) *He used to say keep that for Bella that was for me for to get bread in for the bairns.* (NECTE)
- (126) *When I moved it just didn't enter me head for to say I wonder what if it'll be different.* (NECTE)



(127) *We were glad for to get out* (Shorrocks 1999:248).

It is worth noting that, of these examples only in (125) does *for to* carry the meaning 'in order to'.

In the North-east, *need* and *want* take a past participle as complement, rather than a present participle or infinitive, as in *my hair needs cut, that referee wants shot* (meaning only that the speaker is extremely displeased with the referee!)

### 5.3. Order of direct and indirect object

Shorrocks explains the order of direct and indirect objects in Northern English dialects as follows: "With two noun objects, the indirect precedes the direct. When the direct and indirect objects are both pronouns, either one may precede the other" (1999: 80). He gives the examples:

(128) *He couldn't give him it.*

(129) *I tan (= 'took') it her back.*

Petyt (1985: 236) found two examples of non-standard ordering in his corpus:

(130) *I didn't show it Harry.*

(131) *Open me t' door.* (= Standard English 'Open the door for me')

This suggests that, where a clause contains a pronoun and a noun, the pronoun comes first. In both sets of examples, the preposition *to* or *for* is omitted in the Northern dialect. This would appear to be general throughout the North, as examples were also found in NECTE:

(132) *So she won't give us it.*

(133) *Thanks, you're the first person that's give us a tip.*

## 6. Organisation of discourse

### 6.1. Right- and left-dislocation

In Northern English dialects, right-dislocation is used mainly in constructions in which the referent is identical to that of a noun phrase or pronoun within the clause. The constructions favoured for right-dislocation vary from one Northern dialect to another. In the North-east, typically only the noun phrase or pronoun is repeated, sometimes reinforced with *like* as in (134), whilst in Yorkshire, an auxiliary verb precedes it, as in (135). Shorrocks (1999: 85–86) reports both constructions in Bolton, as in (136) and (137).

(134) *I'm a Geordie, me, like.* (NECTE)

- (135) *He's got his head screwed on, has Dave.*  
 (136) *They were like lightning, as they say, ...his legs.*  
 (137) *Bet he'd done some laughing, had old Parr.*

Left-dislocation, in Northern dialects as in colloquial English generally, is used for topicalisation. Shorrocks points out that this “forms part of a wider tendency of the dialect speakers to state what is of prime concern initially” (1999: 88). He provides the following examples:

- (138) *Coffee beans, they used to dry them outside.*  
 (139) *They'd no interest in you, the teachers hadn't.*

## 6.2. Focussing devices

In the North-east, as in Scots, *like* is used as a focussing device, with different discourse functions according to its position in the sentence. The most traditional function is as an emphatic device in clause-final position, as in (134) above. In this position it can also be used in interrogatives, where it often conveys a sense of interest or surprise as in:

- (140) *How'd you get away with that like?* (NECTE)

In clause-initial position, *like* focuses on a new topic, as in:

- (141) *Like for one round five quid, that was like three quid, like two-fifty each.*  
 (NECTE)

As the above example shows, in younger speakers, in the North-east as in many other parts of the English-speaking world, *like* is also used within clauses, often as an explanatory device. This means that *like* can occur several times within one sentence in the speech of younger people in the North-east of England, as in (141) above. Another usage which adds to the ubiquity of *like* in this dialect is the recent (global) introduction of *like* as a quotative. In the NECTE corpus, the only speakers to use this were those born after 1974. An example of this, from a speaker born in 1977, is:

- (142) *And they were like “Your .. best friend's going on holiday with your boyfriend?”*

## 7. Lexis

Dialects of English in the North of England are distinct both from dialects of other regions, and from each other, in terms of their lexicons as well as their phonolo-

gies and grammars. This is due largely to a number of historical factors. Most of the North (excluding the North-east) lies within the Danelaw, consequently dialects within the ‘Scandinavian belt’ retain a number of words of Norse origin. This is best illustrated in Map 1 below, showing the distribution of SED informants’ responses to the question: *What do you call any stretch of running water smaller than a river?* In the far North-east, the Anglo-Saxon word *burn* is used, and in the area bordering on the North-west Midlands, another Anglo-Saxon word *brook* is found. However, in a ‘belt’ stretching north-west to south-east from Cumbria to Yorkshire, the word used is the Norse *beck*. These words are retained in place-names: *Troutbeck* in Cumbria, *Otterburn* in Northumberland, *Preston Brook* in Cheshire, and straw polls in class have revealed that they are still used by young speakers from these areas.

Some Norse words are found in North-eastern dialects: *lop* (‘flea’), *garth* (‘yard’), *gate* (‘street’), the latter two found in street names such as *Garth Heads* in Newcastle, *Marygate* in Sheffield. However, a much greater number of Norse words is to be found in the dialects of Yorkshire, where words such as *lake* (‘play’), *addled* (‘earned’) and *throng* (‘busy’) are found. Some words thought to be of Norse origin are used throughout the North. The most notable, because most frequently used, of these, are the affirmative and negative *aye* and *nay*. The NECTE corpus has numerous instances of the interviewer (born in Gateshead) using *aye* to encourage the informant to keep the floor, as in the interchange below in which I is the interviewer and S the informant:

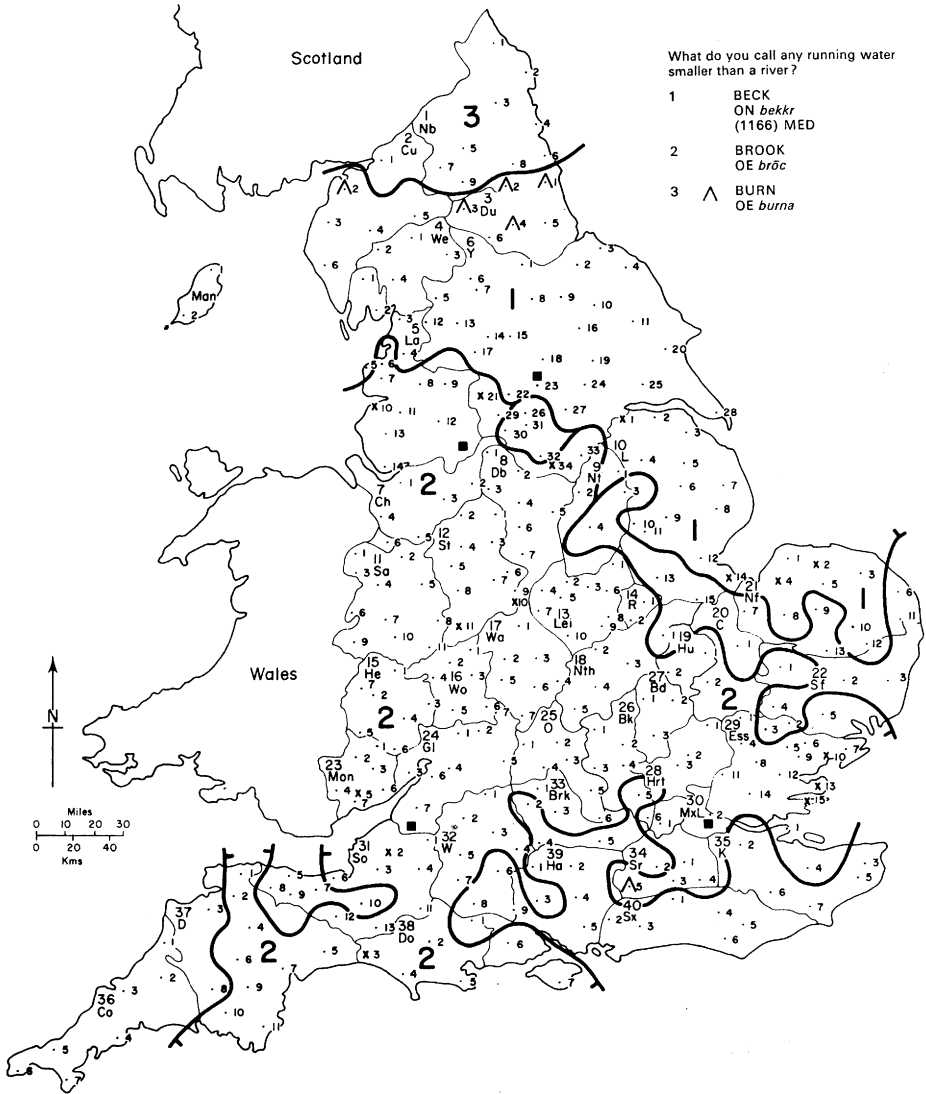
- (143) S *My father went to work in Clarkies.*  
 I *Did he? Aye there’s a lot of people working there. There’s a lot of people work in Clarkies.*  
 S *Aye in Clarkies, went to work in Clarkies...*  
 I *Aye.*

In other cases, Northern dialects retain words which have become archaic elsewhere. A good example of this is the retention of *lads* and *lasses* as colloquial alternatives for Standard English *boys* and *girls*. Examples from the NECTE corpus are:

- (144) *I reckon lasses aren’t as naive as they used to be.*  
 (145) *I’ve got three lads, no, four lads and three lasses.*

In (145), the informant is answering a question about how many children she has. When she refers to these children collectively, she uses the equally archaic northern word *bairns* as in (125) above.

Other influences are found in specific areas of the North. A number of Romani words occur in the North-east, many of which are still used, sometimes with developments in meaning, by young people on Tyneside. Examples are *cush* ‘good’; *gadgie* ‘old man’ from Romani *gadgio* ‘a non-Romani’; *radge/radgie* ‘crazy/crazy



person'; *charver* 'a disreputable working-class youth', from Romani *charvo* 'a boy'. The last of these has been adopted by young people on Tyneside to label a particular sub-group, known elsewhere in England as *townies*.

Speakers in the North of England use a range of terms of endearment, some of which are regionally distributed. These are often used in service encounters, and

can cause misunderstandings when the addressee is a southerner, who believes that s/he is being patronised. The most widespread term is *love*, which I have observed in Sheffield being used by a male shop assistant and a male bus-driver, each addressing middle-aged male customers. This use of *love* between male peers has also been observed in Leeds, but elsewhere, even in the North, this would be unusual, as the normal pattern is for the terms to be used by older speakers to younger speakers and in male-female or female-male interactions. In the North-east *bonny lad* and *son* are used between males of the same age, and thus are equivalent to *mate* elsewhere. Regionally distributed terms of endearment are *pet* (North-east), *chuck* (Lancashire), *cock* (Lancashire and parts of Yorkshire), and *duck* (South Yorkshire). The latter three, like West Midlands *chick*, all refer to domestic fowl. *Son* is also used in the North-east as a term of address to dogs, so that a man in this region may address his wife as *pet* and his dog as *son*. *Man* is used in the North-east as a term of address to males or females (cf. US *guys*), often expressing annoyance or impatience. In the following example the speaker implies that the interviewer has asked her a stupid question, i.e. ‘where do you go for holidays?’:

(146) *I divn't gan for holidays man. I wish I could.*

A student in Newcastle reported to me that he had overheard an exasperated young man say to his partner ‘Howay man, woman, man!’

One area of the lexicon to which little attention has hitherto been paid by dialectologists is the use of discourse markers, such as words and phrases used to gain the attention of an addressee, or to express surprise, annoyance, etc. These are worth noting, as they are often regionally distributed and highly salient. In the North of England, terms used to gain attention range from *howay* in the North-east, to *ey up* in Lancashire and Yorkshire and *eck eck* in Liverpool.

## 8. Conclusion

This chapter has set out some of the distinctive morphological, syntactic and lexical features of northern dialects of English. It is apparent that, whilst some features, such as the ‘Northern Subject Rule’ (3.1.1.) and the regularised pattern of reflexives (2.3.4.) are found throughout the North of England, others, such as definite article reduction in Lancashire and Yorkshire (2.5.1.) and double modals in the North-east (4.2.3.) are restricted to particular regional dialects within the North. Examples used in this chapter have mostly been taken from four corpora collected in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from Tyneside, Sheffield, Bolton and West Yorkshire. This leaves huge gaps in the geographical coverage, which need to be filled by the collection of new data from cities such as Carlisle, Lancaster, Liverpool and Manchester, and the processing of data already collected elsewhere. What is clear is that, whilst a sense of ‘northernness’ is felt by citizens

of all these places, there are distinctive features of dialect which mark them off from each other.

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# The dialect of East Anglia: morphology and syntax

Peter Trudgill

## 1. Morphology

### 1.1. Present tense verb forms

#### 1.1.1. Third-person singular zero

Probably the best-known morphological East Anglian dialect feature is third-person present-tense singular zero. East Anglian dialects have zero-marking for all persons of the verb in the present tense: *he go, she come, that say*. Of the localities investigated by the *Survey of English Dialects* (SED), this feature was found in all the Suffolk localities, in northeastern Essex, and in all of Norfolk except the Fens. Observations suggest that this geographical pattern is also valid for the Modern Dialects of the early twenty-first century. David Britain, an expert on the dialects of the Fens, confirms (personal communication) that the Cambridgeshire town of Wisbech and its Norfolk suburb of Emneth both have *-s*. Third-person singular zero is a social dialect feature (see Trudgill 1974). This has the consequence that a number of middle-class East Anglians do not use it at all, and that others use it variably.

One interesting question is why East Anglia is the only area of Britain to have this system. Other areas either have the Standard English system, or else have *-s* for all persons: *I goes, we likes* etc. My theory (see Trudgill 2002) about this is that it has to do with the “invasion” of Norwich in the 16th century by the remarkable group of people we now know as the Strangers. These were Protestants fleeing from religious persecution in the Low Countries – modern Belgium and Holland – at the hands of their Spanish Catholic rulers. They were mostly native speakers of Dutch (Flemish) but there was also a good proportion of speakers of French. People who are learning English as a foreign language often have trouble with the irregular third-person singular *-s* of Standard English. I hypothesize that the more or less simultaneous arrival into Norwich of the new *he likes* form from the north of England, and the *he like* forms from the foreigner English of the Strangers, both in competition with the old *he liketh* forms, led to a situation where there was competition between these three forms, *-th*, *-s*, and *-Ø*, in which the most regular form was the one which eventually won. It then subsequently spread outwards from Norwich, which was the second largest city in England at the time, to the whole of the area which it dominated culturally and economically, namely East Anglia (see Trudgill 2002).



## 1.1.2. To be

The present tense of the verb *to be* in Norfolk is identical with that in Standard English: *I am, he/she/it is, we/you/they are*. But there is one interesting exception. This concerns the phenomenon of *presentative be*. Speakers normally say *I am* but may nevertheless announce themselves, on arriving somewhere, by saying *Here I be!*. Similarly, if they are looking for someone and find him, they may exclaim *There he be!*. That is, *be* is used for all persons when the speaker is presenting themselves or someone or something they have found or come across. These forms probably reflect an earlier stage of the dialect when *be* was the normal present-tense form in all meanings, as in parts of the West Country where speakers still say *I be, you be* etc.

## 1.1.3. Have

Unless the next word begins with a vowel, the form *have* is most often pronounced without the final *v*: /*(h)æ/*, /*(h)ɛ/* or /*(h)ə/*: *Ha' you got some?*

## 1.2. Past tense verb forms

## 1.2.1. Irregular verbs: past tense forms and past participles

The East Anglian dialect has a number of differences in verb-formation from Standard English. In some cases like *draw*, Standard English irregular verbs are regular. In other cases, Standard English regular verbs are irregular: for example, the past tense of *snow* is *snew*. In many other cases, partial regularisation has taken place, so that there are two forms instead of three, as with *break*, or one form instead of two, as with *come*. Typical East Anglian verb forms include:

Present	Past	Past Participle
<i>begin</i>	<i>begun</i>	<i>begun</i>
<i>beat</i>	<i>beat/bet</i>	<i>beat/bet</i>
<i>become</i>	<i>become</i>	<i>become</i>
<i>bite</i>	<i>bit</i>	<i>bit</i>
<i>blow</i>	<i>blew</i>	<i>blew</i>
<i>break</i>	<i>broke</i>	<i>broke</i>
<i>bring</i>	<i>brung</i>	<i>brung/brought</i>
<i>catch</i>	<i>catched</i>	<i>catched</i>
<i>choose</i>	<i>chose</i>	<i>chose</i>
<i>come</i>	<i>come</i>	<i>come</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>done</i>	<i>done</i>
<i>draw</i>	<i>drawed</i>	<i>drawed</i>
<i>drink</i>	<i>drunk</i>	<i>drunk</i>
<i>drive</i>	<i>driv</i>	<i>driven</i>

(continued)

Present	Past	Past Participle
<i>forget</i>	<i>forgot</i>	<i>forgot</i>
<i>give</i>	<i>give/gon</i>	<i>give(n)</i>
<i>grow</i>	<i>growed</i>	<i>growed</i>
<i>know</i>	<i>knowed</i>	<i>knowed</i>
<i>mow</i>	<i>mew</i>	<i>mown</i>
<i>owe</i>	<i>ewe</i>	<i>own</i>
<i>ride</i>	<i>rid</i>	<i>rid(den)</i>
<i>rise</i>	<i>ris</i>	<i>ris(en)</i>
<i>ring</i>	<i>rung</i>	<i>rung</i>
<i>run</i>	<i>run</i>	<i>run</i>
<i>see</i>	<i>see</i>	<i>see(n)</i>
<i>shake</i>	<i>shook</i>	<i>shook</i>
<i>show</i>	<i>shew</i>	<i>shown</i>
<i>shriek</i>	<i>shruck</i>	<i>shruck</i>
<i>snow</i>	<i>snew</i>	<i>snown</i>
<i>speak</i>	<i>spoke</i>	<i>spoke</i>
<i>steal</i>	<i>stole</i>	<i>stole</i>
<i>stink</i>	<i>stunk</i>	<i>stunk</i>
<i>swim</i>	<i>swum</i>	<i>swum</i>
<i>take</i>	<i>took</i>	<i>took</i>
<i>thaw/thow</i>	<i>thew</i>	<i>thew</i>
<i>teach</i>	<i>teached</i>	<i>teached</i>
<i>tear</i>	<i>tore</i>	<i>tore</i>
<i>tread</i>	<i>trod</i>	<i>trod</i>
<i>wake</i>	<i>woke</i>	<i>woke</i>
<i>wear</i>	<i>wore</i>	<i>wore</i>
<i>wrap</i>	<i>wrop</i>	<i>wrop</i>
<i>write</i>	<i>writ</i>	<i>writ</i>

Some of these forms are very archaic, especially *gon* and *wrop*. *Shew*, as the past tense of *show*, is, on the other hand, very widely used and is still very frequently found in the speech even of people whose English is not very dialectal. *Chose* and *choose* can be pronounced identically (see Trudgill, other volume).

### 1.2.2. Auxiliary and full verb *do*

As in most English dialects, in East Anglia, although the past tense of *do* is *done* rather than Standard English *did*, this is not true of the auxiliary verb *do*, where the past tense is *did*:

- (1) *You done it, did you?*

1.2.3. The past tense of *be*

The past tense of *to be* is *wus* /wuz/ for all persons in the positive, but *weren't* for all persons in the negative (see Anderwald 2002):

- |     |                          |                     |
|-----|--------------------------|---------------------|
| (2) | a. <b>Singular</b>       | <b>Plural</b>       |
|     | <i>I wus</i>             | <i>we wus</i>       |
|     | <i>you wus</i>           | <i>you wus</i>      |
|     | <i>he/she/it wus</i>     | <i>they wus</i>     |
|     | b. <b>Singular</b>       | <b>Plural</b>       |
|     | <i>I weren't</i>         | <i>we weren't</i>   |
|     | <i>you weren't</i>       | <i>you weren't</i>  |
|     | <i>he/she/it weren't</i> | <i>they weren't</i> |

The word *weren't* is pronounced in a number of different ways: /wɜ:nt/, /wɑ:nt/, /wɔ:nt/, /wɒnt/. The older dialect, on the other hand, had *war* /wɑ:/ for all persons in the positive.

## 1.2.4. Dare

The archaic English past tense form of the verb *to dare* was *durst*. In the East Anglian dialect, this has become the present tense as well:

- (3) *You dursn't/dussn't.*  
'You dare not.'

In less dialectal local speech, the Standard English negative present tense form of *dare*, *daren't*, is still distinctive in that it is pronounced as two syllables, rhyming with *parent*, unlike in the rest of the country where it is normally pronounced as a single syllable. This is true even of the speech of speakers who otherwise have few regional features in their pronunciation.

1.3. Present tense negative of *have* and *be*

Corresponding to the more geographically widespread *ain't*, the negative present tense form of *be* and of *have* in East Anglia is most often /ɛnt/ or /ɪnt/ for all persons:

- (4) a. *I in't a-comen.*  
'I'm not coming.'  
b. *I in't done it yet.*  
'I havent done it yet.'

## 1.4. Plurals

The older dialect had a number of archaic plurals:

- (5) *house housen*  
*mouse meece*

Forby (1830) also cites *cheesen* ‘cheeses’, and *closten* ‘clothes’.

As in many other dialects, it is common for measurement nouns not to take a plural *-s* after numerals: *four foot, three mile*. In telling the time, 25 is generally *five and twenty*:

- (6) a. *That leave at five and twenty to.*  
‘It leaves at twenty-five to.’  
b. *Thass five and twenty past four.*  
‘It’s twenty-five past four.’

## 1.5. The definite article

*The* normally appears in the form *th*’ if the next word begins with a vowel: *th’old house, in th’oven*.

In the older dialect, the definite article could be omitted after prepositions of motion and before nouns denoting certain familiar domestic objects:

- (7) a. *he walked into house*  
b. *put th’apples into basket*  
c. *she come out of barn*

## 1.6. Pronouns

## 1.6.1. Personal pronouns

Unstressed *I* is pronounced with the reduced vowel [ə], even at the end of a sentence, so that *can I?* is pronounced *can a?* rhyming with *banner*. Unstressed *they* is pronounced *thee*: *Where are thee?* Stressed *it* in Standard English corresponds to *that* in East Anglia:

- (8) a. *Thass rainen.*  
‘It’s raining.’  
b. *Ah, that wus me what done it.*  
‘Yes, it was me that did it.’

In the older dialect, *thaself* was also found as the reflexive:

- (9) *The dog hurt thaself.*

But now this has disappeared. In the older dialect, *that* also appeared as /tə/, often shown in dialect literature as *ta* or *t'*: *Ta fruz* 'it froze'. This has now also disappeared except in the concessive expression *t'is true* 'It's true'. In unstressed position, however, *it* occurs:

(10) *I don't like it, thass no good.*

It is not clear how we should explain this development of *that* as the stressed form of the pronoun. Poussa (1997) has argued that it goes back to the Danish of the Viking period: modern Scandinavian languages still have *det* meaning 'it'. This seems highly unlikely, however, since no other Danelaw area has it; Danish has not been spoken in East Anglia for a thousand years or so; and we have no record of it for East Anglia before Forby (1830). It seems much more likely to be the result of a perfectly normal grammaticalisation process: Diessel (2000) shows that demonstratives very frequently become third-person pronouns as a result of grammaticalisation. The fact that *it* is most usually pronounced as a possibly rather indistinct [ə?] may have assisted this process.

*You...together* functions as a second person plural pronoun:

(11) a. *Where are you together?*  
 b. *Come you on together!*

The possessive pronouns *mine*, *yours*, *his*, *hers*, *ours*, *theirs* are used to refer to a place where somebody lives:

(12) *Less go round mine.*  
 'Let's go to my place.'

### 1.6.2. Pronoun substitution

In the southwest of England, the pronoun forms *he*, *she*, *we*, *they* can occur as grammatical objects, and *him*, *her*, *us* can occur as grammatical subjects. This feature, often known as *pronoun exchange*, has not yet been subjected to any definitive analysis, but it seems possible that what happens is that the Standard English subject pronouns occur as objects when the pronoun is emphasised, and object pronouns as subjects when the pronoun is not emphasised. Something similar occurs or occurred in southern East Anglia, although in this case we see only subject pronouns as objects. Charles Benham's *Essex Ballads*, first published in Colchester in the 1890s, contain a number of instances of this feature. Here is one example (italics are mine):

Tha's where they're gooin', are they? Pas' the mill,  
 Along the fiel' path leadin' tard the woods;  
 I'll give *he* what for some day, that I will,

For walkin' out 'ith that ere bit of goods.  
 J'yer hear him call "Good arternune" to me?  
 He think he's doin' of it there some tune.  
 Next time I ketch him out along o' *she*,  
 Blest if I don't give *he* "good arternune".

The evidence of these ballads and of the SED records suggests that in southern East Anglia the phenomenon was more restricted than in the southwest. The south-western usage of *him*, *her*, *us* as subjects does not seem to have been a possibility; we witness merely the use of *he*, *she*, *we*, *they* as objects.

### 1.6.3. Relative pronouns

The relative pronoun is *what* for both animates and inanimates:

- (13) a. *He's the one what done it.*  
 b. *A book what I read.*

### 1.6.4. Demonstrative pronouns

As in many other dialects, the distal plural form is not *those* but *them* e.g. *Eat you them carrots* 'Eat those carrots'. *Here* and *there* are often used as reinforcers:

- (14) a. *this here book*  
 b. *them there books*

## 1.7. Prepositions

As in nonstandard dialects generally, there are many differences of preposition usage between the local dialects and Standard English. Distinctively East Anglian usages include:

- (15) a. *Are you comen round John's?* (i.e. to John's [place])  
 b. *I was round John's.* (i.e. at John's [place])  
 c. *I'm goen down the city.* (i.e. to Norwich from the suburbs)  
 d. *I'm goen up the city.* (i.e. to Norwich from the country)

Standard English *of* is usually [ə] but is pronounced *on* when stressed:

- (16) a. *What do you think on it?*  
 b. *There was a couple on 'em.*

*Alonga*, derived from *along with* or, more likely, *along of*, means 'together with':

- (17) *Come you alonga me!*

### 1.8. Temporal adverbials

The traditional dialects of northern East Anglia not only had forms such as *t'night* and *t'day* but also *t'year*, *t'mornen*, *t'week*, meaning 'this year, this morning, this week'.

### 1.9. *Now*

An East Anglian feature found at most social levels is the use of *now* rather than *just* in expressions such as *I'm now coming*.

### 1.10. *Wholly*

*Wholly*, normally pronounced /hʊli: ~ hʊlə/ is widely used as an intensifier, e.g. *That wholly poured*.

## 2. Syntax

### 2.1. Conjunctions

#### 2.1.1. *Conjunction do*

In the older dialects of East Anglia, the word *do* is used as conjunction which means something like 'otherwise'. The *English Dialect Dictionary* shows that this usage was once found in the dialects of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and northern Essex.

This seems to be the result of grammaticalisation processes. Consider the following examples from local dialect literature:

- (18) a. *Don't you take yours off, do you'll get rheumatism.*  
 b. *Don't you tell your Aunt Agatha about the coupons, do she'll mob me.*

In these examples, the insertion of *because if you* will provide forms readily comprehensible to speakers of all English dialects:

- (19) *Don't take yours off, [because if you] do you'll get rheumatism.*

It seems, then, that the development of the conjunction *do* began with an initial stage in which speakers simply omitted phrases such as *because if you*. A second stage in the development of a more abstract meaning can be illustrated by the following:

- (20) *Have the fox left? No that ain't, do Bailey would've let them went.*

Here the link between the two parts of the sentence is more abstract and complicated. The originally present-tense form *do* is being applied in a past-tense context,

and *do* is used in spite of the fact that we would have to insert a form of *have*, not *do*, to get a full form of the sentence:

(21) *No that ain't, [because if that had] Bailey would've let them went.*

The third and final stage in the process is demonstrated in examples like:

- (22) a. *That's a good job we come out of that there field, do he'd've had us!*  
 b. *We stabled them elephants right in the middle, do we should've capsized.*

Here present tense *do* is once again being used in past tense contexts, but it is also being used, in spite of the fact that it is a positive verb form, in a situation where a full form of the sentence would require a negative verb:

(23) *That's a good job we come out of that there field, [because if we hadn't] he'd've had us!*

This feature is also found in parts of the American South: it has been reported for North Carolina and northern Florida (see Trudgill 1997).

### 2.1.2. *Conjunction time*

The older East Anglian dialect employed *time* as a conjunction in the sense of Standard English 'while':

(24) *Go you and have a good wash time I git tea ready.*

We can assume that this is the result of grammaticalisation processes involving the deletion of phonological material such as [*during the*] *time*.

### 2.1.3. *Conjunction (nor) yet*

The form *yet* may function as a conjunction equivalent to *nor* in constructions such as (25):

- (25) a. *There weren't no laburnum, yet no lilac.*  
 b. *There wouldn't be nothen nor yet nobody to start things off again.*

### 2.1.4. *Conjunction more*

The form (*no*) *more* can function as a conjunction or conjunct equivalent to *nor* or *neither*:

(26) *The fruit and vegetables weren't as big as last year, more weren't the taters and onions.*



## 2.2. Multiple negation

As in most nonstandard dialects of English, multiple negation is usual. However, East Anglian English extends this feature to include constructions with *hardly*:

(27) *I couldn't find hardly none on 'em.*

## 2.3. Imperatives

The second person pronoun is usually explicit in East Anglian imperatives:

(28) a. *Go you on!*  
 b. *Shut you up!*

This is true even when the imperative is strengthened by using the auxiliary verb *do*:

(29) *Do you sit down!*

## 2.4. Ought

Typical East Anglian forms of this verb, even in the speech of people who otherwise have used few dialect forms, involve negative and interrogative forms with the past tense auxiliary *did*:

(30) a. *You didn't ought to do that, did you?*  
 b. *Did you ought to do that?*

## 2.5. Progressive aspect

Older East Anglian dialect speakers sometimes uses non-progressive verb forms where other dialects would use the progressive forms with *-ing*:

(31) a. *(The) kittle bile!*  
       'The kettle's boiling!'  
 b. *I go to Norwich tomorra.*  
       'I'm going to Norwich tomorrow.'

## 2.6. A-verbing

As in many other dialects, it is usual in continuous aspect forms for participles in *-ing* (which is pronounced '-en' [ən]) to be preceded by *a-* [ə]:

(32) a. *I'm a-runnen*                      d. *we're a-runnen*  
       b. *you're a-runnen*                e. *you're a-runnen*  
       c. *he's a-runnen*                    f. *they're a-runnen*

The history of participles as nominal forms can still be seen from the fact that such transitive verb forms are normally followed by *on* (which corresponds to Standard English *of* – see above):

- (33) a. *He wus a-hitten on it.*  
       ‘He was hitting it.’  
       b. *I’m a-taken on em.*  
       ‘I’m taking them.’  
       c. *What are you a-doen on?*  
       ‘What are you doing?’

## 2.7. Matter

Standard English *It doesn’t matter* is most usually *That don’t matters*. The origin of this form with *-s* is not known.

## 2.8. Street names

Street names involving the names of saints typically omit the word *street*. Thus, in Norwich, *St Augustine’s Street*, *St Giles’ Street*, *St Benedict’s Street*, *St George’s Street*, are normally referred to as *St Augustine’s*, *St Giles’*, *St Benedict’s*, *St George’s*. Note that this is only possible if the official street name actually includes the form *Street* rather than *Avenue*, *Crescent* etc. Thus, in Norwich *St Stephen’s Road* has to be so called, and *St Stephen’s* can refer only to *St Stephen’s Street*.

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Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# English dialects in the Southwest: morphology and syntax

Susanne Wagner

## 1. Background

The Southwest or, to use a more traditional label, the West Country, has figured prominently in dialectological investigations for centuries. From a modern viewpoint, one can only guess at the reasons behind the considerable attention that has been attributed to West Country English, particularly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the major factors causing interest in the region certainly was its rural character and relative remoteness, which to a certain extent still survives to the present day. Traditionally, attributes such as “rustic” or “primitive” were associated with inhabitants of the West Country and their speech patterns.

No matter what reasons may have triggered the interest in West Country dialects, it resulted in an amount of studies, both professional (i.e. linguistic) and non-professional, that is almost unique in the field. Writers such as William Barnes or Thomas Hardy use vernacular speech in their poems and novels. Barnes also published a treatise on the grammar of his home country, Dorset, which shows a certain indebtedness to, for example, Frederic Elworthy’s work on Somerset English (cf. Barnes [1844] 1994; Elworthy [1875] 1965a, [1877] 1965b).

Experts writing on West Country English list a wide array of peculiarities in the variety. Among those most widely known in pronunciation is the voicing of initial fricatives, which is also extensively used in Barnes’ poetry and Hardy’s novels. But in contrast with most other traditional as well as modern varieties, West Country dialect shows numerous morpho-syntactic idiosyncrasies as well. The sheer number of features and their occurrence in a relatively restricted area help further the claim that the West Country is unique as a dialect region.

For the sake of simplicity, “the West Country” or “the Southwest” will be considered as a homogeneous linguistic area here. The core of this area is constituted by the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, and Wiltshire, while its boundaries are formed by parts of the adjoining counties of Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Worcestershire, and Herefordshire, which create a transition zone. Hampshire and Berkshire are not included; Berkshire is not often covered in studies of the Southwest, due to its “transitional nature” (Ihalainen 1994: 211), while Hampshire shows a high degree of mixture of features from the Southwest and Southeast, justifying its exclusion (see also Altendorf and Watt, other volume)

The following sections will mostly follow Rogers (1979), both in outline and content (grammatical features to be considered), whose *Wessex Dialect* to this day presents one of the most detailed accounts of the variety. Rogers' study will provide the background against which modern corpus data will be judged. Unless otherwise stated, all examples stem from the Freiburg English Dialect Corpus (FRED) compiled at Freiburg University (DFG research grant KO 1181/1-1-3). Additional material stems from the fieldworker notebooks of the Survey of English Dialects (SED). As with most other regions, the West Country exhibits a mixture of features that can be categorized according to their distribution (see section 9): a) exclusively Southwestern features; b) features also found in other (regional) dialects; and c) general features of spoken non-standard English. Sections 2 to 8 will first treat features irrespective of these categories.

## 2. Articles

The observed over-use of the definite article in certain environments in West Country dialects is a possible candidate for substrate influence from Celtic languages. While this feature has been researched in Irish English (see Filppula, this volume), there are to my knowledge no studies that link West Country dialects with other Celtic-influenced Englishes, although the connections are well-known. Non-standard uses occur for example with diseases (*the chicken pox, the arthritis*), quantifying expressions (e.g. *the both, the most*), holidays (*the Christmas*), geographical units and institutions (*the church, the county Devon*), etc.

The indefinite article, on the other hand, often occurs as *a* also before vowels, and in general in such a reduced form that the non-native might not even hear it at all – “but the intention to say it is there and if the speaker were asked to repeat slowly he would definitely include it” (Rogers 1979: 31). Modern examples from FRED include the ones in (1):

- (1) a. [Interviewer: *Did you take any exam? For example, did you take a scholarship exam to the County School?*]  
*Yes, I took it two years following, and failed **the both** of them.* (FRED Con\_007)
- b. *Well father couldn't drive **the both** engines ...* (FRED Som\_014)
- c. *Going smashed the gate to pieces, broke **the both** shafts off old Harry's milk float.* (FRED Wil\_003)
- d. *...but I stayed on until **the Christmas**.* (FRED Con\_008)
- e. *...we had to walk a mile to **the school** and back.* (FRED Som\_012)
- f. *...and naturally her father was **a older** man when she was a young girl, ...* (FRED Con\_009)
- g. *...about three pound **a acre**.* (FRED Som\_031)

- h. *A journeyman is **a apprentice** that has served his apprenticeship ...*  
(FRED Dev\_002)
- i. *If **a end** comes off he automatically stops, see.* (FRED Wil\_001)

### 3. Adjectives

Although the ending *-en* meaning ‘made of’ is also found in Standard English (StE), it is supposedly more productive and thus more frequent in the Southwest, yielding such phrases as *bricken bridge*, *dirten floor*, or *wheaten straw* (cf. Barnes 1994: 130; Rogers 1979: 33). In comparison, the synthetic strategy can be found also with multisyllabic adjectives; double comparison (analytic and synthetic strategy) is also common, a feature that is frequently encountered in other non-standard varieties as well (cf. Rogers 1979: 34; examples in 2). Note that examples (2a) and (2c) include instances of a dialectal comparison strategy (*than what*) which is generally not commented on in detail in the literature, but which seems common in a number of dialects (about 130 instances in FRED). No instances of *-en* adjectives could be found in the modern material.

- (2) a. *I'd be **more happier** out there than what I should be haymaking.* (FRED Som\_005)
- b. its 'fiftu 'tɔɪmz **wɒsər**  
‘it’s fifty times worse’ (31 So 14, book VI)
- c. ***More happier** then than what it is today I think.* (FRED Wil\_022)

### 4. Nouns

In plural formation, West Country dialects at one time preferred the traditional *-en* ending over the StE *-s*, but have since adopted the StE strategy (cf. Barnes 1994: 129; Rogers 1979: 33). For some plurals, the distribution of allomorphs differs from that in StE in that dialects used [ɪz] as a means of consonant cluster simplification. Thus, one hears plural forms such as *ghostes* or *beastes* (cf. Rogers 1979: 33), a feature that settlers took with them to Newfoundland and which has been typical of Newfoundland dialect(s) ever since (see Clarke, this volume).

Another phenomenon widespread in most non-standard varieties of English is the absence of an overt plural marker on some measurement nouns and nouns after numerals. While a plural *-s* after such nouns as *pound*, *mile* or *year* would be the exception rather than the rule, Rogers (1979: 33; cf. also Barnes [1886<sup>2</sup>] 1970: 20) claims that the plural usually *is* marked on certain nouns belonging to the same respective family (or semantic field), namely *acre*, *ounce*, *inch*, *yard*, *hour*, *day* and

*week*, a claim that essentially seems to hold for the modern corpus material as well. Examples of unmarked plurals abound; some typical ones are provided in (3).

- (3) a. *He used to have **four pound** of butter a week every week.* (FRED Con\_005)  
 b. *If they had any money they did give you **a few pound** ...* (FRED Som\_031)  
 c. *...we were **three mile** away from Plymouth ...* (FRED Dev\_001)  
 d. *... 'e was walkin' **six mile** a day to work mornin's an' **six mile** 'ome ...* (FRED Wil\_004)

## 5. Pronouns

The pronominal system of West Country dialects is generally considered its most distinctive feature, as peculiarities cluster here. For example, Ihalainen (1994: 249–250) lists four features as typical of modern Southwestern dialect (voicing of initial fricatives, *bain* 't, pronoun exchange, “gendered” pronouns), two of which can be found in the personal pronoun system (pronoun exchange, “gendered” pronouns; cf. also Trudgill and Chambers 1991). Phenomena that are unique to the Southwest can be found in the system of demonstrative and personal pronouns. It does not come as a surprise then that pronouns in general and personal pronouns in particular have drawn considerable attention over time. Nevertheless, two of the most interesting features have not yet been studied in detail: case assignment (“pronoun exchange”; section 5.1.1.) and gender assignment (“gendered pronouns”, “gender diffusion”, “animation”; section 5.1.2.).

### 5.1. Personal pronouns

#### 5.1.1. Pronoun exchange

The generally agreed-upon label for the phenomenon illustrated in (4) is “pronoun exchange” (probably Ossi Ihalainen’s term; Ihalainen 1991, based on a 1983 talk, but see also Wakelin 1981: 114). Pronoun exchange is defined as the use of a subject personal pronoun in an object position or all other positions that would normally require the use of an oblique (i.e. non-subject) form.

- (4) a. *...they always called **I** 'Willie', see.* (FRED Som\_009)  
 b. *...Uncle Willy, they used to call him, you remember **he**?* (FRED Con\_006)  
 c. *...you couldn't put **she** [= horse] in a putt ...* (FRED Som\_005)  
 d. *I did give **she** a 'and and she did give **I** a 'and and we did 'elp one another.* (FRED Wil\_011)

- e. *Well, if I didn't know **they**, they knowed **I**.* (FRED Wil\_009)
- f. *...he never interfered with **I**...* (FRED Som\_020)
- g. *Never had no fault at all with **she**.* (FRED Som\_005)
- h. *Yeah, 'twere to **they** but 'twasn' to **I**.* (FRED Wil\_018)

The most common explanation for this type of use found in the literature is that the subject forms are used when the respective form is emphasized, while the oblique forms are used in all other contexts (Elworthy 1965b: 35–38; Kruisinga 1905: 35–36; Wright 1905: 271). Rogers notes that the pressure of a rigid SVO word order in English might have contributed to “a certain amount of confusion over pronouns which followed verbs” (1979: 35), resulting in subject forms being restricted to pre-verbal contexts. This is reminiscent of the change in StE from *it's I* to *it's me*, which is presumably based on the same factors.

Utterances like the following are also found, although more restrictions apply to this type of use. The examples in (5) illustrate the reverse exchange scenario, namely oblique forms in subject contexts.

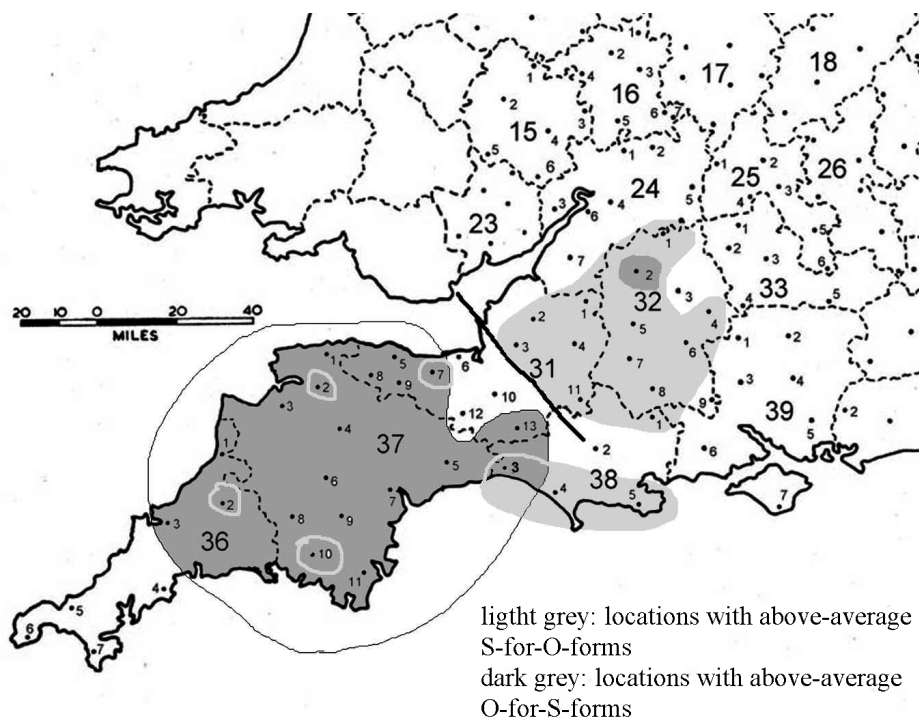
- (5)
- a. *'er's shakin' up seventy.*  
'She is almost seventy.' (37 D 1, book VII)
  - b. *Evercreech, what did 'em call it?* (FRED Som\_031)
  - c. *Us don' think naught about things like that.* (37 D 1, book III)
  - d. *We used to stook it off didn't us?* (FRED Som\_027)

The extent to which these two patterns are applied differs from region to region. Rogers' (1979: 35) impression, for instance, is that the use of oblique forms in subject position (primarily *us* for *we* and *her* for *she*) is more restricted in Somerset, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Dorset than in Cornwall, Devon and Gloucestershire.

Overall, the factors that influence pronoun exchange are extremely complex. A detailed investigation of the phenomenon in the SED Basic Material and field-worker notebooks revealed surprising distributional patterns from an areal point of view (cf. Map 1 and 2):

- (i) Subject forms are used much more frequently in object slots than object forms in subject slots (55% to 20%).
- (ii) Locations with a high degree of exchanged subject forms (i.e. subject forms used in oblique contexts) will almost certainly have a (very) low degree of exchanged object forms, and vice versa.
- (iii) The West Country is split into two parts. Subject-for-object forms are typical of the eastern locations (particularly Wiltshire) rather than the West Country proper, where mainly object-for-subject forms are used. West Cornwall belongs to the East rather than the West.
- (iv) The comparison of the Basic and incidental SED material suggests that both areas are receding even within their original homelands. Somerset, which has already been split in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, seems to be on its way to losing pronoun





Map 1. Pronoun Exchange in the SED Basic Material

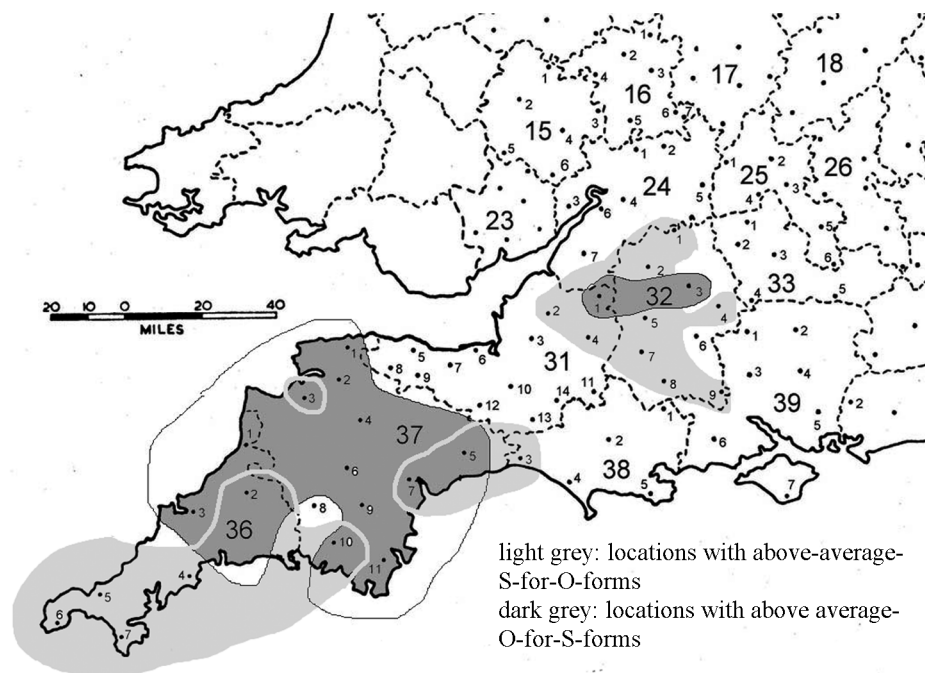
exchange altogether, using very low percentages of “exchanged” forms in general.

- (v) The use of subject-for-object forms seems to be spreading eastwards from West Cornwall. One possible explanation for this is a general tendency in colloquial English to use subject forms in non-subject functions, e.g. after prepositions (*between you and I*), which may help further such uses.

From a modern point of view, it has to be stated that pronoun exchange is rapidly receding. With a frequency of about 1% in the Southwest component of FRED, pronoun exchange seems to be all but dead in its former homelands.

### 5.1.2. “Gendered” pronouns

Like pronoun exchange, “gendered” pronouns are among the most frequently mentioned peculiarities of West Country dialects. “Gendered” pronouns as defined here are instances of personal pronouns which are marked for masculine or feminine gender but which refer to inanimate count nouns. Traditional West Country dialect uses an elaborate system of gender assignment which is rare in



Map 2. Pronoun Exchange in the SED fieldworker notebooks

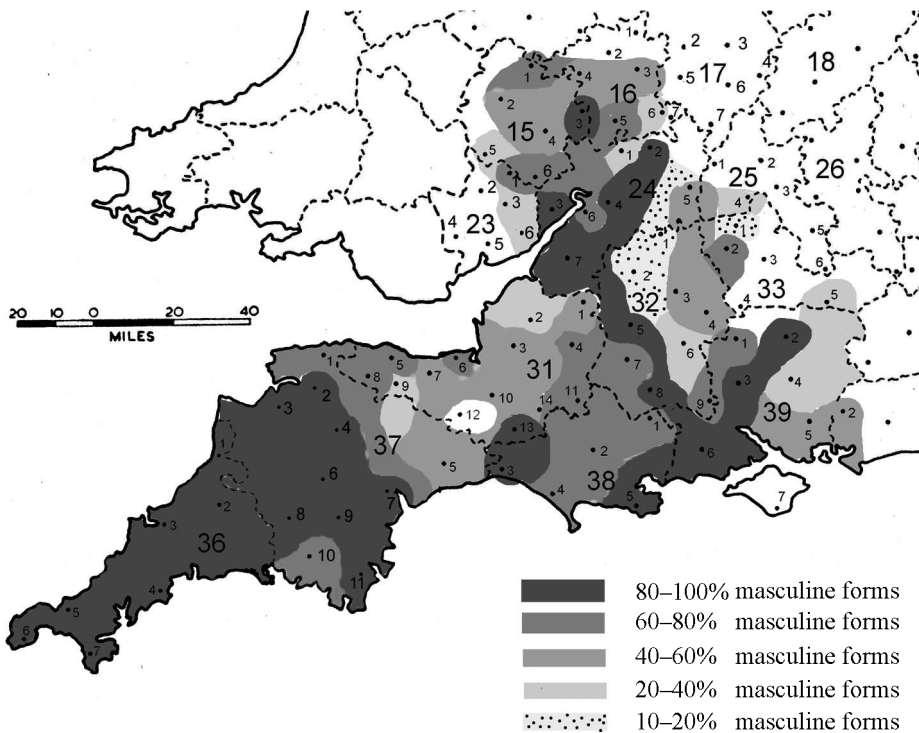
the world's languages and which to date has only been observed for non-standard varieties (see Pawley, this volume; Rohdenburg 2004: 343–348; Siemund 2002): The distinction that is made between different types of nouns is that of mass versus count nouns. Gender distinctions are based on that division, so that only count nouns use the forms we know as masculine and feminine, while mass nouns use neuter *it* exclusively. In reality, the system is much more complex. The factors influencing gender assignment in a number of varieties of English, including StE, are discussed in detail in Wagner (2004b). Illustrative material is provided in (6).

- (6)
- a. 'ɒɪ də 'mɒɪnd 'wʌn tʌɪm wen ðe: dɪd 'kɔ:t ɪ 'gɑ:dn æʊs (38 Do 3, book V)  
'I remember one time when we called it garden house.'
  - b. 'ʃʊt ðɪk 'dɔ:ər ði:s 'gɒt ɪ 'dʒɑ:rɪn  
'Shut that door, thee hast got it jarring.' (31 So 14, book IX)
  - c. *That ball won' glance. If 'e's split 'e won't.* (37 D 10, book VIII)
  - d. *I bet thee cansn' climb he [= tree].* (32 W 9, book VIII)
  - e. **He** do [də] go now. **He** 'ave been a good watch. (31 So 11, book VII)

This section contains results from a study based on the responses to 10 SED questions possibly containing “gendered” pronouns. The questions and the respective

referents that were used are: I.7.1 (“thing”), I.11.2 (cart), I.11.6 (cart), VIII.7.6 (bone), IX.2.6 (door), IX.2.8 (door), IX.3.1 (knife), IX.4.4 (spade), IX.8.2 (ball), IX.9.3 (“something”). Two things are noteworthy about the areal distribution of “gendered” pronouns in the Basic Material: First of all, the Southwest – once probably homogeneous regarding its use of “gendered” pronouns – appears to have given way to the system known from StE to different degrees in different regions. While the far West has been rather resistant to change, with percentages of “gendered” pronouns still between 80% and 100%, particularly Somerset shows figures much lower than some more eastern locations. Second, from the impression gained from the areal distribution of pronoun exchange, the figures for “gendered” pronouns, like pronoun exchange a traditional dialect feature, should be much lower in West Cornwall than they actually are. If due to its shorter history English in West Cornwall truly were closer to StE, we would expect “gendered” pronouns to be among the first features that disappear (if they ever existed in the first place). The impression of a surprisingly dialectal West Cornwall based on the Basic Material data is supported by the results from the fieldworker notebooks data.

Map 3 shows the percentages of masculine forms used in responses which would trigger a neuter pronoun in StE. Looking at the eastern belt of locations



Map 3. Distribution of “gendered” pronouns in the SED Basic Material

where “gendered” pronouns are still frequently used, one is forced to conclude that the “gendered” pronoun territory once covered an even larger area, extending both northwards and eastwards. When comparing Maps 2 and 3, parallels are obvious. The core territory of both pronoun exchange and “gendered” pronouns is Devon and the locations bordering it in the West (Cornwall) and Northeast (Somerset). With the NORM informants of the SED, pronoun exchange seems to have retreated from its original stronghold to a higher degree than “gendered” pronouns, which are still used frequently in a belt which nicely coincides with various proposed borders separating the Southwest from the Southeast.

*Table 1.* Frequency of “gendered” pronouns per county and location (SED fieldworker notebooks)

<b>county</b>	<b>no. of examples</b>	<b>no. of locations</b>	<b>examples per location</b>	<b>no. of speakers</b>	<b>examples per speaker</b>
Cornwall	163	7	23.3	20	8.2
Dorset	40	5	8.0	8	5.0
Devon	126	11	11.5	26	4.8
Wiltshire	70	9	7.8	15	4.7
Somerset	88	13+1	6.3	28	3.1
Total	487	46	10.6	97	5.0

Columns 4 and 6 in Table 1 are of particular interest. Even on a very superficial level, the picture emerging could not be any clearer: Speakers from Cornwall produce most of the gendered pronouns by far and are responsible for almost exactly a third (163 out of 487; 33.5%) of all examples.

Speakers from Dorset, Devon and Wiltshire are close to the average of five forms per speaker, while once again Somerset lags behind. This overall picture does not change when looking at detailed distributions per location and per individual speaker. The order of counties is slightly different for examples per location – Devon and Dorset change places (see column 4). Examples per location range from two to 45. All but one of the Cornish locations are above the average of 10.6 examples per location, as are five out of nine in Wiltshire, six out of 11 in Devon, two out of five locations in Dorset, but only one out of 14 in Somerset (Montacute is not included in the Basic Material).

The order of counties stays the same when looking at the actual contributors of masculine forms: In Cornwall and Devon all informants do, while this is not so in the remaining counties. One of the nine Dorset informants (i.e. 11.1%) does not contribute, while this percentage climbs to 25% in Wiltshire (five of 20 speakers) and to 33.3% in Somerset (12 of 36 speakers, excluding Montacute).

Although the order of counties in the detailed distribution list changes to a certain extent, we cannot identify individual informants who might distort these fig-

ures. Contributions range between one and 24 per speaker, with an average of five. 70 speakers are below that average or conform to it, while 27 contribute more than their share. Those 27 (or 27.8% of speakers) contribute 295 forms, i.e. 60.6% of the total of 487.

The data presented here once more add to the already familiar impression: (West) Cornwall is much more dialectal than has generally been assumed, at least when it comes to the use of “gendered” pronouns. Somerset in the 1950s, on the other hand, does not seem to have much in common with the Somerset of Elworthy’s times. While the gender system described in his studies can be considered the epitome of West Country dialect, the SED data show a system that is much closer to StE than to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century West Country one.

As with pronoun exchange, the situation of “gendered” pronouns in the modern FRED material is much more difficult to generalize. Although the feature is encountered more frequently than pronoun exchange, “gendered” pronouns are still rare. The only thing that can be safely said judging from the FRED examples is that the traditional system is by no means dead. Although the traditional dialects are influenced by StE and colloquial English, the level of dialect mixture has not (yet) reached a degree where West Country background can no longer be determined: Thus, while most non-standard varieties of English world-wide have extended feminine forms to inanimate (and also generic) referents (see e.g. Pawley, this volume), this task is still fulfilled by masculine forms in West Country speech, making it almost unique among English dialects.

### 5.2. Demonstrative pronouns

The system of demonstrative pronouns parallels that of personal pronouns in that they both distinguish count from non-count forms. Based on Rogers’ description it looks as follows (Rogers 1979: 32; cf. also Barnes 1994: 130, 1970: 17–18; Elworthy 1965a: 23, 1965b: 29):

		West Country		StE
		count	mass	
close	singular	<i>theäse or thick (here)</i>	<i>this (here)</i>	<i>this</i>
	plural	<i>these (here)</i>		<i>these</i>
distant	singular	<i>thick, thicky (there)</i>	<i>that (there)</i>	<i>that</i>
	plural	<i>they, them (there)</i>		<i>those</i>

Although a close-distant-remote system has been postulated for Southwestern dialects in some modern studies (e.g. Trudgill 1999: 86; Harris 1991; Trudgill and Chambers 1991: 10), this assumption is supported neither by traditional accounts

nor by data from the corpora, as examples of a threefold distinction are non-existent or at least difficult to find. Judging from the examples, the traditional system has declined, and the form *thick(y)* has all but died out, with a total of some 20 forms in FRED, some of which can be found in (7).

- (7) a. *Well, like **thick** one what's in there now, ehr, for killing all **they** women.* (FRED Som\_005)  
 b. *...they had **this here** place on the racecourse ...* (FRED Dev\_004)  
 c. *...when you come to **that there** corner, that's called Tugrushen corner.* (FRED Som\_014)  
 d. *That's what all **them** old buildings are.* (FRED Con\_006)

### 5.3. Possessive pronouns

As in other areas of grammar, dialects prefer an analytic strategy in marking possession. Therefore, one would expect to find more examples of the type *the father of/on un* than *his father* (cf. Rogers 1979: 32; Barnes 1994: 129–130, 1970: 16; Elworthy 1965b: 13; Hancock 1994: 105; Wakelin 1986: 38; see also section 6 on prepositions for the status of *of* and *on*). Although some instances can be found in the modern material (see examples in 8a,b), speakers do not seem to avoid using possessive pronouns consciously. What they clearly *do* avoid, though, is the neuter possessive pronoun, *its*, once more preferring the analytic *of it* (see examples 8c–f), even if this results in two adjoining *of*-phrases, as in (8c).

- (8) a. *And that was the end **of her**.* (FRED Dev\_002)  
 b. *...the owner **of her** ...* (FRED Som\_028)  
 c. *I had an idea of the price **of it**.* (FRED Con\_009)  
 d. *...that car had carrier on the back **of it** ...* (FRED Som\_029)  
 e. *Sherford was the name **of it**, that's right ...* (FRED Dev\_001)  
 f. *...you couldn' really see the colour **of it** ...* (FRED Wil\_002)

Rogers' claim (1979: 32) that *its* is substituted by the “gendered” alternatives *his* and *her* cannot be conclusively drawn from the data. In fact, the occurrence of “gendered” pronouns in the possessive is rather rare. A possible explanation for this could be seen in Ihalainen's accessibility hypothesis, according to which the standard forms invade the dialect system from the less accessible positions in the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy. The possessive slot would be one of the first to be taken over by StE forms (for a detailed account of Ihalainen's hypothesis, see Wagner 2004a). Furthermore, there is no evidence in the corpora that Southwest speakers use independent possessive forms usually associated with the Midlands, namely *hisn*, *hern*, *ourn*, *yourn*, *theirn*. It is likely that Rogers, as a native of Wiltshire, where possessives in *-n* are indeed found, overgeneralized from that observation. The feature is unknown further west, though. For the distribution

of possessives in *-n*, see Trudgill (1999: 90 and his Map 20). Traditionally, it is assumed that these are formed in analogy with *mine* and *thine*.

#### 5.4. Reflexive pronouns

Like many other non-standard varieties of English, West Country dialects have regularized the irregular StE system of reflexives by forming *hissself* and *theirselves* in analogy with the rest of the paradigm (possessive pronoun + *-self/-selves*, example 9a; cf. e.g. Barnes 1970: 20). In addition, the plural is not always marked on those reflexive pronouns whose first element clearly indicates plurality (thus: *ourself*, *theirsself*, but not *yoursself*, which would be singular only) – another common feature of English-based varieties, as illustrated in (9).

- (9) a. ...*everybody enjoyed **theirselves*** ... (FRED Wil\_007)  
 b. *Yes, we made that **ourself***. (FRED Som\_004)  
 c. ...*they call **theirsself** A-1 Builders* ... (FRED Dev\_001)  
 d. ...*the sort of food that we were having **ourself*** ... (FRED Con\_009)

#### 5.5. Relative markers

*What* and to a restricted extent also *as* do duty as relative particles in West Country speech in addition to the relative pronouns *who*, *which* and *that* (examples 10a–c; see also Rogers 1979: 36; Elworthy 1965b: 41–42). Moreover, the division of tasks between the forms tends to differ from that found in StE. A general observation one can make is that dialects usually prefer uninflected and/or neutral forms which are unmarked for case and gender. This generalization holds for several areas of grammar. For relative particles, this means that we have a higher percentage of *that* with personal antecedents than in StE, as speakers tend to avoid the inflected *wh*-forms *whose* and *whom*. There is in fact not a single example of *whom* and there are only eight instances of *whose* in the FRED Southwest texts (ca. 500,000 words). We can also observe a preference for co-ordination rather than subordination – (10d) is a possible candidate for that tendency. The most striking difference from StE, however, is exemplified in (10e) to (10i). StE only allows gapping – a zero relative marker – in non-subject positions.

- (10) a. ...*we had a big churn **what**'d hold forty gallons* ... (FRED Som\_011)  
 b. ...*(gap 'name'), you know **what** was boss* ... (FRED Som\_009)  
 c. ...*my dear sister **as** is dead and gone* ... (FRED Wil\_005)  
 d. ...*and there were a man in there **and he** were a dowser* ... (FRED Wil\_001)  
 e. *There's a pair of blocks down there **Ø** was made when I was apprentice*. (FRED Som\_016)  
 f. *I know a man **Ø**'ll do it for 'ee*. (36 Co 4, book IX)

- g. ... *you had a barrow* Ø *runs from there straight across like that ...*  
(FRED Som\_001)
- h. ... *that's the last orchard* Ø *been done around here for years...*  
(FRED Som\_002)
- i. *You know anybody* Ø *wants some, he'll sell them.* (FRED Som\_031)

When looking at relative clause formation, it becomes clear once more that analytic strategies take precedence over synthetic ones, a pervasive tendency in spontaneous English in general.

## 6. Prepositions

- (11) a. *A lot of things you see in life if you'd only knowed* **on it** *were very interesting.* (FRED Wil\_011)
- b. *He eat eleven* **on 'em.** (FRED Som\_013)
- c. ...*give us half* **on it** (FRED Oxf\_001)

An interesting feature in the use of prepositions is exemplified in (11). Rogers cites a possible explanation by Kjederqvist, who mentions a possible connection with Middle English where the two items in question were homophonous in certain contexts, but who rejects this idea at the same time. Rogers comments further that “*on* occurs in places where we might have expected ‘of’, mainly in front of the unstressed pronouns ‘en (him), *it* and ‘em (them)” (1979: 41). An extensive treatment of prepositional use can be found in Elworthy (1965b: 87–95).

Another interesting phenomenon is what Rogers calls “otiose *of*” (1979: 41), which is used before direct objects, but only after progressive verb forms. This use seems to have been extended to gerundial forms as well, resulting in utterances like *(the) doing of it* (‘doing it’). (12a) to (12d) may be taken as illustrations from a total of about 60 instances in the corpora:

- (12) a. *You couldn't afford to buy new ones so you had to keep* **mending of 'em** *didn't you?* (FRED Wil\_009)
- b. *I been* **driving of her** *for fifteen, sixteen years.* (FRED Som\_014)
- c. *I can't mind the* **making of them.** (FRED Som\_021)
- d. *I don't mind* **doing of it.** (FRED Som\_002)

Last but not least, the substitution of certain prepositions with others is distinctive of the area. Rogers notes that *up*, *down* and *over* are used where StE would use *to* or *at*, the explanation behind it being a geographical one: *over* is used “for nearby towns and villages”, while *up* and *down* follow the sun’s path – East = *up*, West = *down* (cf. Rogers 1979: 41). This is a very frequent phenomenon (13a–c).



- (13) a. *No, that was [name] **over** Downby, that was another [name] where (gap ‘indistinct’) is.* (FRED Som\_020)  
 b. *Yes, there was one or two **down** Zennor. I can mind – now hold on a minute. They had one **down** Zennor, and when [name]’s brother [name] came over Treen to live – that’s below the hotel here ...* (FRED Con\_005)  
 c. *...he went **up** Stroud district ...* (FRED Wil\_001)

## 7. Adverbs

The absence of the StE ending *-ly* in adverb marking is another feature that can be considered almost universal in spoken English. It is therefore not surprising that West Country dialects share it. In addition to a number of different intensifiers or boosters (Rogers [1979: 37] lists *main* ‘I do feel main bad’ [14a] and *terriblish*), the Southwest probably used *real* in intensifying function at an earlier point in time than the varieties it is most commonly associated with nowadays (14b).

- (14) a. *...she were **main** strict ...* (FRED Wil\_003)  
 b. *Oh yeah, they, in the end they was turning out **real** good furniture.* (FRED Dev\_010)

Peculiar uses of *like* are known from a number of dialects, and have probably made their way into casual speech from there. Originally, *like* was used as a qualifying adjective in West Country speech, meaning *rather*. Thus, *He walks real quiet like* would correspond to StE *He walks rather quietly* (cf. Elworthy 1965a: 33, 1965b: 81–82; Barnes 1970: 34). Examples (15a–c) show this use and some others that are reminiscent of 1990s teenager speech, when *like* started to creep in as a discourse marker (cf. also Anderwald, this volume on *like* in South-eastern dialects).

- (15) a. *’Course being silly **like**, I said ...* (FRED Som\_021)  
 b. *You had to tie your corn behind the strappers **like**.* (FRED Som\_006)  
 c. *...he used to pick it up **like**, you know, ...* (FRED Con\_004)

## 8. Verbs and the verb phrase

Apart from the pronominal system, the verbal paradigm of West Country English is the sub-system that is the most interesting to investigate. One should distinguish between antiquated traditional features that are no longer or only very rarely found

today, and those features which may have become less frequent over the past decades, but which are alive and kicking nevertheless.

### 8.1. Antiquated traditional features

Rogers (1979: 37; cf. also Barnes 1994: 131; Elworthy 1965a: 21; Wakelin 1984: 82) describes an intricacy of traditional verbal morphology that has since been almost eradicated. Infinitives of transitive verbs that were used intransitively were marked by a *-y* ending. What we are dealing with here is a rather complex case of functional re-interpretation and extension at the same time: the Middle English infinitive ending was restricted to certain verbs, while it had nothing to do with transitivity. The modern Southwestern *-y*, on the other hand, can be added to all verbs, functioning as a marker of intransitivity. Thus, examples (16a,b) would constitute a type of minimal pair (from Rogers 1979: 37). While this form can still be found in the SED fieldworker notebooks (cf. 16c,d), it is absent from the comparatively modern corpus material. Note that (16c) supports the claim (cf. Rogers 1979: 37) that the *-y* is dropped before a vowel.

- (16) a. *I do **dig** the garden.*  
 b. *Every day, I do diggy for three hours.*  
 c. aɪ ɡɒt 'bɪ:ɪv ʌt 'du: jəno: 'pɪgz te:met\_ ən 'kæʊz tə 'mɪlki:  
 'I've got a lot to do today, you know; pigs to mate and cows to milk.'  
 (36 Co 4, book VIII)  
 d. wi: də 'bɪŋ æʊɾ 'ʃi:p ɪn 'lʌmi  
 'We bring our sheep in (to) lamb.' (36 Co 6, book I)

A feature that will only briefly be commented on is the use of (unsplit) *for to* or only *for to* to introduce infinitival purpose clauses (17a–c; see Wakelin 1986: 38; Hancock 1994: 104). While *for to* is an old StE form and is still found quite frequently in the modern data, simple dialectal *for* seems to have died out.

- (17) a. *I've got a one, but 'tis a job **for** keep up wi' 'em.* (36 Co 1, book VII)  
 b. wɒd'ɪv'ɹ 'ɛɪd i: və': 'dʊ ət  
 'whatever ailed you to do it' (36 Co 1, book VIII)  
 c. *Always the evenings **for to** get the men **for to** do it.* (FRED Som\_025)

Another remnant of an earlier stage of English is the *a*-prefix found in present and past participles, including some unhistorical uses (cf. Barnes 1994: 132, 1970: 28; Elworthy 1965a: 9; Rogers 1979: 38; Wakelin 1984: 83, 1986: 36). It is ubiquitous in the SED data (18a), while only traces of it can be found in the modern material (18b,c).

- (18) a. 'e's **a-waiting** for I (24 Gl 4, book VIII)  
 b. *And he were down around Brown's farm **a-haulin'** pigs.* (FRED Wil\_010)  
 c. *...if he'd **a-been** alive.* (FRED Som\_032)

The forms *be* and in the plural also *am* (or 'm) constituted the main part of the historical *be*-paradigm used in West Country speech. Thus, *I, you, he/she/it be, we'm, you'm* and *they'm* were frequently heard in traditional dialect (see Rogers 1979: 38; Wakelin 1986: 36). A study of the modern material indicates that interestingly the paradigm has since shifted towards that of modern West Country dialects, not that of StE. The present tense examples in (19a) and (19b) are therefore traditional, while the simple past forms in (19c) to (19e) can be considered modern. This shift in the *be*-paradigm is a rare example of a traditional system being substituted by another earlier standard (now non-standard) system.

- (19) a. *we'm happy ...* (FRED Som\_005)  
 b. *But they'm always giving them a bit of help ...* (FRED Con\_005)  
 c. *I were very happy there.* (FRED Wil\_008)  
 d. *If you was wrong, you was wrong ...* (FRED Con\_009)  
 e. *...he were in the Navy.* (FRED Som\_012)

Another agreement feature that to this day is said to be distinctive of Newfoundland English (see Clarke, this volume) is discussed below. True West Country dialect is said to have distinguished the main verb from the auxiliary use of the primary verbs *do, have* and *be*. While the forms inflect as main verbs, taking *-s* in all persons, they do not in their auxiliary function(s), which use the base form. Instances exemplifying this contrast, as in (20), are rare, and it is probably safe to assume it does no longer exist in modern Southwestern dialects:

- (20) a. [Interviewer: *It makes a messier cheese – was it now –*  
*It do.* (FRED Som\_025)  
 b. *... and in they days the ladies didn't ride straddle like they do's today, they used to ride side-saddle.* (FRED Wil\_001)  
 c. *...perhaps it might be a good idea if I has a bit of insight in case mother was taken ill ...* (FRED Som\_011)  
 d. *...and they has these long trousers tucked up like this ...* (FRED Som\_022)

## 8.2. Traditional features still in use

### 8.2.1. Regularization of irregular verbs

Two general tendencies can be observed in the irregular verb paradigms of basically all spoken varieties of English today: partial or complete regularization of the paradigm. For past tense and past participle formation, we are thus facing

the following possibilities (Rogers 1979: 40–41; cf. also Barnes 1994: 125, 1970: 26–27):

- (a) maintenance of irregular form(s), but reduction to one instead of two; for that purpose, either the simple past or the past participle form is extended to cover both these uses (e.g. *speak-spoke-spoke*; *break-broke-broke*; *do-done-done*, *come-come-come*; 21a–c)
  - (b) StE strong verbs receive an extra weak (i.e. regular) ending in addition to vowel gradation (e.g. *take-tooked*; *steal-stoled*)
  - (c) StE weak or mixed verbs become irregular (i.e. strong) in dialect (e.g. *creep-crope*; *scrape-scrope*)
  - (d) StE strong verbs are regularized (i.e. weakened) in dialect – probably the most frequent scenario (e.g. *know-knowled*; *see-seed*; *give-gived*; *blow-blowed*; *hurt-hurted* etc.; see 21d–f)
- (21) a. ...*he done odd jobs for farmers* ... (FRED Con\_009)  
 b. *I come here in 1915* ... (FRED Som\_016)  
 c. ...*you had to find out which one was broke and thread it through again* ... (FRED Wil\_022)  
 d. *So, they went off one night, went up round and caught her 'bout six o'clock* ... (FRED Som\_005)  
 e. ...*he were gived the push* ... (FRED Wil\_001)  
 f. ...*you knowed this one* ... (FRED Con\_006)

### 8.1.2. *Double and multiple negation*

Double (and multiple) negation is among the most wide-spread features of non-standard varieties and can also be found in the Southwestern dialects. The universal negator *ain't*, standing for all negated forms of *have* and *be*, is another form that is commonly found in non-standard varieties of English.

- (22) a. ...*he wasn't no rogue really*. (FRED Con\_003)  
 b. *I mean you couldn't do nothing about it*. (FRED Oxf\_001)  
 c. *We never went no more, did we?* (FRED Wil\_017)  
 d. *So anyhow they never had no, never had no glasses nor nothing in them days, you know*. (FRED Con\_006)  
 e. *No that ain't no use now, ...* (FRED Dev\_002)  
 f. *I ain't doing bad am I?* (FRED Wil\_005)

### 8.1.3. *Periphrastic do*

The story of periphrastic *do* in the history of English is long and well-studied. Nevertheless, its modern unemphatic uses in some dialects and particularly in

the Southwest continue to intrigue researchers. Klemola (1996) offers the most comprehensive account to date, using both historical and fairly modern traditional data for his investigation. The following account is for the most part based on Klemola's research and Rogers' summary of 19<sup>th</sup>-century analyses, which will be supported with examples from the modern corpora.

Scholars generally agree that unemphatic *do* (*do* [də], *did*) is most often used to express habituality, contrasting with the simple present and past tense forms, and as a tense carrier in affirmative sentences (cf. Klemola 1996: chapter 4; Kortmann 2004: 248–259). Rogers adds another form to the repertoire of what he calls “frequentative” forms, namely the *-s* ending. The distribution of the two forms is described as follows: “The stronghold of the ‘do’ forms is Dorsetshire but they are also found in Wiltshire (especially the western half), in Somerset and in parts of Gloucestershire. Devon prefers the *-s*-form with ‘they’ but the other reappears briefly in west Cornwall” (Rogers 1979: 39 and his map).

Judging from the modern corpus data (23), periphrastic *do* is omnipresent with some speakers, while others do not have it in their language system at all. Note that the previously mentioned rule of auxiliaries traditionally not inflecting for person is also valid for periphrastic *do*, thus generating the forms *he/she/it do V*.

- (23) a. *As I **do** say to my niece, I say, you know, you're far better off, I said, than what we were, I said.* (FRED Wil\_012)
- b. *...and then I **did** cut 'em off as they **did** grow, ...* (FRED Som\_002)
- c. *But it **do** get in the barrel and you **do** hear plop, plop, plop, you want to leave it alone.* (FRED Som\_013)
- d. *...she **did** do a lot of needlework, ...* (FRED Wil\_018)
- e. *William, my son, **do** live down there.* (FRED Con\_005)
- f. *But they **did** work 'til quarter to six at night, that was their normal time and as I say, the hooter **did** blow at the finish and all machines **did** shut down they were gone within about five minutes. It didn't take long to do it. They **did** sweep round the machines before they left, they always do that when the machines are running.* (FRED Wil\_006)

## 9. Summary and outlook

Table 2 summarizes which of the features listed here are found solely in the Southwest, and which ones can also be found in other varieties of English or are even features typical of present-day spoken English, in general. For other features that have not been mentioned explicitly here, see for example Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1989: 194–195).

The picture presented here is essentially that of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the time frame of the corpus material used. However, it should be noted that a comparison of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>-century features with those found in the modern material reveals surprisingly few changes. Of the features investigated here, Ihalainen (1994: 214) lists periphrastic *do*, pronoun exchange, “gendered” pronouns, otiose *of*, and uninflected *do/have* as morphological Southwestern dialect markers of the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century. With four of five features still alive and kicking, not *that* much seems to have changed, after all.

Table 2. Uniquely Southwest, regional and universal dialect features

Southwest	universal	regional (British & overseas)
– pronoun exchange	– no overt plural marking of some measurement nouns (after numerals)	– regularized reflexive pronouns (possessive pronoun + <i>-self/-selves</i> )
– “gendered” pronouns	– plural demonstrative <i>them</i> (= StE <i>those</i> )	– irregular use (omission or insertion) of articles
– unemphatic periphrastic <i>do</i> as tense carrier	– no overt marking of adverbs derived from adjectives (no <i>-ly</i> )	– regularized <i>be</i> -paradigm (e.g. <i>was</i> vs <i>weren't</i> etc.)
– mass/count distinction in demonstrative pronouns (?)	– different inventory of relative pronouns (e.g. <i>as</i> , <i>what</i> )	
	– gapping/zero relative also in subject position	
– otiose <i>of</i> (?)	– multiple negation	
	– <i>ain't</i> as invariant negative particle	
	– reduced paradigm for irregular verbs (past tense = past participle form)	

The cut-off points between the second and third column, between universal and regional features, are often fuzzy. For the present author, regional features are those which can still be identified with certain regions, although these may be numerous. Universal features, on the other hand, occur in distributions that make it impossible to pinpoint their regional basis. Although the features in the two rightmost columns by far outnumber those unique to the region, the Southwest is one of the most distinctive dialect areas in the British Isles to this day, with a singular combination of traditional features (inherited from earlier stages of both StE and West Country dialect) and those features which even now, after more than a century of investigation, still defy (easy) classification.

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# The varieties of English spoken in the Southeast of England: morphology and syntax

Lieselotte Anderwald

## 1. Introduction

Very little has so far been written about a distinctive dialect grammar of the Southeast of England. Although Standard English (StE) linguistically had its source in the dialect of the East Midlands, London (the seat of the court, of Chancery, of the printing presses) is the place where the standard evolved, and the Southeast of England in general has become inextricably linked with the concept of “Standard English”, so much so that the language of the Southeast is apparently not deemed worthy of dialectological attention. In his historical survey of dialect studies, Ihalaïnen (1994: 252) expressly stresses that for lexicology, “the Home Counties do not emerge as a clearly focused area on the basis of lexical evidence, which can be accounted for by the close affinity to standard English”. Similarly, Edwards (1993) states that “some observers have doubted whether a distinctively non-standard south-eastern speech actually exists” (Edwards 1993: 235). Indeed, perceived nearness to the standard may be a reason why non-standard speech in the Southeast is not seen as dialect, but simply as “incorrect standard”.

Others have cited the fact that London was situated at the intersection of the three Old English kingdoms of Mercia, Wessex and Kent (Edwards 1993: 215); therefore no one distinctive dialect could be expected to continue into modern times and influence present-day dialects. In addition, in Early Modern English times, London was the destination of masses of in-migrants who brought their own dialects. Again, London as the melting pot could perhaps not be expected to evolve its own distinctive non-standard dialect apart from the standard language that arose from this dialect mixture and that was codified around the same time.

On the other hand, the fact that we find the Southeast not so very distinctive may be due to the fact that very few studies so far have dealt with the Southeast in any depth. Edwards and Weltens (1985) note in their survey not even a handful of studies concerned with this area, and twenty years later this situation has not changed greatly. The most important monograph to have appeared since then is Cheshire’s study of adolescent non-standard speech in the town of Reading west of London (Cheshire 1982), as well as a handful of articles based on the same material. Although Reading is situated on the border of what is considered here the Southeast and the Southwest, most features in Cheshire’s description are paralleled by other accounts from the Southeast, which justifies its inclusion in this

article. A little more recent is Viv Edwards' survey article "The grammar of southern British English" (Edwards 1993); however, this article does not include any original research, and does not systematically distinguish the Southwest and the Southeast. Also of interest is the Britain-wide school survey by Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1993) in the same collection, which finds practically all general non-standard features also for the Southeast, but also some unexpected quantitative differences between, very roughly, the South and the North. Newer material not so far explored for grammatical phenomena in depth is the COLT corpus (Bergen Corpus of London Teenage Language). Andersen (2001) is a first pragmatic analysis of invariant tags and the discourse marker *like* based on this material. The British National Corpus (Aston and Burnard 1998) also contains a sample of Southeastern speakers which has so far not been much explored (although parts of this material overlap with COLT). Finally, a new corpus at the University of Freiburg of English dialect speakers (FRED, financed by DFG grant no. Ko/1181/1-1 and 1181/1-2) is nearing conclusion so that some comparative work on dialect grammar is now becoming possible (cf. the contributions in Kortmann et al. 2005). FRED also contains material from the Southeast of England (from the counties of Kent, Middlesex and London), which has been exploited for this article and wherever possible, examples from FRED will be provided in the text.

Judging from what has been published so far, one could sum up that little has been found that is distinctive for the Southeast; instead we would expect to find many features that today mark non-standard speech in general. An overview of these general non-standard features is provided by Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle in the article mentioned above (Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle 1993). An interesting historical question would be to determine in how far the influential Southeast might have been the source for these developments, in particular as some non-standard features still seem to be spreading today.

### 1.1. Geographical delimitation

The Southeast of England is a relatively young dialect area in classificatory terms. A large area of what is now part of the Southeast – especially the counties directly south of London: Surrey, Sussex but even Kent – used to belong to the Southwest linguistically (cf. the description in Ihalainen 1994). Former general Southern features seem to have receded to the Southwest proper quite rapidly at least since the end of the nineteenth century. Today, the Southeast of England is clearly dominated – and influenced – by the metropolis London (see Altendorf and Watt, other volume, for phonetic and phonological evidence; whether this also holds for grammatical features remains to be seen). Based on Trudgill's modern dialect areas (Trudgill 1999: 65), the Southeast includes, for the purpose of this chapter, the metropolis itself and the Home Counties, i.e. those counties bordering London: Middlesex, Essex (where it does not belong to East Anglia), Hertfordshire,

Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire (where they do not belong to the South Midlands), Berkshire, Hampshire (where they do not belong to the Southwest), Surrey, Sussex and Kent.

## 2. Morphology

### 2.1. Pronouns

#### 2.1.1. Possessive *me*

The use of *me* for *my*, i.e. doing double service both as the object form of the personal pronoun and as a possessive pronoun, is noted by all authors and is well attested in any material from the Southeast. Some examples from FRED are provided in (1a) to (1c).

- (1) a. ... *the fact was that **me** brother left home, you know.* (FRED LND\_002)  
 b. *I sat down to have **me** tea as usual.* (FRED KEN\_004)  
 c. *I think **me** memory's getting bad now, somehow.* (FRED MDX\_001)

This is indeed a very frequent feature. Although wide-scale studies are not yet available, my pilot study of FRED material from the Southeast indicates that, on average, around thirty percent of possessive pronouns might be *me* rather than *my*. The use of possessive *me* also has repercussions throughout the reflexive pronoun system, as section 2.1.2. shows. Although this phenomenon is generally (synchronically) interpreted as an extension of the object form for the possessive form, it is plausible to regard *me* as a remnant of Middle English *mi/my* which, as a very frequent and unstressed form, may not have undergone the Great Vowel Shift. Unstressed *mi* would thus have fallen together with a weakened form of the object pronoun *me* /mi/ < ME /me:/, resulting synchronically in this apparently merged form (Krug forthcoming).

#### 2.1.2. Reflexive pronouns

Generally, one can say that the paradigm of reflexive pronouns is regularized in the Southeast of England. In StE, the pattern is mixed: *myself*, *yourself*, *herself*, *ourselves*, and *yourselves* use the possessive case of the personal pronoun plus a form of *self*; *himself* and *themselves* on the other hand use the object case. *Self* inflects for number, such that the singular forms take *self*, the plural forms take *selves*. In the Southeast, however, we generally find the possessive case used throughout; thus we regularly encounter *hissself* as in (2a), and, as a consequence of possessive *me* discussed above, we also find *meself* used as a reflexive pronoun (see 2b). The plural forms are sometimes formed with *self* (*ourself*, *themself*) rather than *selves*

(as in 2c to 2e), which indicates that *-self* has grammaticalized to a simple reflexive marker and is not perceived as indicating number any more. As a consequence, especially the third person plural shows a great deal of variation: StE *them* + non-StE *self*, non-StE *their* + StE *selves*, non-StE *their* + non-StE *self* as well as StE *themselves* are all attested, as examples in (2d) to (2g) show:

- (2)
- a. [*He*] *put his hand to steady **hissself** on top of the winch.* (FRED LND\_007)
  - b. *I had ten bob. Two bob for **meself** and eight bob for the board and lodging.* (FRED KEN\_001)
  - c. [*We*] *used to have to stand in this copper and bath **ourself**, wash our hair and all.* (FRED LND\_005)
  - d. *They wouldn't come round to make **theirsself** a nuisance.* (FRED KEN\_001)
  - e. *They would've never forgiven **themself** for allowing me out on the deck.* (FRED LND\_006)
  - f. *They'd do it **theirselves**.* (FRED KEN\_004)
  - g. *We used to say the fires just eh burnt **themselves** out.* (FRED MDX\_002)

On the syntax of reflexive pronouns see also section 3.1. below.

### 2.1.3. Subject *us*

The StE object pronoun *us* is regularly found in subject position when followed by a noun phrase apposition, as in (3).

- (3)
- a. ***Us kids** used to pinch the sweets like hell.* (FRED LND\_005)
  - b. ***Us old boys** would be drinking beer, too.* (FRED KEN\_002)

This feature seems to be restricted to the first person plural for several reasons. The equivalent third person plural form would be indistinguishable from demonstrative *them* (see section 2.1.5.) and *they* is not usually found in this construction anyway (cf. Quirk et al. 1985: 352–353). The second person has identical forms for subject and object pronouns (*you*), so that an exchange cannot be documented. With singular pronouns (except *you*) a combination with a noun phrase is probably not possible.

### 2.1.4. Singular *us*

As in most other dialect areas, the plural object form *us* can be used in place of the singular *me*. Although this phenomenon can be clearly documented, it is difficult to quantify, as extensive context is necessary to determine the exact reference. Some examples are given in (4).

- (4) a. *He says, **Give us** a fiver for it, Ted, and you can have it.* (FRED KEN\_002)  
 b. ***Show us** them boots!* (FRED LND\_003)

As Edwards notes, “there are restrictions on the distribution of plural forms for reference to the singular. Thus, while it is possible to use *us* for *me*, the corresponding use of *we* for *I* does not occur” (Edwards 1993: 231). Even in the same context of requests, it seems unlikely that third person *them* would substitute *him* or *her*. Instead, this phenomenon seems to be specific to the first person, and to imperatives. Whether the use of *us* for *me* has its origin in being a mitigating factor in requests has not been investigated yet.

### 2.1.5. *Them as demonstrative pronoun*

The system of demonstrative pronouns is much the same in the Southeast as in StE: we find a two-way distinction between near and distant objects. However, as in many other dialect areas, for distant plural objects *them* is used rather than StE *those*:

- (5) a. *I don't know if you've ever seen **them** old drinking horns, have you?* (FRED KEN\_001)  
 b. *That was the way of life in **them** days.* (FRED LND\_002)  
 c. *That bloke used to cut **them** willows.* (FRED MDX\_002)

The use of *them* rather than *those* as the distal demonstrative pronoun is a highly frequent phenomenon; for example, FRED data from Kent has *them* rather than *those* in over seventy percent of all possible cases.

## 2.2. Past tense verb paradigms

As in other dialect areas, many speakers in the Southeast have verb paradigms different from the standard. Authors have tried to systematize the differences in various ways. It is clear that overall, irregular verb paradigms of the standard tend to be simpler than in StE. This concerns in particular StE strong verbs which have three-way paradigms (e.g. *know-knew-known*; *see-saw-seen*) and strong verbs with two-way paradigms (e.g. *run-ran-run*; *come-came-come*). While each verb undoubtedly has its own history, and many non-standard forms may be carry-overs from historical forms that did not make it into the standard, today non-standard grammar is often interpreted as simplifying the StE system. Thus, three-part paradigms are reduced to just two items – although it is not predictable whether the past tense form or the past participle is extended to the other function – and we also often find that two-part paradigms are reduced to just one form, as in the cases of *come* or *run*. Particularly frequent in previous accounts as well as my data from

the Southeast seems to be the simplification of *come* to the past tense and the use of *done* for the past tense, as in (6) and (7).

- (6) *I was standing looking at a chap working, and he **come** up to me and wanted to know* (FRED KEN\_005)
- (7) *He worked, but what he **done** for a living, I don't know.* (FRED LND\_001)

In the case of (6), this results in a paradigm that today looks maximally simplified: it contains only the one form *come-come-come*, and past tense meaning is only inferable from the context (except in the third person singular, where it is also signalled by the absence of the present tense *-s*, as example [6] illustrates). Parallel to past tense *come* we also encounter past tense *become*. The past tenses of *give* and *run* also seem to follow this pattern fairly frequently. In the case of (7), the StE three-part paradigm *do-did-done* is reduced to the two-part paradigm *do-done-done*. This is a case of simplification, but not of regularization (*do* will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3.4.).

Cheshire (1982) distinguishes three classes of verbs: (a) verbs that are weak in the non-standard, but still strong in the standard, i.e. that have a non-standard past tense with *-ed* such as, in her data, *gived*, *holded*, *drawed*, *swinged*, *runned*, *blowed*, *fighted* and *waked*. (b) verbs where the StE past tense form is used for both the past tense and the (non-standard) past participle, as in *go*, *take*, *forget*, *run*, *break*, *throw*, *beat* and *see*. (c) In a third class, the reverse is the case, and the StE past participle is used for both the non-standard past tense and past participle, as for *come*, *become*, *run* and *do*. Particularly for the first three of these forms, however, present tense and past participle are identical in form, so that one could equally well speak of a maximally simplified system.

For some highly frequent verbs like *know*, *break*, *see* or *eat*, however, we find a variety of non-standard forms co-existing alongside each other, and indeed alongside the StE forms. (As most other dialect features today, the past tense/past participle forms are variable and co-exist with the corresponding StE forms.) In Cheshire's system, the same word can belong to several classes. This solution might however obscure the potentially interesting character of these verbs. Edwards for example draws attention to the fact that we find a number of different forms coexisting, which in her opinion "point[s] very clearly to a process of linguistic change which is still in progress" (Edwards 1993: 221). However, detailed studies of this change in progress are still missing, both in comparison with the historical switch of strong verbs to weak verbs, and in comparison with other dialect areas.

What is becoming obvious from the published accounts, though, is that those irregular paradigms of the standard which still consist of three different forms (present tense, past tense, past participle, e.g. *see-saw-seen* or *drive-drove-driven*) tend towards a paradigm that is differentiated only along two ways (a present

tense form, and then identical past tense and past participle forms). In this regard, irregular verbs of the non-standard are becoming more similar to the regular verbs in *-ed* (of standard and non-standard): Even if they do not completely switch verb classes from strong verbs to weak verbs, they do follow the same pattern of not differentiating between past tense and past participle forms (cf. *see-seen-seen* parallel to *start-started-started*).

### 2.3. New modal verbs

Krug (2000) discusses the emergence of some new modal verbs, his “emerging modals” WANT TO, BE GOING TO, HAVE GOT TO and, more marginally, HAVE TO and NEED TO. Often, these occur as contracted forms, especially *wanna*, *gonna*, *gotta* and *hafta*. Interestingly, the contracted forms also tend to go together with a shift in meaning. *Wanna* for example seems to be on the path of becoming a modal, exhibiting the meaning of obligation, if not even a command, as in (8), *gonna* is becoming a simple future marker, and *gotta* has developed epistemic readings from the – still more frequent – deontic ones, as in (9).

(8) *You've got toothache? You **wanna** see a dentist!* (Krug 2000: 147)

(9) *And I think probably it's **got to** be her.* (Krug 2000: 94)

Although these forms can be found practically all over Great Britain today, quantitative differences based on regional comparisons from the BNC suggest that they may have had their source in the Southeast of England (cf. Krug 2000: 111–114, 185–192).

## 3. Syntax

### 3.1. Use of untriggered reflexive pronouns

In the Southeast of England, we encounter the use of *self*-forms that need no antecedent for their interpretation (so-called untriggered *self*-forms). What looks like a reflexive pronoun thus takes over the function of a simple pronoun. Untriggered *self*-forms are reported to appear especially in subject position, and especially in co-ordinated noun phrases (cf. Hernández 2002), and data from FRED supports this also for the Southeast of England, as examples (10) and (11) illustrate.

(10) *No, my younger brother and **myself** was his favourites.* (FRED LND\_001)

(11) Interviewer: *How many of you were there?*

Informant: *There was **meself**, and me sister's four years younger than me. And then there's eh a brother of mine.* (FRED KEN\_005)

3.2. Lack of plural *-s* with measurement nouns

It is widely reported that the Southeast permits the use of singular nouns after numbers or, put differently, generally has nouns of measurement in the singular, again as in many other dialects. Some examples are given in (12).

- (12) a. *I had it made, cost thirteen **pound**, in nineteen twenty-six.* (FRED KEN\_002)  
 b. *These people used to move the fence three **foot** every night.* (FRED MDX\_002)  
 c. *We got five **mile** to walk.* (FRED KEN\_006)

A careful analysis of a range of nouns of measurement paints a more differentiated picture, however. Not all nouns of measurement occur in the singular. *Ounces* and *yards* for example regularly appear in the plural in FRED with numbers larger than one, as do *days*, *weeks*, and *inches*. *Mile*, *pound* and *foot*, as in the examples in (12), on the other hand, are usually found in the singular. Historically, these units of measurement were regularly used in the singular after numbers, as the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) documents. Plural use of these nouns (as measurement nouns) was introduced into the standard at different times for the individual lexemes, and indeed singular *foot* is still variably used even today in StE as a noun of measurement, while singular *pound* is still permitted in combinations (e.g. *two pound ten*), according to the OED (cf. OED, sub voce *foot*, *pound*, *mile*).

## 3.3. Subject-verb concord

3.3.1. BE was/were *variation*

In the Southeast of England, plural pronouns are extremely frequently used with the StE singular form *was*. Thus the combination of *we*, *you*, and *they* with *was* is almost categorical (around 80 percent in the data from FRED). Occasionally *was* is also used with full noun phrases, as examples (13d) and (13e) show (names have been anonymized by the use of the asterisk \*; two asterisks represent two syllables).

- (13) a. ***We was** never without food.* (FRED KEN\_003)  
 b. *So **you was** a week on labour, a week off.* (FRED LND\_006)  
 c. *They lost their mother when **they was** boys.* (FRED MDX\_001)  
 d. *And that was where **the first aeroplanes was** built, over at Eastchurch.* (FRED KEN\_006)  
 e. *Never out of work, **none of me brothers was** ever out of work, never.* (FRED LND\_001)
- (14) a. Interviewer: *Was it easy to get into trouble there?*  
 Informant: ***It were** easy. Yeah, very easy.* (FRED LND\_001)



- b. *He also worked for a very long time for Mr G\*\*, that were young Mr F\* G\*\*, that had his building-yard up at D\*'s Farm (FRED MDX\_001)*

The reverse phenomenon, i.e. singular subjects occurring with the StE plural form *were*, also occurs in FRED, but only exceedingly rarely. In all three counties represented, relative frequencies are under or around the one percent mark for *were*-regularization. Two of the rare examples are provided in (14). The – far more usual – extension of *was* to plural subjects also holds for the negated forms, although confirmation is sometimes difficult as negation itself is quite rare (in data from FRED, one negative verb form occurs only per every sixteen positive verb forms). It is generally noted that negation plays an important role for this phenomenon, but for these particular dialect areas in FRED, relative frequencies for *was*-regularization are more than twice as high than for the negative equivalent, the use of plural pronouns with *wasn't*.

### 3.3.2. There + BE

Existential *there* is frequently used with the singular forms of BE, even if it refers to a plural subject. This is the case both for present and past tense forms of BE. Thus we regularly find *there is* and *there was* with reference to a following plural subject, as in (15).

- (15) a. *There's no false ceiling, **there's** no columns.* (FRED LND\_007)  
 b. ***There was** some papers wanted urgently.* (FRED LND\_006)

At first glance, this might simply be another aspect of variation in forms of BE noted above. On the other hand, it might indicate a change in the status of *there* rather than be a feature of the verb *be*, as *there* seems to be treated as a normal singular pronoun. Whereas *was* with plural personal pronouns is a matter of variation, *there was* is as good as categorical: *we was* and *we were* exist side by side, whereas *there was* for many speakers is the only form attested. In addition, the singular form is also documented for the present tense with *there*, as in example (15a), whereas *is* with the plural personal pronouns, i.e. forms like *we is*, *they is*, is not attested at all for the Southeast of England.

### 3.3.3. HAVE full verb vs. auxiliary

*Has*, restricted in StE to the third person singular (*he has*, *she has*, *it has*), can also occur with other subjects in Reading English, according to Cheshire (1982: 32), as example (16) illustrates.

- (16) a. ***We has** a muck around in there.*  
 b. ***You just has** to do what these teachers tell you.*

Interestingly, in Cheshire's Reading material, "the non-standard form never occurs when HAVE is an auxiliary verb" (Cheshire 1982: 32). No non-concord forms of HAVE could be detected in FRED, but this may be due to the overall rarity of *has* compared to the other primary verbs. (FRED only contains 29 instances of *has* for the Southeast, all of which are standard, i.e. occur with third person singular subjects.)

### 3.3.4. DO full verb vs. auxiliary

For present tense DO, Cheshire (1982) reports three non-standard forms: (a) Non-concord *does* [dʌz] is used with all persons, i.e. also with non-third-person singular subjects, especially when it is a full verb, as in examples (17a) and (17b). (b) Non-concord *do* is also used with all persons, especially with third-person singular subjects, when it is used as an auxiliary, as in (17c). (c) The non-standard form *dos* [du:z] is used mainly with third-person subjects, but only in full verb use, as in (17d). All examples in (17) are from Cheshire (1982: 35).

- (17) a. *every time **we does** anything wrong*  
 b. *that's what **I does***  
 c. *it hurts my dad more than **it do** her*  
 d. ***one bloke** stays at home and **dos** the house-cleaning and all that.*

- (18) *But nowadays **it don't** matter **does** it.* (FRED KEN\_004)

Cheshire claims that the present distribution represents a change in progress, from the earlier main verb form *dos* [du:z] to the present day form *does* [dʌz] to the StE differentiation of *does* vs. *do* for third person singular – non-third person singular; on the other hand Cheshire postulates an earlier auxiliary verb form *do* (for all persons) which fell together with StE *does/do*. Although data from FRED do not support this distinction for the positive paradigm, in the negative paradigm *don't* is almost categorical, i.e. also used in the third person singular, as in (18). And indeed this would be the expected form from a former auxiliary *do*, as only the auxiliary can be negated by adding the negator *n't* (the full verb of course has to take *do*-support). The phenomenon of third-singular *don't* is discussed further in section 3.4.2.

In the past tense, full verb and auxiliary uses of DO are also distinguished. Cheshire (1982) claims a strict differentiation in Reading adolescent non-standard speech between DO used as a full verb and DO used as an auxiliary. Only full verb DO has the past tense and past participle form *done*, as in (19a). Auxiliary DO also has identical past tense and past participle forms, but here the form is *did*. A nice example that combines both uses of DO is example (19b) (both from Cheshire 1982: 48).

- (19) a. ***I done** the most to him.*  
 b. *She **done** it, **didn't** she?*

- c. *I don't know what they **done** with them.* (FRED KEN\_002)  
 d. *but Mother used to take the bets, so **did** Dad.* (FRED LND\_005)

As (19c) and (19d) illustrate, this distinction of full verb vs. auxiliary in the past tense of DO can also be observed in data from FRED, and can thus be confirmed as a feature of the wider Southeast.

### 3.3.5. Non-standard -s with other verbs

Many regular verbs sometimes occur with -s with subjects other than the third-person singular. It is not exactly clear what determines the use of this non-standard -s, as it is highly variable. Linguistic constraints (preceding environment, following environment) do not seem to play a decisive role. Style seems to be a more important feature. Cheshire for example finds the use of non-standard -s particularly frequent with “vernacular verbs”, i.e. verbs which do not occur in StE at all, or that are used with a different meaning: “it can be seen that the use of a ‘vernacular’ verb acts as a lexical constraint on the form of the verb, strongly favouring the non-standard form” (Cheshire 1982: 43). Some of her examples are provided in (20).

- (20) a. ***I goes**, oh clear off.*  
 b. ***We chins** them.*  
 c. ***We bunks** it.*

Especially in (20a), *I goes* functions as a – non-standard – quotative marker, i.e. a marker introducing (direct or reported) speech. Here *goes* rather than *go* seems obligatory. (On quotative markers see further section 3.9.) A more comprehensive database like FRED, which samples a wider range of texts than the speech of adolescents as in Cheshire’s study, indicates that the historical present is not only used with vernacular verbs but also triggered in passages of increased involvement, and this is often marked by -s, as in (21).

- (21) ***I goes** into the shelter.* (FRED LON\_001)

Again, however, more detailed studies on this kind of non-concord -s are still missing. It is therefore difficult to judge in how far non-concord -s functions as a specific indicator of narratives, or whether it is a dialect feature that simply emerges more frequently when the speaker is emotionally involved.

## 3.4. Negation

### 3.4.1. Ain't

*Ain't* is probably the best-known indicator of non-standard grammar in North America and the UK. There are only very few exceptions, most notably Irish and

Scottish English, where *ain't* is reported not to occur in the traditional dialects. It does occur in the Southeast of England, as in examples (22a) to (22c).

- (22) a. *I asked him, and he said, Well, There **ain't** nothing you can do.*  
(FRED KEN\_003)
- b. *And he said no, I **ain't** going.* (FRED KEN\_004)
- c. *Him and I **ain't** been fishing for these last six weeks.* (FRED MDX\_001)

*Ain't* is indeed part of the traditional dialect system of the Southeast (see data from the SED on the individual verb forms which also attest *ain't/en't/in't*, collected in Anderwald [2002: 122–123]). Although the history of this form still remains to be written, it must have been frequent enough by the early nineteenth century for Charles Dickens to use it as a regional stereotype which characterizes his working class characters from London, and it is still very popular there, as Wright notices: “People grumble about this widespread Cockney liking for *ain't*, but the thinking Cockney replies that he has to keep saying it, especially for asking questions, because it is so ‘darned useful’” (Wright 1981: 120). And very useful it is indeed, as the one verb form *ain't* does service for all present tense forms of BE (*am, are, is*) as well as for all present tense forms of HAVE (*has, have*). While there is no differentiation in the use of *ain't* for BE (*ain't* can be used both for copula BE and auxiliary BE, as example [22a] and [22b] illustrate), it is generally held that only auxiliary (as opposed to full verb) HAVE can be substituted by *ain't*, as in (22c). It is thus not possible to have a form like *\*I ain't a clue*, e.g. according to Hughes and Trudgill (1996: 23).

For her Reading adolescent speakers, Cheshire notes a striking regularity in the use of *ain't* for these three verbs (auxiliary HAVE, copula BE, auxiliary BE): “Its occurrence follows a regular pattern, with *ain't* occurring most often as auxiliary HAVE, in the speech of all groups, and least often as auxiliary BE” (Cheshire 1982: 51). In my follow-up study based on about ten times as many tokens from the British National Corpus (BNC), I have not been able to substantiate this distribution (Anderwald 2002: 117, 135–139). There are however two robust trends across all regions in Britain: if one compares the two primary verbs, *ain't* is used much more frequently – in relative terms – for HAVE than for BE (copula and auxiliary uses taken together). Secondly, if we look inside the BE paradigm, there is an equally robust trend that *ain't* is used more frequently for auxiliary BE than for copula BE. An underlying reason for both distributions might be the fact that BE is much more frequent than HAVE (at a ratio of about three to one), and that copular BE is much more frequent than the auxiliary (at a ratio of about five or six to one). In both cases, the less frequent member of the pair in absolute terms (HAVE < BE; aux BE < cop BE) is simplified to *ain't* much more often – a typical pattern for simplification strategies, which tend to affect high frequency items last. Another possible generalization is that *ain't* is used far

more frequently for the negation of an auxiliary (HAVE or BE) than for negating a full verb.

In his jocular account, Wright already points to the fact that *ain't* might be particularly frequent in interrogatives (Wright 1981). The data support this, especially if one takes into account the different phonetic forms that *ain't* can take (in particular, /emt/ /mt/ and /ent/, usually transcribed as *ain't*, *in't* and *en't*). As Cheshire has noted, “tag questions strongly favour the use of a non-standard form” (Cheshire 1982: 55), and in particular *in't* occurs almost exclusively in tag questions. From here it is only a short step to the highly contracted tag question *inmit*, which will be dealt with in section 3.7.1.

### 3.4.2. Third person singular *don't*

The negative form of present tense DO is *don't* across the whole of the Southeast, as in (23). This is possibly an independent development from positive third person singular *do* mentioned above, but could also be plausibly interpreted as a relic of an earlier, more widespread auxiliary *do* used for all persons.

- (23) a. *That's funny, He don't live in there.* (FRED LND\_005)  
 b. *They say, What the eye don't see, the heart don't grieve.* (FRED LND\_004)

Although *don't* is almost categorical in data from FRED, absolute figures are so low that quantitative analyses do not seem feasible for this phenomenon. Again, this is a feature that is not restricted to the Southeast of England.

### 3.4.3. Multiple negation/negative concord

Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1993) have very tentatively suggested that – contrary to every expectation – multiple negation (or negative concord) seems to be more frequent in their data from the South than it is in the Midlands or in the North. Although they do not provide any statistical analyses as to whether these differences are significant, and if so at what level, their figures look interesting enough to merit further examination. In Anderwald (2002: 109–114) I have investigated this possibility in data from the BNC, and significant differences between the South and the North did indeed emerge. More detailed preliminary studies based on FRED corroborate that there is in fact a robust quantitative difference between the North and the South, such that negative concord is far more frequent in the South, and relatively infrequent in the North. Data from FRED suggests a ratio of around 36 percent negative concord for the three Southeastern counties included, as against just over 11 percent for the North, with the Midlands patterning in between. In other words, negative concord in the Southeast is more than three times as likely as in the North – a striking regional distribution that has not been investigated in detail yet.

Structurally, negative concord usually consists of the sentence negator *not* as the first element, combined with other negative elements, as in (24).

- (24) a. *He wouldn't give me nothing.* (FRED LND\_001)  
 b. *I didn't know nothing what to say to 'em.* (FRED KEN\_004)

Other frequent first elements are *never*, as in (22), and, more marginally, *no-one*.

- (25) a. *He never got no supper.* (FRED MDX\_002)  
 b. *He never done nothing.* (FRED LND\_001)  
 c. *No-one would never take much offence.* (FRED KEN\_003)

(On the use of *never* in past tense contexts see section 3.4.4. below.) What Labov (1972) has called NEG concord to pre-verbal position does occur as well, if only marginally so. This feature has sometimes been adduced as distinguishing African American Vernacular English from other dialects of English, but a careful study of dialect data shows that NEG concord to pre-verbal position is also systematically possible in at least some British English dialects as well, as example (26) shows.

- (26) *Yes, and no people didn't trouble about gas stoves then.* (FRED KEN\_005)

#### 3.4.4. *Never as a past tense negator*

Cheshire (1982: 67–71) stresses that in Reading, *never* can act as the sole negator in past tense contexts with the specific meaning 'not on a specific occasion'. In example (27), *never went* is thus equivalent to StE *didn't go*.

- (27) *I never went to school today.* (Cheshire 1982: 67)

This is relatively difficult to verify quantitatively, as the meaning is extremely context-dependent, and even a large context is not always sufficient to disambiguate between the standard meaning of *never* ('not on any occasion') and the non-standard meaning ('not on a specific occasion'). Some clear cases however can be found in the transcribed material from FRED, and one example is (28):

- (28) *and, uh, he, he never done a lot of schooling. And he come running out of a, his house one day. And a kid swore black and blue he's nicked a ten bob note off him. He was gonna get some errands. They turned him over, the boy, never found no ten bob note. And then when they f- the school report, that was it. It convicted him.* (FRED LND\_004)

Again, this is a feature not unique to the Southeast, but one that qualifies as a widespread non-standard feature in Cheshire's, Edwards' and Whittle's list (1993: 64).

## 3.5. Adverbs = adjectives

In the Southeast of England, as probably in most other dialect areas, adverbs often have the same form as the corresponding adjectives. This holds particularly for the very frequent adverbs. Again this is a feature already included by Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1993) in their questionnaire, and especially the form *quick* as an adverb is common currency across the Southeast, as in example (29). Other adverbs however are also found in this form, as examples (30a) to (30e) show.

- (29) *I swum me way out of it **quick**.* (FRED LND\_006)
- (30) a. *They fussed him up **terrible**.* (FRED LND\_001)  
 b. *that used to last you a week **easy*** (FRED KEN\_005)  
 c. *That is **honest** true, that is.* (FRED LND\_004)  
 d. *If you got **proper** disabled.* (FRED KEN\_005)  
 e. *And he'll have his own Sam Browne [belt] off, and he'd give them so many straps, real strap, **real** hard.* (FRED LND\_001)

On the other hand, a large number of adverbs never occur without *-ly*, e.g. *actually, generally, particularly, recently, suddenly*. The distinction is not quite clear, but it does not so much seem a function of the etymology of the stem (for example, Romance origin vs. Germanic), but of their syntactic function. Only the prototypical adverbials, with the adverb modifying an adjective or the verb phrase, seem to occur without *-ly*, while adverbials like *actually* appear in their full form. Again, there are no detailed studies on the constraints of this interesting phenomenon to date.

## 3.6. Subordination

## 3.6.1. Subject zero relatives

According to Wright (1981: 117) and Edwards (1993: 229), it is possible to use zero to introduce subject relative clauses in the Southeast of England, whereas the standard only permits this construction for the object (and oblique) position. These subject contact clauses occur quite regularly and seem to be particularly frequent in the existential construction, i.e. after existential *there is/there was*, as the examples in (31) demonstrate:

- (31) a. *There was no nurse Ø came.* (FRED LND\_006)  
 b. *There's one single house Ø stands right against the school gates.*  
 (FRED MDX\_001)

Indeed, Quirk et al. claim that in this context (existentials, cleft sentences) we are not dealing with a typical adnominal relative clause, because the left hand portion is obligatory (Quirk et al. 1985: 1250). As they do not offer an alternative analysis,

however, I have retained general dialectological practice and referred to these constructions also as subject zero relatives. This is an extension of a standard strategy to a position where the standard does not permit it, which results in a non-standard construction. Unfortunately, no detailed regional or indeed cross-dialectal studies are available yet for this phenomenon, leaving much scope for further research.

### 3.6.2. *What as a relative pronoun*

As in many other dialects, *what* can be used as a relative pronoun; according to Wright (1981: 116) and Edwards (1993: 228), *what* is doing service for *who*, *whom* and *which*, and data from FRED confirm this, as example (32) illustrates.

- (32) a. *Anybody **what** [=StE *who*] been away from them, there, well, this last twenty years wouldn't know it.* (FRED KEN\_006)  
 b. *the stuff **what** [=StE *which*] came from the gas corroded the cable.* (FRED MDX\_001)

In contrast to zero as a relative marker in subject position mentioned above, the relative pronoun *what* is not permitted in the standard in any position. We are thus dealing here with a non-standard feature that has no parallel in the standard. First results from dialect-comparative work indicate that the origin of *what* as a relative marker may very well lie in the Southeast, from where it seems to be spreading (Herrmann 2003: 88).

### 3.6.3. *Relative as*

Another non-standard relative marker mentioned for Cockney in Wright (1981) is *as*. The relative marker *as* does not seem to be nearly as frequent as *what* above, and there are some indications that *as* is an older form that is receding from dialect speech (Herrmann 2003: 88). An example from Wright (1981) – also indicating *h*-dropping – is given in (33a), perhaps the only equivalent from FRED is given in (33b).

- (33) a. *That noise **as** you 'eard.*  
 b. *He ... was a chap **as** got a living anyhow.* (FRED KEN\_002)

Although this is a very infrequent phenomenon, the regional spread of relative *as* does seem to reach at least beyond London, as the example from FRED (Kent) indicates. Edwards likewise still reports the use of *as* “in some parts of the region” (Edwards 1993: 228).

Again, however, non-standard relative markers (both *what* and *as*) have not been examined in detail until very recently (cf. Herrmann 2003, who unfortunately only includes data from East Anglia, not the wider Southeast in her study), so that regional comparisons must still remain tentative.



## 3.7. Tag questions

## 3.7.1. Innit

A feature typical of adolescent London speech is the invariant tag question *innit*. This has clearly grammaticalized from *isn't it*, although a derivation from *ain't it* is also possible (cf. the discussion in Andersen 2001: 168–179). Today, *innit* is used with all persons and verbs as a non-canonical tag, as Andersen (2001: 97–208) shows on the basis of data from COLT. Some examples are provided in (34).

- (34) a. *He gets upset quick innit?* (for *doesn't he?*) (Andersen 2001: 105)  
 b. *you can go with your Mum then, innit* (for *can't you*) (Andersen 2001: 171)

Andersen (2001: 113–114) traces the history of this invariant *non-canonical* tag to the multilingual community of London, in particular the Jamaican community from which it may have originated. The non-standard tag *innit* certainly seems to be on the spread; indeed Andersen states that “it is used by both genders and by young and older adults alike, suggesting that *innit* is fairly well established as a non-standard tag in London English generally” (Andersen 2001: 109), but in the speech of adults today *innit* always corresponds to *isn't it*, i.e. it is not used as an invariant tag, but as a non-standard canonical tag with third-person singular neuter subjects. Whether the use of *innit* as a non-canonical tag will spread out from the adolescent population, or whether it will remain a feature characteristic of adolescent speech and thus be subject to age-grading, remains to be seen.

## 3.7.2. Aggressive tags

Cheshire already reports the use of what she calls “unconventional tags” (Cheshire 1982: 57–60) in her adolescent material, especially in the context of (verbal or indeed nonverbal) fights, as in (35).

- (35) *You're a fucking hard nut, in't you?* (Cheshire 1982: 58)

Although the form of these tag questions is not necessarily non-standard, the function certainly is. They are intended to convey assertion or even aggression, rather than seek confirmation. Similar uses can also be confirmed for the FRED material and are thus not a feature of adolescent language exclusively, as example (36) shows.

- (36) a. *I was playing up the wall and all of a sudden, something's hit me in the bleeding head, hasn't it.* (FRED LON\_001)  
 b. *'Course we had a fight there, don't we.* (FRED LON\_001)

Wright similarly notices that “the oddest thing about Cockney tag questions is their use to ask a listener things he or she cannot possibly know, especially in recounting incidents” (Wright 1981: 121).

## 3.8. Conjunctions

3.8.1. *Without as a conjunction*

The use of *without* as a conjunction introducing finite clauses has not been documented before for the Southeast of England, but the examples from FRED in (37) are unambiguous. In StE, an equivalent construction would have to contain a non-finite clause with *-ing* (... *without having to sit on the floor*), as *without* in StE can only introduce non-finite or verbless clauses (Quirk et al. 1985: 704). Similar to comparative *as* and *than* discussed below, *without* can be strengthened by *that*, as in (37b), yielding a non-standard complex conjunction.

- (37) a. *Because my old man couldn't walk from here to the corner **without** he had to sit on the floor.* (FRED LND\_004)  
 b. *He was a very nice man. **Wouldn't** let you go in his place **without that** you, you (pause) cleaned your shoes before you come in the door.* (FRED LND\_004)

Unfortunately, there are no further examples available for the Southeast, so that this interesting phenomenon remains to be investigated in more detail in the future. A cursory look across FRED suggests however that this use of *without* is not restricted to the Southeast, but occurs in all dialect areas across Great Britain. The OED supplies evidence that *without* and *without that* as conjunctions introducing finite clauses were in use in StE until the end of the nineteenth century (OED, sub voce *without*). (At least some) non-standard varieties of English here seem to have maintained the historical construction.

3.8.2. *Comparative as, than*

In the Southeast of England, *what* can be added to the comparatives *as* and *than* and thus form a complex conjunction, as in (38) and (39).

- (38) *Well, Mum was as bad **as what** he was.* (FRED LND\_002)  
 (39) *So he's about eight years younger **than what** I am.* (FRED KEN\_005)

Again, this is a frequent strategy that has not been investigated in any depth yet. It does not seem to have historical predecessors in the standard, as the OED only refers to it as “dialectal” (OED, sub voce *what*), in contradistinction to *without* (*that*) above.

3.9. Pragmatic marker *like*

While non-canonical *innit* discussed above seems to have its origin in London (Andersen 2001: 97–208), the discourse marker *like* seems to be an imported fea-

ture from the U.S. (Andersen 2001: 216). Like *innit*, the pragmatic marker *like* is used almost exclusively by adolescents and young adults – Andersen states that in his material, “83 percent of the tokens of the pragmatic marker *like* are uttered by speakers aged 41 or lower” (2001: 225). The pragmatic marker *like* has a wide range of functions: it is used in “ad hoc concept construction”, i.e. for purposes of approximation and exemplification, as in (40a) and (40b); *like* is used to construct a metalinguistic focus, as in (40c), it is used as a quotative after BE (as in 40d), and, very frequently, it is a hesitational device or a discourse link (Andersen 2001: 209–299).

- (40) a. *It's just like all sticking out all over the place.* (Andersen 2001: 237)  
 b. *You know what I mean it's like all plotted.* (Andersen 2001: 237)  
 c. *It's like one day developing, right* (Andersen 2001: 242)  
 d. *I was like, he should come and speak to me* (Andersen 2001: 250)  
 e. *I know and like ... on Friday yeah ...* (Andersen 2001: 255)

Not surprisingly, given its recency, this pragmatic *like* is not found in the FRED material, which dates from the 1970s and 1980s and contains the speech of mostly older speakers. What can be corroborated, though, is the use of a distinct, “traditional” dialectal *like* for the Southeast of England as well, supporting Andersen’s hunch that this dialectal *like* is not exclusively a northern phenomenon, as examples (41) from FRED show.

- (41) a. *but they 're dead and gone now like. And eh, I went out with eh, ...*  
 (FRED LND\_003)  
 b. *Used to come down here like and have the day* (FRED KEN\_001)

This older *like* is used “parenthetically to qualify a preceding statement” (Andersen 2001: 206, quoting from the OED), quite distinct from the new uses as recorded in COLT by Andersen. It is not implausible however that London is the source for the outward spread of these new – imported – uses of *like*, especially – perhaps most notably – of quotative *like* which is currently being recorded all over Great Britain (cf. Macaulay 2001).

#### 4. Conclusion

Most of the features presented and discussed here are not used in the Southeast of England exclusively. However, even if features may have a more widespread geographical distribution, quantitative differences may be hiding behind qualitative similarity, opening up interesting research questions that only larger-scale comparative dialect studies will be able to answer. In the absence of more detailed dialect studies of this overlooked area of England, as well as larger comparative studies that include the Southeast, much of the material presented here must

remain speculative for the moment. Nevertheless, I have attempted to document some aspects of the grammar of the Southeast of England, hoping that this may serve as an impetus for future research on this surprisingly neglected dialect area.

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# British Creole: morphology and syntax

Mark Sebba

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. General description of British Creole

British Creole, as explained by Peter Patrick in his chapter on its phonology (see Patrick, other volume), is the product of dialect contact between the Creole language varieties of migrants from the Caribbean (the largest group of whom were Jamaican), and vernacular varieties of urban English English (EngE) (Patrick 1999). Speakers of British Creole (who usually call the language *Patois* or *Patwa*), from the second generation onwards, are all bilinguals or multilinguals. At a very early age, they acquire a local variety of British English; at school if not earlier, they will be exposed to Standard English as well. In the second and later generations, code-switching in private conversations is common, with local EngE predominating over Creole. Although grammatical, phonological and lexical evidence indicates clearly that British Creole is based on Jamaican Creole (JamC), its speakers are not confined to the descendents of Jamaicans. They include people whose heritage is Caribbean but not Jamaican, and, on a smaller scale, others who have no Caribbean connections at all (Sebba 1993; Hewitt 1986). As mentioned by Patrick in his introduction, there is a range of fluency in British Creole, from passive knowledge (with only token productive capability) to competence comparable with a Caribbean island-born speaker of Creole.

In Britain, Caribbeans were immersed in local varieties of British English and in the second and third generations have become dominant in those varieties. Edwards (1986: 100) describes the competence of some second-generation speakers of Creole as “highly reminiscent of that of second language learners.” Sebba (1993: 39) argues that the speakers he studied are more like ‘new dialect learners’ (Trudgill 1986) in that they acquire, sequentially, a new variety (Creole) which is similar in grammar, phonology and lexis to their first (London English).

Creoles within the Caribbean have long been a source of interest to linguists because of their high degree of variability, a variability often modelled as a ‘post-creole’ continuum in which two distinct and mutually unintelligible varieties – the *basilect* or ‘broadest’ Creole and the *acrolect* or local Standard English – are linked in ‘a continuous spectrum of speech varieties’ (DeCamp 1971: 350). The great syntactic variability of British Creole cannot be explained by a continuum

model alone, being due on the one hand to the existence of both Creole-like and standard-like variants for many linguistic forms, and on the other to the frequent mixing of distinctively Creole forms with distinctively EngE forms, sometimes as part of a conversational strategy of code-switching and sometimes, apparently, as a result of incomplete fluency in the Creole. There is evidence that less fluent second-variety Creole speakers ‘create’ Creole by adapting British English forms to make them seem Creole-like. From time to time hybrid linguistic forms appear which can only be explained this way. For example:

- (1) *What time did unu (you-plural) reach home?*  
 ‘What time did you get home?’

This utterance, marked as Creole by pronunciation (throughout) and pronoun forms (*unu*), would not be uttered by a first-language speaker of Creole in Jamaica, because JamC has no subject-auxiliary inversion in questions. The ‘normal’ JamC form for this question would be

- (1’) *What time unu (you-plural) did (or en, or Ø) reach home?*

The existence of forms like this suggests a strategy of ‘dressing up’ a basically London English sentence (e.g. *Did he give you what you were looking for?*) as Creole by adding Creole phonology, lexis and grammar. The results sound Creole enough to count as Creole for the purposes of the interaction, but would not pass for Creole in Jamaica. For these speakers ‘Patois’ is produced by a strategy of systematically ‘adapting’ their first language variety to produce utterances which conform, at least superficially, to the grammar of Creole. As a result their Creole intermittently shows some or all of the following (Sebba 1993: 52):

- (a) incomplete adaptation: insufficiently salient features of JamC ‘slip through’ and fail to be adapted;
- (b) inconsistency: due to possible learning or memory constraints, some adaptations are made sporadically, so that the same item might appear sometimes in its London English variant, sometimes in its JamC form;
- (c) misadaptation: where the systems differ in such a way that adapting correctly requires recognising a contrast that exists in JamC but not in London English, speakers occasionally create forms which are neither the target (JamC) nor London English

For many British-born speakers, the use of Creole in conversation is largely symbolic: purely communicative functions can all be carried out through the medium of English. The symbolism of Creole as a marker of group identity is powerful even for those speakers who have limited fluency in it. A broad range of speech styles or language varieties might count as ‘British Creole’ for different purposes. For the purposes of symbolising group membership, the token use of a few lexical items with a high symbolic load (e.g. forms of address, greetings,

swear words) might suffice for the speaker to be considered as talking ‘Black’ or ‘chattin’ Patois’. At the other end of the scale, some utterances of some speakers may be identical to basilectal Creole utterances produced by Jamaican speakers.

To summarise, British Creole is very poorly served by models of language which emphasise the separateness of different varieties and the regularities of differences between them. Variability in British Creole results from several different processes: variation with its historical origins in the Caribbean, code-switching, and second dialect acquisition strategies. Patrick (1999: 171) points out that for JamC “*a priori* categorical statements equating form and meaning are misleading”. Creole languages have inspired innovative models of both language variation and language contact, and ‘British Creole’ (even the label begs many questions) exhibits complexities of both types.

For the purposes of this chapter, the morphosyntax of Standard English and JamC as described by Beryl Loftman Bailey (1966) and Peter Patrick (this volume) are used as reference varieties.

## 1.2. Sources of data on British Creole

The examples contained in this chapter are drawn from the following sources:

1. A corpus of informal conversations among British-born Caribbean adolescents recorded by the author in London in the early 1980s. This data reflects mainly the usage of adolescent second-generation speakers and would not necessarily be typical of the third or subsequent generations who are by now adolescents themselves.
2. The Corpus of Written British Creole (CWBC) (Sebba, Kedge and Dray 1999), which contains texts in a range of genres produced in Britain by writers of Caribbean heritage. Although all the writers of the texts were based in Britain as adults, the language of the texts does not necessarily reflect specifically British, as opposed to Caribbean, usages. Most of the Creole in the corpus is actually a representation of speech (e.g. dialogue). More information is available at <http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/staff/mark/cwbc/cwbcman.htm>.

## 1.3. Orthography

Cassidy developed an orthography for JamC which is used in Cassidy and Le Page ([1967] 1980) and is widely used by academic linguists but little used elsewhere (see Sebba 1998 for a discussion of Creole spelling practices). Orthography in this article is that of the original source for most citations, elsewhere it is Cassidy orthography (for grammatical citation forms etc.).



## 2. Verbal syntax and morphology

### 2.1. Verbal morphology: invariance of forms

Basilectal JamC is characterised, in common with other Creoles, by invariance of forms. There is a general reduction or absence of morphological processes which commonly serve grammatical functions in Standard English, such as affixation, vowel changes, and suppletion. The corollaries of this, detailed further below, include a lack of person/number agreement, invariance of pronoun forms irrespective of grammatical function, absence of morphological plural marking and invariant verb forms.

Even where JamC appears to have morphological marking of verbs, the reality is otherwise. For a few common verbs the base form of the JamC verb derives historically from an English past tense. Examples are *brok* ('break/broke'), *lef* ('leave/left'). These forms are used invariantly in JamC for both present and past.

As with other features of basilectal JamC, 'invariance' in British Creole is found variably. In other words, we can often find forms which show a lack of morphological marking alongside other forms, even in the same utterance, which display morphological marking in accordance with Standard English norms. Examples can be seen below in sections 2.2. (example 6) and 6.1. (examples 35 and 36).

### 2.2. Agreement

Agreement for person and number is absent in basilectal JamC. Generally this is also the case in British Creole, e.g.

(2) *She **look** pretty though, and **favour** you too.* (CWBC, fiction)

However, in British Creole we sometimes find agreement, even in a sentence where there is a lack of agreement elsewhere:

(3) *It **seems** like young Zukie **want** Paradise fe himself!* (CWBC, fiction)

Although the copula appears in different forms, these do not usually reflect person or number agreement:

(4) *OK, star, we know say **you is** a top soldier down ah Yard.*

'OK, star [a friendly term of address], we know that you are a top soldier down at the Yard.' (CWBC, fiction)

(5) *I **is** a very expensive man right now.* (CWBC, fiction)

(6) *Me and my spars dem **was** coming from a club in Dalston.* (CWBC, school writing)

## 2.3. Tense – aspect – modality systems

Unlike the Standard English system of verbal tense and aspect, which relies on affixation, morphological change, and the auxiliaries *be* and *have*, the JamC basilectal tense/aspect system is usually described in terms of a system of invariant preverbal particles, which allow for a set of contrasts different from those available in Standard English.

According to Bailey (1966: 45–46), the particle system comprises a ‘tense indicator’ *en* and an ‘aspect marker’ *a*. The third member of this system is zero, the absence of a marker. The following examples show how the tense and aspect markers may combine (the Standard English glosses are approximate):

Function	Morpheme	Example	Gloss
habitual, anterior	∅	<i>Mi ron</i>	‘I run’ (habitually); ‘I ran’
progressive	<i>a</i>	<i>Mi a ron</i>	‘I am running’
anterior	<i>en</i>	<i>Mi en ron</i>	‘I have run’; ‘I had run’
anterior progressive	<i>ena</i> ( <i>en+a</i> )	<i>Mi ena ron</i>	‘I was running’

The tense marker which Bailey cites as *en* does not usually appear in that form in British Creole. It occasionally appears as *bin*, but much more frequently as *did*.

Examples below show unmarked anterior or past tense (7), progressive aspect marking *a* (8), anterior tense marking with *did* (only) (9), and combined aspect and tense marking (10).

- (7) *Is wha appen Sharon, unnu reach already?*  
‘What happened Sharon, are you there already?’ (CWBC, scripted dialogue)
- (8) *Check wah’ de bwoy ah do.*  
‘Check what the boy is doing.’ (CWBC, fiction)
- (9) *Him did sing pure lovers rock tune.*  
‘He sang only ‘Lover’s Rock’ tunes.’ (CWBC, school writing)
- (10) *de sun did a shine same way*  
‘the sun was shining the same way’ (CWBC, poetry)

Example (11) below shows that the sequence of tenses also differs from that of Standard English: the anterior marker *did* occurs only once, at the beginning of a sequence where all the verbs are preceded by the aspect marker *a*.

- (11) *Mi did a stan up inna di miggie a di road an mi a flag dung di bus fi stop an nun a di bus naah stop a nuh time at all.*

'I was standing in the middle of the road and I was flagging down the buses to stop and none of the buses ever stopped at all.' (CWBC, scripted dialogue)

In decreolisation, morphemes of non-standard appearance may be replaced by others which *resemble* morphemes of Standard English, but do not necessarily have the same function. In this context we may note that an important site for this is in the tense/aspect marking system. Thus basilectal *ben* or *en* may be replaced by *did*, while the preverbal 'aspect marker' *a* may be replaced by a suffix /in/ (modelled on the Standard English *-ing* ending), with or without a preverbal /iz/ modelled on English *is*. The first of these changes is almost categorical in British Creole, but the second occurs variably, cf. examples (12) and (13).

(12) *Mi **did** really **glad** fi see them.* (CWBC, school writing)

(13) *We movin in a single file.* (CWBC, poetry)

## 2.4. Auxiliaries, modal verbs and infinitives

### 2.4.1. Infinitive marking

The English infinitive marker *to* is most often translated by *fi* in JamC. In the Caribbean *fi* is considered to be a marker of extremely broad Creole; many otherwise broad Creole speakers will use *tu* (English *to*) in preference (see Bailey 1966: 122–124 for a description of the use of *fi*).

(14) *Me want a permanent stamp **fe go** ah New York City.* (CWBC, fiction)

In some cases infinitive marking is optional in Creole where it is obligatory in English (e.g. after *want* and *start*):

(15) *Mi nose **start run** wid misery.* (CWBC, poetry)

(16) *I **waan** yuh **play** a record for me idren.*  
'I want you to play a record for my brothers.' (CWBC, fiction)

## 2.5. The copula

In Standard English the verb *to be* is used in a number of different functions:

- (a) As an auxiliary verb to form different verb tenses: *I am writing*, etc.
- (b) As an equative verb: *I am a teacher* etc.
- (c) As a locative verb: *We are in London* etc.
- (d) As a copular verb with a predicate adjective: *This book is old* etc.

Basilectal JamC uses a different expression for each of these:

(a') Auxiliary verbs are not used to form tenses or aspects of the verb in JamC (see 2.3. above): this is done by using invariant particles.

(b') The JamC equative verb *a* "regularly connects two nominals" (Bailey 1966: 32):

(17) *Den him know sey dat dem a duppy.*  
'Then he knew that they were ghosts.' (CWBC, school writing)

(c') JamC has a separate locative verb *de*:

(18) *Him deh ah jail.*  
'He is in jail.' (CWBC, fiction)

(19) *Me deh pon some serious business.*  
'I am on some serious business.' (CWBC, fiction)

Sometimes the copula is omitted altogether in locatives:

(20) *"The bathroom upstairs," Joseph said.* (CWBC, fiction)

(d') With true predicate adjectives in JamC, no copula is required, the predicate adjective functioning like a stative verb:

(21) *Di place clean and di food nice.* (CWBC, humour)

(22) *De night did cold.* (CWBC, school writing)

British Creole speakers may use /iz/ as a substitute for *a* and/or *de*, obscuring some of the grammatical differences between JamC and Standard English.

## 2.6. Negation

The main negator is preverbal *no*, as in:

(23) *Perhaps she have a secret man and nuh tell we.* (CWBC, fiction)

*No* can also combine with the aspect marker *a* to produce *naa* (*no+a*):

(24) *Mi naah bak affa she.*  
'I'm not barking at her.' (CWBC, fiction)

Other possible negators are *never* and *don't*.

'Double negatives' are used with quantitives in basilectal JamC, and are frequently found in British Creole, where their distribution is similar to that in most non-standard British varieties of English:

(25) *Nothing don't seriously wrong wid him.* (CWBC, fiction)

*Ain t* is also a common negator (=BE+*not*) though it may be better to consider it as British English rather than British Creole:

(26) *I in't taking nothing from none of them.* (CWBC, fiction)

## 2.7. Adjectives and stative verbs

As mentioned in the section on the copula, predicate adjectives in JamC show behaviour similar to stative verbs. A number of words which in Standard English would be classed as adjectives are in fact verbs in JamC (e.g. *dead*), and vice versa (e.g. [*be*] *born*, [*be*] *named*).

(27) *One man from de Village did dead.* (CWBC, school writing)

(28) *That boy born and look exactly like you people.* (CWBC, fiction)

(29) *She sey she name Mervalin.* (CWBC, school writing)

## 3. The pronoun system

The JamC 'basilectal' pronominal system has only seven terms, as follows:

person	singular	plural
1	mi	wi
2	yu	unu
3	im (m/f) i (n)	dem

Mesolectal varieties would differentiate *im* (masculine) and *shi* (feminine) in the third person. These forms are used in subject, object and possessive functions.

An alternative construction, *fi* + PRONOUN, e.g. *fi-mi*, is available for the possessive:

(30) *That a fe yuh business.*  
'That's your business.' (CWBC, fiction)

British Creole speakers variably use pronoun forms modelled on Standard English alongside the Jamaican forms, where these are different. Thus while *mi* (for first person subject pronoun) is less standard-like and therefore has more symbolic potential as a group marker, we also often find *I* (and this particular pronoun has special significance for Rastafarians, see section 8 below).

In British Creole, the strict distinction between *yu* (singular) and *unu* (plural) may have been lost for some speakers who use *yu* for the plural, in analogy with Standard English.

#### 4. Noun syntax and morphology

##### 4.1. Plural marking

Basilectal JamC does not mark the plural of nouns, except in the case of animate nouns, which may be followed by the suffix *-dem*. In mesolectal varieties the Standard English suffix *-s* may co-occur with the JamC suffix *dem*, and this is also commonly found in British Creole, with animate and sometimes also inanimate nouns:

(31) *Look how me make yuh **dumplin's dem** fresh and crispy.* (CWBC, fiction)

##### 4.2. Possessives

In basilectal JamC, in keeping with the principle of invariance of form and lack of nominal morphology, possession is expressed simply by juxtaposition, with the possessor preceding the possessed. The effect is that the ordering of nouns is as in Standard English, but there is no possessive marker (*'*): thus *di bwai niem* 'the boy's name'.

This structure applies to common nouns but also to pronouns, so we find *mi buk* 'my book', *unu kyaa* 'your car' etc., although alternative forms *fi-mi buk*, *fi-unu kyaa* are possible.

(32) *Nuh tell me seh, you nuh recognise **yuh husband sister!***  
'Don't tell me you don't recognize your husband's sister!' (CWBC, fiction)

In British Creole, the possessive's of Standard English may appear variably.

#### 5. Complementation: the complementiser *seh*

A number of the Atlantic Creoles, including JamC, and many African languages, have a complementiser which in function is similar to *that* but which in form is similar to a verb meaning *to say*. According to Cassidy and LePage (1980: 396), in JamC *seh* [se] is used, "after verbs such as *think, know, believe, suppose, see* or others involving communication, as, *tell, hear, promise*, introducing the object clause: virtually equivalent to *that*. (Sometimes *that* is used redundantly after it.)"

Although *seh* is equivalent to Standard English *that* in some contexts, the rules governing the use of *seh* are different from those which apply to *that*: in fact *seh* occurs as a complementiser in much more restricted contexts than *that*. In British Creole, *seh* is common as a complementiser especially after *know, think* and *tell*, and can even be found in the English of British-born speakers (see Sebba 1993: 62).

- (33) *You must t'ink seh me turn English girl.*  
 'You must think I've become an English girl.' (CWBC, fiction)
- (34) *Phone Lefty, tell him seh we ready fe him now.*  
 '... tell him that we're ready for him now.' (CWBC, fiction)

## 6. Word order and information structure

### 6.1. Question structure

The process of subject/auxiliary inversion which characterises some kinds of question in written and formal Standard English is absent in basilectal JamC, so the word order of a question is the same as the order of the corresponding statement, e.g.

- (35) *So how Ethel's been doing?* (CWBC, fiction)
- (36) *You heard about Fluxy?* (CWBC, fiction)

British speakers of Creole sometimes produce hybrid forms which appear to have subject/auxiliary inversion, e.g.

- (37) *Did him give you what you a look for?*  
 'Did he give you what you were looking for?' (Conversational data,  
 London, 1980s)

Here, the corresponding JamC form would have the same word order as the declarative: *him did give...?*

*Did him* seems to be a case of direct transfer from English, but is strictly speaking neither English (which requires *did he*) nor JamC. Since Creole *did* is not an auxiliary, but an invariant particle, and therefore cannot undergo 'subject/auxiliary inversion', the best way to analyse this part of the utterance seems to be as an English string which has been adapted by changing the subject pronoun into its Jamaican form (cf. 1.1. above) while leaving the English grammar intact.

### 6.2. Topicalizing constructions

#### 6.2.1. Clefts

Clefts are constructions which involve fronting a nominal element. Cleft constructions are introduced by a topic marker or 'highlighter' which in JamC takes the form of the copula *a* (alternatively: *is*) or zero in positive clefts, and copula *a+no* in negatives. While in Standard English clefts seem to be uncommon and slightly awkward in questions (cf. *Who is it that you're looking for* vs. *Who are you looking for?*), in JamC they commonly occur in *wh*-questions with *what*, *when*, *where* and *who*.

- (38) *A who dat?*  
 ‘Who’s that?’ (CWBC, fiction)
- (39) “*Is what area dis, star?*” he asked. (CWBC, fiction)
- (40) *So is weh de load deh?*  
 ‘So where is the load?’ (CWBC, fiction)

More rarely cleft constructions can be found in non-questions.

- (41) *Skeets seh is one ki you bring, weh de rest deh?*  
 ‘Skeets said you brought one key [kilo of drugs], where’s the rest?’  
 (CWBC, fiction)
- (42) *We see sey a mini cab him inna.*  
 ‘We saw it was a minicab he was inside.’ (CWBC, school writing)

### 6.2.2. Predicate clefts

Predicate clefts are constructions which involve fronting and repeating the main verb (or predicate adjective) for emphasis or contrast. They are introduced by a topic marker or ‘highlighter’ similar to the one used in a (nominal) cleft construction. Predicate cleft constructions are characteristic of some Atlantic Creoles, including JamC, and some West African languages (Holm 1988: 179).

In JamC the topicaliser takes the form of the copula *a* (alternatively: *is*) or zero in positive clefts, and copula *a+no* in negatives.

- (43) *Work?! Where? Here? Joke you a joke, man!* (CWBC, fiction)
- (44) *A no play we a play.*  
 ‘We’re not playing!’ (CWBC, poetry)

Predicate clefts are rare in British Creole.

### 6.3. Verb chaining

Verbs in JamC may be combined in ways which are not possible in English. One set of possibilities involves the motion verbs *go* and *come* immediately followed by another verb, e.g.

- (45) *Prettyboy, go bring you gran’uncle something to drink.* (CWBC, fiction)

A second possibility is where the motion verb follows a main verb with lexical content, e.g.

- (46) *Weh you ah rush go so?* (CWBC, drama)



Other combinations of verbs in this kind of construction are sometimes found both in JamC and in British Creole. Verbal constructions of this type resemble serial verb constructions which are characteristic of some West African languages and certain Atlantic Creoles (see Sebba 1987).

## 7. Prepositions

The preposition *a* has a wide range of uses corresponding to some uses of Standard English *in*, *at* or *to*.

(47) *Me go a de airport.* (CWBC, fiction)

(48) *Me lef' Jamaica an' come ah England!* (CWBC, fiction)

Other common prepositions which differ from Standard English are *ina* ('in') and *pan* ('on'). In written form there are numerous variant spellings of these.

(49) *Why should I let you inna me house?* (CWBC, fiction)

(50) *Him saddle up 'pon bicycle an' t'ing.*  
'He's saddled up on a bicycle and stuff.' (CWBC, fiction)

## 8. The lexicon of British Creole

The lexicon of JamC as spoken in the Caribbean is derived from a variety of sources including various languages of West Africa, languages of indigenous Caribbean peoples such as the Arawak, and colonizer groups such as the Spanish and Portuguese. However, the great majority of the vocabulary of JamC is identifiable of English origin and is recognisably similar to Standard English (LePage and DeCamp 1960, Cassidy 1961, Cassidy and LePage 1980). Some of the JamC vocabulary which is not shared with other varieties relates to species of flora and fauna which are not found in Britain; these words are therefore largely redundant in Britain and may well not be known to second and subsequent generations. Some words relating to widespread Jamaican cultural practices and beliefs such as *obiah* ('magic') and *duppy* ('ghost') seem to be well-known to second generation speakers but are probably used mainly with reference to events in the Caribbean.

In the British context, as British Creole functions largely as a youth language, there are many new coinages which are short-lived and restricted to users of a particular age group: hence a popular perception that 'Black English' is actually a type of slang. Since at least the 1970s there has been a movement of vocabulary from Creole to the 'local multiracial vernacular' of adolescents (Hewitt 1986) in cities with large Caribbean minorities like London. Hewitt (1986) mentions find-

ing at least 30 items of Creole origin in the speech of young whites. The trend may well have accelerated since then. However, it is likely that the movement is not just in one direction, and that Creole as used by young second and third generation Caribbeans contains new words of British (not necessarily *English*) origin. The degree of cultural and linguistic contact between Creole and other British language varieties makes the origin of new terms difficult to pinpoint. The work of Rampton (1995, 1999) has shown that adolescents from different ethnic backgrounds in London are able to make use of each other's 'ethnic' languages to some extent.

One source of lexical innovation for British Creole is the Rastafarian religious movement, which has developed its own vocabulary for Rastafarian cultural practices and beliefs (Pollard 1994). Much of this vocabulary would also be used in the Caribbean. A distinctive Rastafarian linguistic practice which serves to make common lexical items incomprehensible to outsiders is to replace the first syllable of a word with /ai/, as in *Idrin* (< *bre-drin* 'brethren, fellow Rastafarians'), *ital* (< *vital* 'vegetarian food'), *iration* (< *generation*). Another practice is to replace 'negative' morphemes with their 'positive' counterparts, e.g. *overstand* < *understand*. Some of this vocabulary is occasionally used by non-Rastafarians.

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# **The Americas and the Caribbean**

Edgar W. Schneider (ed.)



# **Introduction: varieties of English in the Americas and the Caribbean**

Edgar W. Schneider

## **1. Introduction: One region?**

Dealing with the Americas and the Caribbean jointly, in a single volume and chapter, is a decision that requires some discussion, perhaps justification. Of course, in a global geographical perspective it comes natural, focusing upon a continent that is separated from other world regions by the globe's largest oceans on both sides. History also justifies such a perspective, with roughly similar population movements having occurred at similar times. All parts of the American continent were originally populated by Native Americans. After the "discovery" of the continent by Columbus and during the period of colonial expansion the indigenous tribes were subdued and cruelly decimated by European settlers, who, in turn, forced millions of Africans to be transported to the region, with the descendants of these, plus some smaller groups of later arrivals, making up for the major population segments. Close economic connections have prevailed to the present day, and substantial migration in both directions has occurred (and provided for mutual linguistic influences). On closer examination, however, there are of course also fundamental differences to be discerned in their economic, social, demographic and cultural make-up. North American settlers were attracted by the prospect of religious freedom and economic prosperity, while for a long time the Caribbean was not deliberately settled but rather exploited mainly as the site of the mass production of cash crops, most notably sugar cane, resulting in plantation societies which rested upon the infamous institution of slavery. Hence, while the descendants of Europeans predominate in North America, those of Africans constitute the majority throughout the Caribbean. Politically and socially, the Caribbean was much more fragmented and disputed by several European colonial powers, while on the North American continent the British secured their predominance (with the exception of remaining French enclaves and, around the Gulf of Mexico, Spanish traces and neighbors). Most importantly in the present, linguistic perspective, different settlement patterns have resulted in North American varieties of English being characterized by dialect transmission (with some degree of koinéization but also innovation) as against Caribbean forms of English being shaped by processes of creolization.

## 2. Historical background

Disregarding Sir Walter Raleigh's late-fifteenth century "Lost Colony" of Roanoke, permanent English settlement in North America started early in the seventeenth century, and the fact that the earliest settler groups tended to be religious dissenters predominantly from southern parts of England has resulted in the fact that the dialects of the regions where they established their bridgeheads (1607: Jamestown, Virginia; 1620: the Pilgrim Fathers landing on Plymouth Rock in Massachusetts) have retained higher degrees of similarity to southern forms of British English. Later streams of settlers, migrating from landing sites in or near Pennsylvania into the interior North, the Midlands and the Upper South in search of new lands, brought their northern English or Scottish-derived forms of English and caused these to diffuse, thus giving them a particularly strong role in the evolution of distinctly American ways of speaking. The first two centuries of British settlement (and the French and Indian War of 1756–1763) secured English as the language of the Atlantic seaboard and beyond, the area occupied by the thirteen original colonies that declared their independence in 1776. As a consequence of relatively homogeneous settler groups and long-standing stability in this eastern region along the Atlantic coast, regional dialect differences have been found to be stronger there than further to the West. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 opened up the continent for further exploration and settlement expansion throughout the nineteenth century, invigorated by the California Gold Rush after 1848 and the construction and completion (in 1869) of the transcontinental railway. Linguistically speaking, these processes resulted in even more dialect mixing and relatively higher degrees of linguistic homogeneity. At the same time, for centuries Africans had been brought to the South forcedly as slaves. Emancipation after the Civil War, in 1865, gave them freedom but did not prevent social segregation, which to some degree has persisted to the present day – developments which have resulted in and are reflected by the emergence and evolution of African American Vernacular English and Gullah and which in some respects may be taken to have resulted in a linguistic bridge between inland varieties and the Caribbean. In Canada, the British possession of Newfoundland dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, caused it to be settled by people from Ireland and southwestern England, and has left a distinctive dialect there. On the other hand, Canadian English in general is said to have been characterized by a tension between its British roots (reinforced by loyalists who opted for living in Canada after America's independence) and the continuous linguistic and cultural pressure (or attractiveness, for that matter) exerted by its big southern neighbor. Furthermore, varieties of American English comprise accents forged by immigrant groups from a host of countries of origin, including southern and eastern Europeans, Asians, and South and Central Americans: Today, the most important of these are certainly the forms of English created by contact with Mexican Spanish.

In the Caribbean, the British entered the stage more than a century after the Spanish had established themselves; and the struggle for superiority and influence between these two and a few more European powers (most importantly, the French and the Dutch) shaped the ragged history of the region for centuries. The agents of these struggles were not primarily settlers but buccaneers, planters, and slaves, and many islands changed hands repeatedly (31 times, it is reported, in the case of Tobago). Such political turnovers and other activities resulted in high rates of cross-migration and mutual influences, also linguistically (Holm 1983). The earliest British possessions in the region were St. Kitts (1624; said to have been highly influential in the shaping and dispersal of Caribbean language forms: Baker and Bruyn 1998) and Barbados (1627). Jamaica, the largest and most important stronghold of Caribbean English (and Creole), became British in 1655. Suriname, located on the South American continent but culturally a part of the Caribbean in many ways, presents an exceptional and also linguistically extraordinary case: An English colony for only 16 years (from 1651 to 1657, when it was exchanged for New Amsterdam, which thus became New York), it has retained the English-related creole of its founder years, now called Sranan, and its maroon descendant forms of the interior to the present day, thus being the site of the most conservative and radical creoles in the region. In Trinidad, English and English-based creole replaced French creole only in the course of the nineteenth century. Finally, various historical incidents (minor settlement migrations, like from the Caymans to the Bay Islands of Honduras; log-wood cutting, buccaneering and even shipwrecks in Belize and Nicaragua; economic activities, like railroad construction in Costa Rica and the building of the canal in Panama) established pockets of English creoles throughout central America.

### 3. Research coverage and main topics of investigations

All of these processes have resulted in a diverse range of varieties of English, which have attracted the attention of observers and scholars for centuries. Early accounts tended to be anecdotal records or short literary representations by native users or outside observers (except for sketchy dictionaries and grammars produced by missionaries, notably for Sranan, which is therefore historically uniquely well researched). Serious and systematic scholarly investigation of these varieties began with the launching of dialect geography in North America in the late 1920s. As a consequence, regional varieties of American English (as well as some degree of social variation), based upon data from the 1930s to the 1970s, are thoroughly documented by a series of regional atlas projects, most importantly the *Linguistic Atlas of New England* (Kurath 1939-43), the *Linguistic Atlas of the Middle and South Atlantic States*, directed first by Kurath, then by Raven McDavid, and now by William Kretzschmar (Kretzschmar 1994; see the web site with data for downloading at <us.english.uga.edu>) and the *Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States* (Pederson

et al. 1986-92), along with several others (see Davis 1983 for a survey). These projects were analyzed in several studies, three of which, covering the levels of vocabulary, morphology and pronunciation, respectively, count as classics, having established the conventional division of American English into three main regions – North, Midland, and South (Kurath 1949; Atwood 1953; Kurath and McDavid 1961). Carver (1987) later challenged this division and proposed to consider the northern Midlands and southern Midlands as divisions of extended North and South regions, respectively – a recategorization which is less dramatic than it might look at first sight. Since the 1990s the second major project of investigating the regional dialects of all of the US, Labov's Telsur survey, has been under way; it looks into phonological differences and analyses ongoing sound changes (Labov, Ash and Boberg *fc.*). This project has grown out of the second major discipline that has investigated variation within and varieties of American English, sociolinguistics, founded by Labov in the 1960s (Labov 1966, 1972). Employing conversational interviews and quantitative techniques of analysis, sociolinguists have investigated patterns of variation and change in many different cities and communities (Chambers 2003), including, most importantly, African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and, in recent years, dialect enclaves. The 1960s also saw the growth of creole studies as a distinct paradigm of linguistic investigation, with many of its early classics being concerned with the English-based creoles of Jamaica (Bailey 1966) and Guyana (Bickerton 1975; Rickford 1987). In addition to many important book-length studies of individual varieties (listed in the general bibliography and referred to in the individual articles of this book), many collective volumes, reflecting a variety of research activities, have been published, including Williamson and Burke (1971), Allen and Underwood (1971), Allen and Linn (1997), Preston (1993) and Schneider (1996) on North American varieties in general, Montgomery and Bailey (1986), Bernstein, Nunnally and Sabino (1997), Montgomery and Nunnally (1998) and Nagle and Sanders (2003) on Southern English, Frazer (1993) on the Midwest, as well as Carrington, Craig and Dandare (1983), Christie (1998), several volumes of the "Creole Language Library" series published by Benjamins, and, most recently, Aceto and Williams (2003) on Caribbean creoles and dialects.

Schneider (1996a), in a volume that uniquely unites dialectologists, sociolinguists and creolists, surveys ongoing research activities on North American Englishes, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Updating and supplementing these observations a little, we can observe the following major trends of ongoing research:

- computational and statistical procedures applied to dialect atlas data (Kretzschmar and Schneider 1996 and other work by Kretzschmar and, more recently, John Nerbonne);
- the study of variation and change of specific variables in select communities (for broad surveys, see Chambers 2003; Chambers, Trudgill and Schilling-Estes 2002), in particular



- investigations of enclave communities and their trajectories of change (Wolfram, Hazen and Schilling-Estes 1999 and other work by Wolfram and associates in North Carolina, and work by Cukor-Avila in Texas);
- investigations of ongoing sound changes in AmE (work by Labov and associates, most notably Labov 1994; Labov, Ash and Boberg *fc.*; Gordon 2001; Thomas 2001);
- investigations of ethnolinguistic differences, in particular cultural and pedagogical implications of the uses of AAVE (Mufwene *et al.* 1998; Rickford 1999; Lanehart 2001);
- historical investigations of regional varieties (in particular, Southern English: Nagle and Sanders 2003);
- improved diachronic documentation and interpretation of pertinent sources on the history of AAVE (Schneider 1989; Bailey, Maynor and Cukor-Avila 1991; Poplack 2000; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001; Kautzsch 2002; Wolfram and Thomas 2002).

In a similar vein, it is also possible to survey the major research fashions, recurrent themes and basic concerns, in the investigation of the Caribbean English creoles. These include the following:

- the genesis of creoles (the perennial issue of universalism vs. substratism; *cf.* Alleyne 1980; Bickerton 1981; Muysken and Smith 1986) and the diffusion of creole forms (Huber and Parkvall 1999; Baker and Huber 2001)
- a search for historical documentation of earlier stages of Caribbean creoles (to provide improved empirical evidence for the aforementioned discussion; *cf.* for Jamaica D’Costa and Lalla 1989; for Guyana Rickford 1987; for Barbados Rickford and Handler 1994)
- acceptance of the fact that creoles come in different “degrees of creoleness”, *i.e.* that differences between “deep / radical” creoles on the one hand and “lighter” creoles with few basilectal features, sometimes called “semi-creoles” or “creoloids”, exist and blur the very category of “creole languages” (Schneider 1990; Neumann-Holzschuh and Schneider 2000; Holm 2004), and increased emphasis on the importance of mesolects (Patrick 1999);
- consequently, the questioning of the distinctness of creoles as a language type altogether, thus regarding them as varieties of their lexifiers rather than distinct languages (Mufwene 2001; but *cf.* McWhorter 1998, 2000) and ultimately the recognition of language contact as the appropriate overarching topic and field of study (Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Thomason 2001; Myers-Scotton 2002; Winford 2003)
- increased emphasis on empirical documentations, primarily with respect to relatively “minor”, hitherto underinvestigated varieties (Aceto and Williams 2003; James and Youssef 2002) but also in association with typological and sociolinguistic thinking (*e.g.* Winford 1993; Hackert 2004).

- the emergence of an increasingly positive attitude toward creoles in public discourse, recognized as carriers of regional identities and gradually encroaching into the public domain (Shields-Brodber 1997; Mühleisen 2002).

#### 4. Parameters of variation by language levels

The varieties of English in the Americas, like everywhere else, correlate with the parameters of region, social class, and style, and in most cases it is impossible to draw clear-cut, qualitative distinctions. Typically, select features tend to occur more frequently in certain varieties than in others; hardly ever are there any uncontroversial shibboleths to be observed (for instance, even the prototypically Southern pronoun *y'all* has been shown to be spreading outside of the South; Tillery, Wikle and Bailey 2000). Nevertheless, it is possible to state some broad tendencies which as such are of interest.

Broadly speaking, phonology tends to vary regionally while grammar varies socially in the first place. Pronunciation differences delimitate dialect regions of North American English most clearly and consistently, and the contributors to the pronunciation papers point out local, regional and supraregional phonological or phonetic features. Of course, accents go by social class as well, but the standard assumption for American English is that even educated speakers, from certain regions at least (most notably New England and the South), at times use regional pronunciation characteristics and thus speak “with an accent”; hence, despite the persistent belief in a homogeneous “General American” accent or notions like “network English” there is in fact no single American norm of pronunciation that corresponds to RP in England, being a non-regional class dialect. (Kretzschmar, in this volume, defines a “Standard American English” as an accent deliberately held free of features associated with particular regions.) In contrast, the phonologies of Caribbean varieties of English are underresearched – the strong focus of the discipline upon creole genesis, reflected in the grammar of creoles, has made this a Cinderella of creole studies (Plag 2003 deliberately sets out to remedy this situation). Clearly there are both supra-regional features and tendencies and regional or local forms of pronunciation, but no systematic survey of such similarities or differences is available to date.

Unlike phonology, in North American English grammatical variation is primarily socially determined. This is perhaps less true for nonstandard morphology (like irregular nonstandard verb forms or noun plurals), where dialectological research has identified some regional correlations (Atwood 1953), and a small number of minor syntactic patterns may be pinned down to specific regions; but basically using nonstandard grammar betrays a speaker’s social class background, not his or her regional whereabouts. Many of these patterns (like multiple negation, left dislocation, or intonation-marked but uninverted questions) are not even distinctly

American but constitute elements of informal English, presumably British-derived, in many countries around the globe. Quantitative distinctions from one dialect to another exist in America (i.e. some features occur more frequently in certain regions or contexts than others), but basically it is the particular configuration, the specific sub-set of such forms and patterns available in a given region or community, that identifies and distinguishes individual varieties of North American English.

This particular aspect, the uniqueness of the mixture of forms at a given location rather than a diagnostic role of any individual variant, can be stated for the Caribbean situation as well, although the creole continua found there provide for quite different, and certainly no less complex, linguistic ecologies. As is well known, creole grammars are characterized first and foremost by the use of pre-verbal markers for categories of tense, mood and aspect, in addition to several other “characteristically creole” features (e.g. specific copula uses, the functional conflation of pronoun forms, or serial verb constructions), while, conversely, they display very little inflectional morphology on verbs, nouns, or other word classes. Some of these forms characterize certain sub-regions (most importantly, a few forms appear to mark off the eastern as against the western Caribbean), but the most important parameter of variation here is the class and style stratification that is captured by the notion of a creole (or “post-creole”) continuum, the systematic variation between acrolectal (or near-standard), mesolectal and basilectal (“deep creole”) choices. Bickerton (1975), following deCamp (1971), described this variation as “implicational scales”, with both lects (distinct “grammars”) and their features arranged in such a tabular format that the presence of certain forms in certain lects predicts the presence of all other “more basilectal” forms in all other “more basilectal” lects. On the other hand, several aspects of this model have been challenged in recent years, including its monodimensionality and its diachronic implications (the assumption that creoles started out as basilects and have “decreolized”, i.e. exchanged basilectal creole forms by corresponding acrolectal English forms, in the course of time). In fact, the scholarly concentration upon the putatively pure, basilectal creole has led to the paradoxical situation that basilects are at the center of creole studies even if no one has ever documented a pure basilectal creole, while mesolects, the forms that are really in use, have only recently begun to be the objects of scrupulous investigation (Patrick 1999).

Words, finally, vary readily and mostly by region, with the range of their spread extending from the strictly local through the regional to the quasi-national domain. Variation in the lexicon is considerably more resistant to systematic investigation – which is why the contributions to this handbook project cover regional vocabulary only incidentally or not at all. Regional lexicography identifies the ranges and conditions of the uses of individual words (Kurath 1949; Carver 1987), and in the present context the main dictionaries to be consulted are the *Dictionary of American Regional English* for North America (Cassidy et al. 1985–) and the *Dictionary of Caribbean Usage* (Allsopp 1996) for the Caribbean.

## 5. Chapters selected for this handbook

The general considerations outlined above, in particular with respect to the existence of distinct dialectal forms, have guided the selection of individual varieties for coverage in this handbook. Their arrangement roughly follows geographical and historical patterns, with the US and Canada followed by the Caribbean and varieties being strung together according to their geographical proximity (moving from north to south and east to west in most instances) and their historical patterns of diffusion.

The first part covers phonological variation. For American English, Kretzschmar's paper describes a baseline "Standard" variety, devoid of distinctly regional traces; this is followed by papers which focus upon the most distinctive regional varieties: New England (Nagy and Roberts), the staging cities of the East Coast and the urban dialects of the interior North, including the ongoing change known as the "Northern Cities Shift" (Gordon), the South (with Thomas documenting the richness of rural Southern pronunciations and Tillery and Bailey discussing ongoing changes in the wake of urbanization), and the West and Midwest (Gordon, again). Boberg covers Canadian English, and Clarke describes the Newfoundland dialects. Ethnic varieties of AmE include AAVE (Edwards), Gullah (Weldon), Cajun Vernacular English (Dubois and Horvath), and Chicano English (Santa Ana and Bailey). In the Caribbean, the varieties represented are the Bahamas (Childs and Wolfram), Jamaica (with Devonish and Harry describing both English and Creole), smaller islands of the Eastern Caribbean (Aceto), Barbados (Blake), Trinidad and Tobago (Youssef and James), and Suriname (Smith and Haabo).

The morphosyntax part also starts with a baseline paper, covering structural phenomena which occur widely in colloquial AmE (Murray and Simon). Regionally distinctive grammatical variation in North America has been investigated in a small number of salient locations, including the Appalachians (presented in the chapter by Montgomery), enclave communities in the Southeast (discussed by Wolfram), and Newfoundland (documented by Clarke). The primary topics of grammatical research have been ethnic varieties, most notably AAVE (its urban form, discussed by Wolfram; its historical evolution, described by Kautzsch; and the extant creole form of Gullah, studied by Mufwene), but also Chicano English (see the chapter by Bayley and Santa Ana). For the Caribbean, on the other hand, regional differences from one island or region to another are obvious enough to justify such an arrangement, so there are papers on the Bahamas (Reaser and Torbert), Jamaica (Patrick), eastern islands (Aceto), Trinidad and Tobago (James and Youssef), Suriname (Winford and Migge), as well as Central America with special emphasis on Belize (Escure). Coverage of Barbadian Creole (Bajan) and Guyanese Creole would have been desirable, but, regrettably, papers commissioned on these topics failed to materialize.

Every selection of this kind requires decisions and categorizations, of course; I trust that the decisions made reflect the directions and intensity of ongoing research activities. This applies in the few cases where the commissioned papers for

phonology and grammar do not match, for instance: Investigations of Cajun English have taught us much about the dialect's phonology but little about its grammar; conversely, an extensive debate on the emergence of AAVE has been concerned with grammar almost exclusively; and many writings on Caribbean creoles have discussed grammatical but not primarily phonological features (hence the coverage of Belize plus Central America, focussing on grammar only). Of course, other considerations also applied, including space restrictions and the amount of existing research documentation: a handbook survey like the present one requires a certain degree of comprehensiveness and systematicity of earlier investigations of specific varieties, which is not available in many cases. It would have been very interesting to include papers on native American or Asian forms of English, for instance, but publications and research on these dialects have been eclectic so far; a great many facts are either unknown or assumed to be largely similar to "mainstream" forms of AmE. Space constraints and the fact that our project set out to describe "major" varieties exclude strictly local dialects, like, for example, those spoken by the Texas Seminoles in Bracketville (Hancock 1980), on small islands like the Caymans (Washabaugh 1983), or in the city of Americana, Brazil (Montgomery and Melo 1990). The same applies to Falkland Islands English (Sudbury 2001) and, of geographically uncertain association with any continent, the dialect of Tristan da Cunha – well documented and interesting in the light of dialect contact (Schreier 2002, 2003) but spoken by less than three hundred people. Finally Hawai'i, even if politically a part of the US, is discussed in the Pacific (and Australian) part of this handbook, in line with its geographical location.

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# Colloquial American English: grammatical features

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## 1. Introduction

Conventional wisdom has long dictated that, excluding the dialects used in New England, the South, and such northern cities as New York and Chicago, and aside from many ethnic-based vernaculars (Chicano English, Pennsylvania Dutch, and the like), nothing very interesting occurs in the grammar of American English. From the early twentieth century well into the 1950s, some linguists even used “General American” to describe what they perceived as a monolithic variety of the language (grammar included) that extended westward from Pennsylvania and included nearly everything north of the Ohio River and west of the Mississippi. Now, half a century later, the grammar of the North, Midwest, and West has still received remarkably little attention. And the same attitude of uninterest appears in the opinions of laypeople, who, like the Ohioan interviewed in the educational video *American Tongues*, believe that these dialects come “right out of the dictionary”.

Such perceptions dictate the reality of many Americans, and are difficult to dismiss. Yet much empirical evidence suggests that the grammar of the North, Midwest, and West is not “right out of the dictionary”. In fact, we will document that the morphological and syntactic constructions of these regions render the English used there as distinctive as that occurring anywhere in the United States.

Broadly speaking, these constructions fall into two categories: those that are socially and stylistically diagnostic but have no regional affiliation, and those that are regionally restricted but (within those regions) usually not diagnostic socially or stylistically. Features in the first category are typically recognized as vernacular, so draw the attention of English teachers, prescriptive dictionary editors, and other language watchers concerned about the health and vitality of the language. Features in the second category, however, may either occur so transparently that they go unnoticed until attention is drawn to them, or be widely recognized as dialectal stereotypes (in the latter case, they may then either be consciously avoided or used proudly as sources of identity).

Below we present all the features in each category, sub-grouping them by form or function and, for the regionalisms, discussing their areal distributions. We have drawn especially heavily from the inventories given in Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998: 331–344) and Christian, Wolfram, and Dube (1988), from the *Dictionary of American Regional English* (Cassidy 1985–2002; Cassidy 1991, 1996), and from Randolph and Wilson (1953) and Mencken (1963), though all the sample

sentences are taken from the vast corpus of our own research done between 1982 and 2002.

Several brief notes are necessary before we proceed to the features themselves. First, though we do characterize each feature socioeconomically or contextually or geographically, none is used by all or only the speakers in those classes or contexts or regions, just as no feature occurs categorically in the speech of any individual who actually uses it. Moreover, unlike is often true of differences in pronunciation and vocabulary, most features we discuss here are not usually responsible for lapses in communication: the grammars of *The car needs washed* and *He don't want no more*, for example, are unlikely to be misinterpreted anywhere.

We should be clear about our mission, too, which is entirely descriptive. Though most of the features we discuss here result from rule extension or analogy, we will not try to account more specifically for why the various dialects and their features occur as they do. The historical, social, and other causes we would adduce have been explained by Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998: 24–55), and we can do little to improve on that discussion.

Another notable detail of our presentation is that we use nonstandard orthography to capture the phonological flavor of the examples we cite. We discovered early on that divorcing grammar from pronunciation produced sample sentences which sounded awkward or unnatural at best. Co-occurrence rules simply prohibit *going to* from being juxtaposed with *ain't never* in a sentence like *\*He ain't never going to understand that*. A more natural rendering would entail the reduction of *going to*, as in *He ain't never gonna understand that*, and that is how we present it here.

Finally, though we characterize the features below as “colloquial” or “vernacular”, and compare them to “standard” English, of course such labels are social rather than linguistic judgments: matters of right and wrong in language are decided not by the structure of the language, but by the sociocultural biases of the people who speak it. Indeed, many features we discuss here had a long tradition of acceptance in the history of English (Chaucer and Shakespeare, for example, often used multiple negation), continue to occur in the standard forms of other languages, and may one day be accepted in the United States on a wider scale than they are currently.

## 2. Non-regional, socially/stylistically diagnostic features

These features do not link speakers to a given region, but occur more often as one descends the socioeconomic scale and the scale of contextual formality. We discuss as many features as possible in the space allotted, but cannot be comprehensive: we favor systemic patterns over individual usages (though we discuss a fair number of the latter as well), and generally restrict ourselves to grammar *per se* rather than matters of style/usage, or features so common that they occur throughout the language.



## 2.1. The verb phrase

## 2.1.1. Irregular verbs

Atwood (1953: 43) noted long ago that “[t]he most striking characteristic of [vernacular verb usage in the eastern United States] is the leveling of the preterite and the past participle forms [of irregular verbs]”. Subsequent research has confirmed that this is true in the North, Midwest, and West as well. Moreover, again after Atwood (1953: 44), “the standard preterite and past participle forms are [not] habitually reversed”; instead, speakers “waver between two forms, either of which may serve as preterite or as past participle”. The bare root of a verb may also serve as the simple past; thus irregular verbs typically occur in the three categories listed here (see Mencken 1963: 527–528 for more examples of specific verbs).

## 2.1.1.1. Simple past used as participle

- (1) a. Me and Bob have *swam* in that pond lotsa times.
- b. She’d *sang* that song her whole life, and then up and forgot the words.

## 2.1.1.2. Participle used as simple past

- (2) a. I *seen* somethin’ real strange up in them hills last night.
- b. Everybody knows he *done* it, but ain’t nobody gonna tell.

## 2.1.1.3. Bare root used as simple past

- (3) a. He *swim* in that river just about every day of his life.
- b. Why, he *give* Junior here more for it used than he [Junior] paid for it new.

Additionally, a fourth classification includes usages that may fall either into category 2.1.1.2. or 2.1.1.3. above.

## 2.1.1.4. Bare root/participle used as simple past

- (4) a. He *come* in about fifteen minutes late, like usual.
- b. We *run* over that hill faster’n you could blink.

## 2.1.2. Subject-verb concord

Nonstandard agreement patterns are frequent; those involving *be*, *do*, and *have* are most prominent, though nonstandard agreement can occur with any verb.

2.1.2.1. *Plural subject + singular be*

- (5) a. Them kittens *is* really startin' to aggravate me.  
b. They *was* there all night, spent the whole night there.

2.1.2.2. *Singular subject + plural, present tense do + contracted not*

- (6) a. Well, it sure *don't* help things none when we get hail like that.  
b. That meatloaf *don't* look too healthy.

2.1.2.3. *Plural subject + singular, present tense have*

- (7) a. The cars on that lot across the street there *has* just got to go.  
b. I think John and Melody there *has* the right idea.

2.1.2.4. *Plural subject + singular, present tense [other verb]*

- (8) a. So me and Billy *takes* this cow over to the barn...  
b. Them city people *eats* out a lot more'n we do.

2.1.3. *Inversion of auxiliary verb and subject in indirect questions*

Once believed to be a characteristic of only African American Vernacular English (AAVE), this has since been shown to occur throughout the United States. In embedded questions the expected word order of subject + auxiliary verb + main verb is permuted to parallel that of main-clause interrogatives: auxiliary verb + subject + main verb.

- (9) a. He asked *could he get there* about fifteen minutes late.  
b. Susan wants to know *should she bring* a casserole.

2.1.4. *Historical present*

This occurs when the speaker becomes especially involved in the retelling of a past incident. In every instance there is a shift, often mid-sentence, from the past or past progressive to the present tense, which signals the beginning of the event serving as the story's focus.

- (10) a. So I walked in the classroom, and the professor *comes up* to me and *says*, "Well, you're late again".  
b. Heather was just sitting there, minding her own business, and suddenly the whole desk just *collapses*.

### 2.1.5. Multiple negation

The first category of multiple negation listed below is especially prominent. (Note: we use “multiple negation” rather than “double negatives” since sentences may contain more than two negative markers.)

#### 2.1.5.1. Negative marking on auxiliary verb and on indefinite(s) following the main verb

- (11) a. He *didn't* do *nothin'* all day.  
 b. *Don't* be sittin' there tellin' me *no* lies or *nothin'*.

#### 2.1.5.2. Negative marking on auxiliary verb and on indefinite preceding the verb phrase

- (12) a. *Nobody* *won't* show up late when he coaches.  
 b. *Nothing* *can't* stop him now!

### 2.1.6. Ain't

Though *ain't* is becoming increasingly accepted, it still is widely stigmatized. Both categories of usage are extremely common.

#### 2.1.6.1. As a substitute for be + not

- (13) a. You know they *ain't* gonna be here on time.  
 b. Well, *ain't* you the lucky one.

#### 2.1.6.2. As a substitute for have + not

- (14) a. We *ain't* gone to that church for a long time.  
 b. *Ain't* she been to the doctor yet?

## 2.2. Adverbs and adjectives

### 2.2.1. Comparatives and superlatives

Standard English forms most comparatives and superlatives thus: one-syllable adjectives and adverbs take *-er* and *-est*; those of two or more syllables take *more* and *most*. As was true in Elizabethan English, however, and has long occurred in Appalachian English (AppE) and Ozarkian English (OzE), it is becoming more common in vernacular varieties for nearly any adverb or adjective to be made

comparative or superlative by adding either the suffix or *more/most*, respectively, or even by adding *-er* and *more* or *-est* and *most* together, to form a pleonastic construction (which functions pragmatically to indicate force or significance). In a third category of usage, participles used attributively compare like other adjectives.

#### 2.2.1.1. Freedom of occurrence of *-er/more* and *-est/most*

- (15) a. That's just one of the *most pretty* sunsets I believe I've ever seen.  
 b. You can get a little *more close* than that.  
 c. Why, he's the *regularest* kinda guy I know.  
 d. It was the *awfulest* lookin' sewin' job I ever seen, let me tell you.

#### 2.2.1.2. Co-occurrence of *-er/more* and *-est/most*

- (16) a. Ain't nobody around here *more cheaper* 'n old Bill.  
 b. That was the *bestest* chocolate gravy I've ever ate.

#### 2.2.1.3. Attributive particles compare like other adjectives

- (17) a. Oh, she's just about the *lovin'est* [= 'most loving'] one of the bunch.  
 b. That man is the *shootin'est* [= 'prone to shoot a gun'] fool I know.

#### 2.2.2. Absence of adverbial *-ly*

Historical *-ly* adverbs are often used without the *-ly* (see Mencken 1963: 562–564).

- (18) a. This pie of Grandma's is *awful* good.  
 b. He treated her *wrong* right from the start.

#### 2.2.3. Good and + [*descriptive adjective*]

This is a particularly prolific combining form.

- (19) a. If you don't get out of that draft, you're gonna get *good and sick*.  
 b. I'm sure by now everybody's *good and hungry*.

#### 2.2.4. Hopefully as a sentential adverb

Though old in the history of the language (Shapiro 1998), *hopefully* as a sentence modifier has been occurring more frequently since the 1960s.

- (20) a. *Hopefully*, I'll pass the next test.  
 b. No, *hopefully* Charlie won't wait till Christmas to pop the question.

### 2.3. Nominals

#### 2.3.1. Addition of inflectional morphemes to phrases

The two inflectional morphemes affecting nouns, {plural} and {possessive}, can be attached to phrases rather than the principal nouns in those phrases, forming “group plurals” and “group genitives” (both of which are old in the history of the language).

##### 2.3.1.1. Group plurals

- (21) a. That President had two *Secretary of States*.  
 b. All three *sister-in-laws* wound up going to medical school.

##### 2.3.1.2. Group genitives

- (22) a. That's the *guy who won the gold medal's* girlfriend.  
 b. No, I meant the *lawyer in that office's* secretary.

#### 2.3.2. Personal pronouns

Several categories of personal pronoun variation occur (Mencken 1963: 543–557); the fourth listed below has regional variants such as *you'uns*, *y'all*, and *youse*. Pronominal apposition, involving the use of a redundant subject pronoun, was once identified with AAVE, but now is known to occur throughout the language.

##### 2.3.2.1. Regularization of third-person reflexives

- (23) a. He always did think he could do just about everything all by *hissself*.  
 b. And then they went and locked *theirselves* out of the trailer.

##### 2.3.2.2. Extension of object forms to demonstratives

- (24) a. *Them* roosters across the road there has just got to go.  
 b. Just hand me *them* pliers there, will ya?

##### 2.3.2.3. Extension of object forms to coordinate subjects

- (25) a. When are *Julie and them* gonna go pick her up?  
 b. Yeah, *me and Jodie* broke up last October.

2.3.2.4. *Adoption of you guys as second-person personal pronoun*

- (26) a. When did *you guys* get outa class?  
 b. [Are] *you guys* gonna go over to Michael's house?

2.3.2.5. *Pronominal apposition*

- (27) a. Yeah, my brother, *he* dropped outa school again.  
 b. Ted's cousin, *he* really messed up bad this time.

2.3.3. *Relative pronouns*

Each category below involves the use of specific pronouns in nonstandard contexts. The second, also frequent in southern varieties of American English, is particularly stigmatized.

2.3.3.1. *That for who(m)*

- (28) a. He's the professor *that* I told you about.  
 b. Isn't Steve the one *that* took first place?

2.3.3.2. *What for [relative pronoun]*

- (29) a. That dog there's the one *what* wet on the carpet.  
 b. The bulletin board *what's* on that wall is yours.

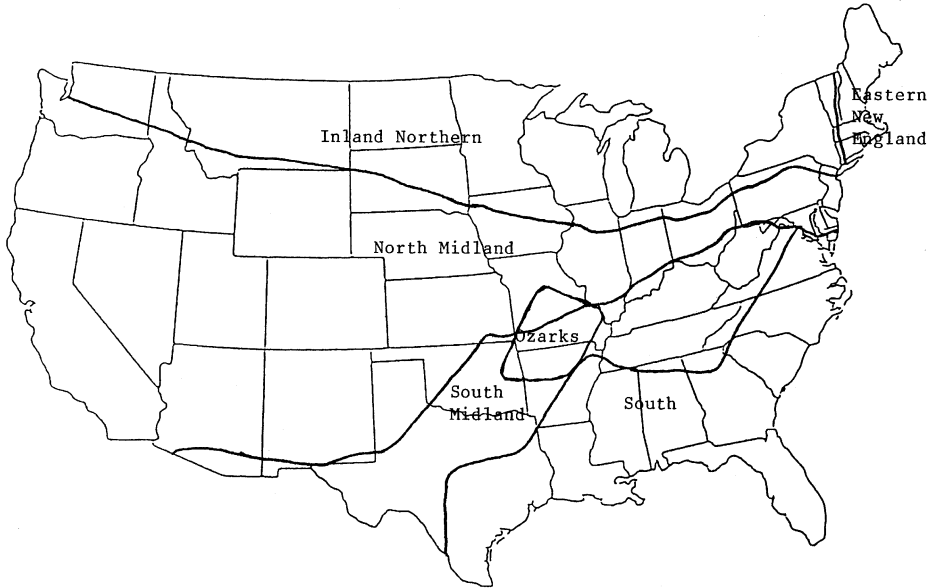
2.3.3.3. *Which for the coordinate conjunction and*

- (30) a. He told me I could jog after seven days, *which* he knows I don't like to run.  
 b. Carla bought Ted that sweater, *which* she knows he's allergic to wool.

**3. Socially/stylistically non-diagnostic, regional features**

These are regionally restricted non-diagnostic features. Again, since many involve specific lexical items, we cannot be comprehensive. Since we divide the discussions below according to dialect area, we have included a map with those areas clearly labeled (see Map 1). The major east-west boundaries and the regions they delimit are from those suggested by Raven McDavid (1958: 580, following Kurath 1949) as they have been revised and expanded by additional research; the Ozarkian borders are taken from Christian, Wolfram, and Dube (1988: 25, fig. 2.4). We

do not delimit the West since, though its lexicon and phonology are distinctive (Carver 1987; Labov, Ash and Boberg forthcoming), its grammar is not.



Map 1. Dialect areas of the USA

### 3.1. Inland northern

The grammar of this area is defined more by negative evidence than positive, so we record very few features here.

#### 3.1.1. *Dove as simple past of dive*

This is an innovation counter to the general analogical trend of strong verbs > weak verbs.

- (31) a. The boy *dove* off the platform and into the lake.  
 b. The plane *dove* and then went into a spiral.

#### 3.1.2. Sick to the stomach

Once restricted to just the Inland North, this is now leeching into the Midlands.

- (32) a. The little girl felt sick *to* her stomach.  
 b. Is he sick *to* his stomach, too?

## 3.2. Midland

The language used in the North Midland and especially the South Midland shares features with that used in the Inland North and South, respectively – so many that some believe the division to be primary rather than secondary (Carver 1987). That debate does not bear on our discussion here; we use Kurath's terminology only for the sake of historical consistency.

3.2.1. *Positive anymore*

Formerly regarded as having negative/interrogative bias, *anymore* now occurs with increasing frequency in positive, non-interrogative sentences (Murray 1993), with the approximate meaning of 'nowadays'. This usage was restricted to western Pennsylvania, Appalachia, and the Ozarks as recently as the early twentieth century, but now occurs extensively throughout the Midlands and is leeching strongly into the Inland North. The *anymore* can occur before or after the phrase it modifies, and occasionally even stands alone.

- (33) a. Sam didn't use to eat red meat, but he sure does *anymore*.  
 b. *Anymore* them crows just come and eat all the corn.  
 c. [Do you use disposable diapers?] *Anymore*.

3.2.2. [*Verb of volition*] + *V-en*

*Like* + *V-en* occurs largely east of the Mississippi; *need/want* + *V-en* are leeching into the Inland North (Murray, Frazer, and Simon 1996; Murray and Simon 1999, 2002).

3.2.2.1. *Need* + *V-en*

- (34) a. Those shirts still *need ironed*.  
 b. The car in the driveway *needs washed*.

3.2.2.2. *Want* + *V-en*

- (35) a. That cat there sure does look like she *wants petted*.  
 b. Is the baby crying because she *wants picked up*?

3.2.2.3. *Like* + *V-en*

- (36) a. The baby *likes cuddled*.  
 b. Be sure to let us know if you'd *like picked up* from the airport.



3.2.3. Quarter till (*the hour*)

This is also common throughout much of the South.

- (37) a. He said he'd meet us there at quarter *till* five.  
 b. We'll need to leave at quarter *till* if we don't want to be late.

3.2.4. All the + [*singular count noun*] or one '*the only*'

Both categories are especially common in the South Midlands, and also occur in AppE.

- (38) a. That's *all the coat* (= the only coat) he has.  
 b. Is this *all the one* (= the only one) you have?

3.2.5. All the + [*adjective/adverb of positive degree*]

This is especially common in the South Midlands and South (cf. the feature just below).

- (39) a. That's *all the fast* it can fly.  
 b. That's *all the far* she can throw it.

3.2.6. All the + [*adjective/adverb of comparative degree*]

This occurs throughout the North Midlands and Inland North (cf. the feature just above).

- (40) a. That's *all the faster* he can run.  
 b. Is that *all the farther* you're willing to go on that topic?

3.2.7. Want + [*preposition*]

In these elliptical constructions, the missing infinitive is understood.

- (41) a. Does the dog *want in/out*?  
 b. Do you *want on/off* that list of names?  
 c. The baby *wants up/down*.

3.2.8. Wait on '*wait for*'

This occurs throughout the Midlands, and is leeching strongly into the Inland North.

- (42) a. We're not going to *wait* on you all day.  
 b. She's been *waiting* on that bus nearly half an hour.

3.2.9. [Interrogative pronoun] + all

*Who* and *what* are common. This occurs especially in the South Midlands.

- (43) a. *Who all* did you say was gonna be there?  
b. *What all* do you want me to get out for lunch?

3.2.10. Second-person plural personal pronoun you`uns

This occurs frequently in western Pennsylvania and the South Midlands.

- (44) a. If *you`uns`d* just apply yourselves a little more, you`d do so much better.  
b. Do *you`uns* want to come with us?

3.2.11. One + [noun]

The *one* of this phrase is redundant when the following noun is singular, and does not limit the number of things specified when the noun is plural.

- (45) a. I wouldn`t mind having that *one dog* in the back.  
b. Remember those *one kids* we saw last week?

3.2.12. Whenever ‘at the time that’; ‘as soon as’

This occurs in the eastern South Midlands, especially AppE. It may cause misunderstandings, since *whenever* can also connote indifference (Montgomery and Kirk 2001).

- (46) a. *Whenever* I first heard the news, I about fell over.  
b. The plumber said he`d be here *whenever* he got the chance.

3.2.13. Compound modals

Common throughout the South and South Midlands, this involves the clustering of modals such as *might* and *could*. (Note: we use “compound modals” rather than “double modals” because more than two occasionally occur together.) Semantically, compound modals tend to lessen the force of attitude/obligation expressed by single modals, so *might oughta* would be understood as less forceful than either *might* or *oughta* alone.

- (47) a. You *might oughta* go to that meeting and express your opinion.  
b. You *might could* get a second job.

## 3.2.14. Come/go with

These elliptical constructions, though found throughout the North Midland region, occur especially often in areas with historically dense concentrations of German settlers. They are frequently interchangeable structurally.

- (48) a. We're gonna go to the store now. You wanna *come/go with*?  
 b. Dustin's coming over at 4:00 o'clock, and Michaela wants to *come with*.  
 c. Honey, Johanna has to leave now. Do you want to *go with*?

3.2.15. Wakened (*as the past participle of wake*)

This is restricted largely to the North Midlands, and may be dwindling in frequency, being supplanted by the more widespread *awakened* (or, occasionally, *woke*).

- (49) a. Sylvia has *awakened* late every day this week.  
 b. When Jim *awakened*, Cathy was already in the kitchen eating breakfast.

## 3.3. Ozarkian English

The Ozarks encompass northwestern Arkansas, most of southern Missouri, as well as small pieces of northeastern Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas. As such, they are Midland, with the Missouri Ozarks bisected by the North Midland-South Midland boundary. OzE is South Midland in nature, yet is different enough to justify separate consideration here. Indeed, the rugged hills of the Ozarks, combined with many of the original settlers being transplants from Appalachia, created a dialectal island that tourists and back-to-the-landers began to penetrate in earnest only in the second half of the twentieth century. Predictably, OzE shares much in common with AppE (Christian, Wolfram, and Dube 1988).

3.3.1. *The verb phrase*3.3.1.1. *Verb forms*

Regular and irregular verbs may take on irregular forms in the present, simple past, and participle. Those in the present tense are restricted to forms with *-en(ed)* and first person *wished* 'wish that'.

3.3.1.1.1. *Simple past forms (those with -en[ed] are especially numerous)*

- (50) a. He *div* into that pond, went all the way to the bottom.  
 b. That bear *riz* up on his hind legs, *musta* stood eight foot tall.  
 c. He said he *boughtened* himself a new truck.

3.3.1.1.2. *Participle forms (those with be- or -en[ed] are especially numerous)*

- (51) a. She's *het* up the coffee; go get you a cup.  
 b. They've cried and *holden* auctions there for years.  
 c. He got all drunk and *benastied* [= 'soiled', as with vomit] hisself.

3.3.1.1.3. *Present forms with -en(ed)*

- (52) a. Just wait'll things *quieten* down some.  
 b. Them chickens there *belongen* to ole Joe across the way.

3.3.1.1.4. *Present tense, first person wished 'wish that'*

- (53) a. I don't like it here. I *wished* I hadn't never come.  
 b. I *wished* you'd just get on with it.

3.3.1.2. *A-prefixing*

An *a-* may occur on *-ing* forms that function as verbs or adverbs (but never on forms that function as nouns or adjectives). This *a-* occurs only on words in which the first syllable is accented, and most typically on words beginning with a consonant sound. Pragmatically, the *a-* may be used to indicate intensity. The feature is also ubiquitous in AppE and may occur in other (usually rural) Southern/South Midland locations.

- (54) a. He come *a-runnin'* around that corner, *a-hollerin'*, makin' more noise'n a herd o' turtles.  
 b. They wasn't *a-doin'* nothin' wrong.

3.3.1.3. *Subordinate hope how 'hope'*

The syntax of the clauses containing this seems generally to be [adjective of measurement] + [subject] + [predicate].

- (55) a. I just *hope* how long the frost holds off.  
 b. I *hope* how soon you'll come back and visit some more.

3.3.1.4. *Completive done*

This auxiliary *done* in a verb phrase may aspectually mark a completed action or event, and may also designate intensity. It also occurs in AAVE and in southern vernacular dialects.

- (56) a. He *done* asked her to marry him.  
 b. I *done* told you to take your shoes off before walkin' on that carpet.

3.3.1.5. *Multiple modals with useta*

This feature, discussed earlier, occurs in OzE with *useta* as the first element. It also occurs, less frequently, throughout the Inland North and Midlands.

- (57) a. You *useta couldn't* get by with that in school.  
 b. It *useta didn't* matter whether you walked in late or not.

3.3.1.6. *Liketa and supposeta*

These mark speakers' perceptions of events that were on the verge of happening. *Liketa*, a "counterfactual", is used to indicate that an incident almost but did not quite occur, and may suggest that the proposition carries an exaggerated connotation. *Supposeta*, often substituting for *supposed to have*, occurs less frequently and conveys weaker pragmatic assumptions about the event on the part of the speaker. Both features also occur in AppE.

- (58) a. The wind blowed so hard it *liketa* knocked every apple off that tree.  
 b. That movie *liketa* scared me half to death.  
 c. She *supposeta* wasn't gonna go to the dance.  
 d. I heard tell, Billy was *supposeta* eaten darn near the whole pie.

3.3.1.7. *Co-occurrence relationships and functional or semantic shifts*

All these occur at least sporadically in AppE as well; most can also be heard, if infrequently, throughout the Midlands.

3.3.1.7.1. *Shifts in verbal transitivity*

- (59) a. He *complained* me off and on for weeks after that happened.  
 b. Go outside and *holler him* over, will ya?

3.3.1.7.2. *Functional shifts resulting in new verb forms*

- (60) a. Come fall he plans to *veal up* that calf in the field.  
b. The folks on that side of the hill don't *neighbor* [= 'socialize'] with us much.

3.3.1.7.3. *Other complement structures co-occurring with particular verbs*

- (61) a. Now, don't you start to *messing around* with that one.  
b. Once he *gets to movin'*, the other team'll never be able to stop him.

3.3.1.7.4. *Main clause have + infinite complements*

- (62) a. I'll just *have* her to *put* dinner on the table early, then.  
b. He *had* three of his best fightin' cocks to *die* on him last month.

3.3.1.7.5. *Initial for to in infinitive complements*

- (63) a. He come early *for* to get a hot cuppa coffee.  
b. Mavis there believes it's awful *for to* serve leftovers.

3.3.1.7.6. *Verb + particle constructions (after is especially common)*

- (64) a. Well, *get on outa* the way then.  
b. It'll be good music, easy to *dance after*.

3.3.1.7.7. *Semantic shifts*

- (65) a. *He took sick last Tuesday*.  
b. *Are you aimin' to get that roof finished 'fore sundown?*

3.3.1.8. *Verb coinages with -(i)fy*

The final -y here is diphthongal.

- (66) a. Don't you *argufy* with me, young man.  
b. If I'd known he was gonna *speechify* so, I wouldn'ta asked the question.

3.3.1.9. *Multiple negation*

This occurs throughout most southern vernaculars and AAVE; the first category is especially common. Pragmatically, multiple negation generally signals force or intensity.

3.3.1.9.1. *Inversion of the negative auxiliary verb and the pre-verbal indefinite*

- (67) a. *Ain't nobody* gonna show up dressed as pretty as you.  
 b. *Didn't nothing* that boy ever done turn out right.

3.3.1.9.2. *Multiple negative marking in different clauses*

- (68) a. Well, Bill *wasn't* sure if maybe *nobody'd* come.  
 b. There *ain't* much *won't* happen here on a Friday night.

3.3.2. *Adverbs and adjectives*3.3.2.1. *Adverb placement*

Temporal adverbials, especially those related to frequency of occurrence, may be moved into the verb phrase. This also occurs in AppE and other southern rural dialects.

- (69) a. Oh, he's *all the time* goin' back up into them woods by hisself.  
 b. So why don't you *once in a while* come over and see us at the church?

3.3.2.2. *Morphemic inversion in compounds containing ever*

This also occurs in AppE.

- (70) a. You can just put that in there *everwhich* way it goes.  
 b. He's been like that *since ever* he was little.

3.3.2.3. *Intensifying adverbs*

Some adverbs, especially *plumb* and *right*, may be used as intensifiers – *plumb* in terms of totality, *right* (often with *smart*) in terms of degree (analogous to *completely* and *very*, respectively, in Standard English). This feature is also found in other rural dialects of the South, and is leeching into the Midlands.

- (71) a. I looked in the basement, but we're *plumb* out of canned tomatoes.  
 b. That's a *right smart* lookin' tie.

3.3.2.4. *Adverbial but 'only; merely'*

This has negative bias, and occurs in the restrictive sense of 'only' or 'merely'.

- (72) a. Why, he couldn't eat *but* one of 'em.  
 b. She's not *but* 14 years old, and you've already got her married!

3.3.2.5. *Absence of adverbial -ly*

Many adverbs with *-ly* in standard English occur without the suffix in OZE.

- (73) a. I believe he's from Oklahoma *original*.  
 b. Ole Doc Martin'll do it *painless*, don't you worry.

3.3.2.6. *Adjectival coinages*

The first category involves adding *-(e)y* to a noun, verb, or adjective, often resulting in a new word. In the second category are adjectives formed by adding *-(i)fied* to existing adjectives (*-[i]ffy* is the same suffix discussed earlier in the creation of new verbs). The third category consists of compound adjectives that result from combining a nominal and a participle.

3.3.2.6.1. *With -(e)y*

- (74) a. That road there is *ledgey* [= 'full of ledges, or uneven spots'], so be careful.  
 b. Oh, she's a *visity* [= 'sociable'; 'prone to go visiting'] one.

3.3.2.6.2. *With -(i)fied*

- (75) a. That girl there's all *airified* [= 'conceited'; < 'one who puts on airs'].  
 b. Why, once she's *prettified* up some, all the boys'll be askin' her out.

3.3.2.6.3. *Compound adjectives*

- (76) a. He got hisself *polecat-stunk* yesterday.  
 b. That girl who was *car-hit* last week near died.

3.3.3. *Nominals*3.3.3.1. *Plurals*

Both categories also occur in AppE, and the second, especially, has leeches well into the North Midlands.



3.3.3.1.1. *Absence of plural morpheme when the noun refers to weights/measures (including measurements of time) and is preceded by a quantifier*

- (77) a. We walk every mornin', about two *mile* right down that road and back.  
 b. Millie was born 93 *year* ago, and she been kickin' and screamin' ever since.

3.3.3.1.2. *Regularization of irregular plurals, especially those unmarked in Standard English*

- (78) a. He got seven *deers* this year, kept us all in meat the whole winter.  
 b. There ain't no place for *sheeps* to graze, too many rocks and such.

3.3.3.2. *Coinages*

3.3.3.2.1. *From adjectives*

- (79) a. The people in that church is all *hatefuls*, pure and simple.  
 b. If they come over here lookin' for trouble, they'll sure get a *lavish* of it.

3.3.3.2.2. *From other nouns, by adding agentive -er*

- (80) a. The *meetin'ers* [= 'churchgoers'] always get out about noontime.  
 b. She's a good little *musicker* [= 'musician'], she is.

3.3.3.2.3. *From other nouns, by adding -ment*

- (81) a. Oh, the baby threw up her *nursement* [= 'milk that the baby nursed'].  
 b. You go put all your *playments* [= 'toys', or things played with] away now.

3.3.3.3. *Pronouns*

The third category is also widespread, especially in southern vernaculars. Personal datives result from the use of two personal pronouns in the same clause, the second being an object pronoun (if it is third person and reflexive, that object pronoun may be regularized). The resultant meaning is benefactive, similar to Standard English *for* + [reflexive].

3.3.3.3.1. *Compound forms with here or there*

- (82) a. *This here* barn is over a hundred years old.  
b. Then he started storyin' again, tellin' about *them there* flyin' saucers he seen.

3.3.3.3.2. *Absolute possessives with -n*

- (83) a. That there's *hisn* applepicker.  
b. Why don't you come over to *ourn* orchard and take a few bushels?

3.3.3.3.3. *Personal datives*

- (84) a. I got to go get *me* a new truck.  
b. Annie sewed *herself* a new dress, looked right pretty.

3.3.3.3.4. *Existential they/it*

These occur frequently with contracted *is*. *They* is also found in other southern vernaculars; *it* has leeches throughout the Midlands.

- (85) a. *They's* a den of snakes under that there slab of concrete.  
b. *It* ain't no rhyme or reason, boy, it's just the way it is.

3.3.4. *Prepositions*

At least the first two categories exist in AppE as well; the first is also leeching northward.

3.3.4.1. *Selection of a preposition (usually of) serving as the axis of the phrase*

- (86) a. We like to set on the porch *of* an evening and just enjoy the quiet.  
b. She come over about 8:00 *of* the mornin' and give us the news.

3.3.4.2. *Absence of a preposition*

- (87) a. Let's go over [*to*] the church a little early.  
b. He woulda been 76 [*on*] his next birthday.

3.3.4.3. *Substitution of to for at*

- (88) a. Sorry, there's no one *to* [= 'at'] home.  
b. They all jumped him *to* once.

## 3.3.5. Conjunctions

## 3.3.5.1. Pleonastic constructions

The first also appears in southern vernaculars like AppE. *Like as if* occurs especially in constructions reflecting great emotion; *but though* may carry no special pragmatic force.

## 3.3.5.1.1. Like as if

- (89) a. You're talkin' at 'im *like as if* he's just a boy when he's near 19 year old!  
 b. Don't treat me *like as if* I'm some damn cripple!

## 3.3.5.1.2. But though

- (90) a. He don't really want to go, *but though* he will.  
 b. I can't hardly ride that horse no more, *but though* I will.

## 3.3.6. Miscellaneous

This characteristic crosses many categories of traditional grammar.

## 3.3.6.1. Expansive a-

Several *a*-usages occur besides the *a*-prefixing discussed earlier. The second appears to be leeching farther northward into the Midlands; the third may be obsolescing.

## 3.3.6.1.1. Corresponding to a preposition in Standard English

- (91) a. We seen a skunk right there *a*-back the barn.  
 b. Just keep goin' right on *a*-down that road till it forks, and you'll see it.

## 3.3.6.1.2. As part of an alternate representation of a lexical item (usually a restricted set of adverbs or nouns)

- (92) a. You go *a*-way back up there, you'll find some [moonshine] stills, guarantee.  
 b. They talk a good line, but not *a*-one of 'em shoots better than Joe here.

3.3.6.1.3. *With forms other than -ing participles*

- (93) a. He just up and *a-quit*, no explanation or nothin’.  
 b. He hadn’t *a-run* that far in years.

#### 4. Final remarks

The picture we have painted here is a synchronic one, and therefore temporary. For sociocultural, sociohistorical, and linguistic reasons, American English will continue to evolve in ways that reflect the changing needs and priorities of its users. To conclude our essay, we anticipate the future state of the variation we have considered. We can offer only intelligent guesses, but linguistic history suggests that very few surprises are on the horizon.

We can be relatively sure, for example, that regardless of what specific changes occur, the dialects discussed here will continue to remain distinct. The common lay assumption is that the increasing social/geographic mobility of the American people, coupled with their great reliance on the media for information and entertainment and their general tendency toward cultural homogenization, will eventually cause the dialects in the United States to level out. But most linguists agree that, however much the varieties of American English change and simplify, the people who use them are too diverse ever to converge their linguistic choices into a single way of speaking. Social class, gender, age, ethnicity, group and personal identity, and other factors are reflected in the language Americans use, and probably always will be.

We can also be relatively sure that the dialects of the North, West, and Midwest will retain some of their nonstandard characteristics. For example, analogy and rule extension have regularized some part-of-speech paradigms in the dialects we discussed: the third person, singular, present tense morpheme is often deleted (*It don’t matter*), and the plural morpheme may not be applied to measurement nouns (*We walked two mile down that road*). Now, sentences in which the vernacular elements of these regularized paradigms occur have the same meaning as, and are less redundant than, those found in Standard English (the *it* of *It don’t matter* signals third person and singular, and the *two* of *We walked two mile down that road* indicates plurality), and, given that languages tend to evolve toward structural simplicity, it is unlikely those redundant elements will be reinstated.

When simplicity conflicts with the retention of meaning, however, speakers will preserve the meaning – that is, will adhere to the “transparency principle” (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998: 43–44). While the negation in *It don’t matter* is structurally simpler than that in *It don’t matter none*, for example, the transparency principle will prevent the loss of *none* from the second sentence since mul-

multiple negation signals a pragmatic force or emphasis not present in single negation. In short, *It don't matter* and *It don't matter none* have slightly different meanings, and the transparency principle will preserve that difference (that is, to the degree to which it is valued by speakers who use multiple negation).

We also know that people's opinions about the standardness of individual features will change. We have already said that many of the forms discussed above are spreading socially and/or geographically; we note here that such spreading often occurs in the face of loud objections by language purists. Eventually these objections will probably cease, some of the forms now objected to will come to be accepted, and new disapproval will rise against a different set of shibboleths. Adverbial *sure* (as in *John sure does like chocolate cake*), participial *proven* (as opposed to *proved*), conjunctive *like* (as in *He went through that store like he'd won a million dollars*) nominative *me* (as in *Danny's four years older than me*), and a host of other constructions were once nonstandard, but are now widely judged respectable if not altogether cultured.

Will all the features currently labeled "vernacular" ultimately be accepted and used by speakers of Standard English? Of course not. And herein lies another certainty about the future of the dialects we have examined here – one that may, indeed, determine their development more than any other: people will always judge the quality of those dialects, and of those dialects' features, by those who use them, and people judged less desirable overall will continue using dialects that mirror that lack of desirability. As we mentioned in our introduction, correctness in language is social, not linguistic.

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Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# Appalachian English: morphology and syntax

Michael B. Montgomery

## 1. Introduction

Appalachia is a large, mainly mountainous region of the eastern United States that is variously defined. Its core territory encompasses seven states (or parts thereof) from West Virginia and Ohio to Georgia, but the definition formulated by the Appalachian Regional Commission, a federal agency, is the broadest (from central New York southwest to northeastern Mississippi, with a population of 23 million) and is the only one having semi-official status. Settlement of Appalachia by Europeans began in the 1730s, mainly with Scotch-Irish and Germans moving southwestward from Pennsylvania and by English from eastern Virginia and the Carolinas, with smaller numbers of Welsh, French, and other nationalities. With the well-known exception of the Cumberland Gap linking northeastern Tennessee to southeastern Kentucky, the path of settlement usually followed river valleys and led to market towns such as Roanoke, Virginia (1740), and Knoxville, Tennessee (1786). Only later did people begin to move into higher elevations and establish the traditional culture now commonly associated with the region. Today the population of Appalachia is more than twice as rural as the country at large.

More has been written about the English spoken in Appalachia than about any other American region, with the possible exception of the Deep South (for a comprehensive listing, see McMillan and Montgomery 1988). Since the 1880s commentators have stressed its conservatism above all other qualities and claimed that it was “Elizabethan” (Montgomery 1998), preserving early stages of development superseded elsewhere (*afeard* ‘afraid’, *holp* ‘helped’, etc.); for the development of research paradigms in the field, see Montgomery (2004) and Wolfram (1977). Until recently travel in or across the largely mountainous region has often been difficult (peaks range to more than 6600 feet high), and many smaller communities have been physically remote from centers of population. For these reasons, commentators have characterized the entire region as “isolated”, a quality that is, however, as much socio-psychological (having to do with adherence to a rural folk culture, cultural solidarity, and so on) as geographical, and one that has been greatly overstated (Montgomery 2000).

Three historical characteristics of English in Appalachia other than its conservatism are noteworthy. First, its ancestry from the British Isles is quite mixed, and it has few borrowings from other languages. Its distinctive grammar is sometimes traceable to southern England (*a-* as a prefix on verb present participles, as

*a-goin'*; *-n* on possessive pronouns, as *hern*, *yourn*), but is more often Scotch-Irish, deriving from Scotland and northern England through the Irish province of Ulster (*you 'uns* 'you (plural)', *whenever* in reference to a single event, as *I was just eight whenever she died*). In contrast, the phonology of its vowel system and individual words comes, except for a few minor details, from Southern England. Appalachian vocabulary comes predominantly from England in general, to a lesser extent northern England (*galluses* 'suspenders'), western England (*counterpane* 'bedspread'), Scotland (*residenter* 'resident, old-timer'), and Ulster (*airish* 'chilly, cool'); see Schneider (1994).

Second, Appalachian speech is far more accurately described as "colonial American" than "Elizabethan", because it shares many more forms with the 18th-century (*obleege* 'oblige', *jine* 'join') than with Shakespeare's English. Third, it is as innovative as it is conservative. This is true for grammar (as in the reversal of elements in *wh-* compounds, producing *everwhat* 'whatever,' *everwho* 'whoever,' etc.), phonology (merger of vowels in *pen/pin* and so on), and especially vocabulary (*hippoes* 'an imaginary or pretended ailment,' from *hypochondria*; *man-pow-er* 'to move by brute effort'). Of the vocabulary, pronunciations, and grammatical patterns found mainly in Appalachia and not shared by the U.S. in general, only about twenty percent can be traced to the British Isles.

Because of its varied history, its large expanse, and its loose borders, Appalachia represents neither a distinct nor a unified speech region. Settlement by different groups or different proportions of groups, along with subsequent innovations, produced several sub-regional varieties, but much less so in grammar than in vocabulary. This chapter surveys the traditional morphology and syntax of only one part of southern Appalachia, the mountains along the Tennessee/North Carolina border. It is based on a longer sketch in Montgomery and Hall (2004), in which each example cited here can be found, with its source identified. Most are authentic utterances from recorded interviews conducted either by Joseph S. Hall in 1939 or by personnel of Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the 1960s/70s. (For an account of selected grammatical patterns in the central Appalachian state of West Virginia, see Wolfram and Christian 1976).

## 2. Verbal morphology

In Appalachian English (AppE), inflections to mark agreement and tense are usually the same in form as in general American usage, but are often found in different contexts and follow different rules.



## 2.1. Concord

Verbs in the third singular conform to general usage in nearly all regards. *It seems* may appear as *seem*, with the pronoun omitted (**seem** like *I've heard it*), and *don't* may occur in the third singular (*she don't care*). Verbs ending in *-st* may take a syllabic suffix (parallel to nouns, as in section 9.4.).

- (1) a. *That water freezes on the bark and **bustes** [i.e. bursts] it.*  
 b. *It **disgustes** me now to drive down through this cove.*

The principal difference in subject-verb concord between AppE and general usage lies in third-person plural contexts. In these, *-s* may occur on verbs having any type of subject other than an adjacent personal pronoun as their subject (as *people knows*, *some goes*, etc.). Except when expressing the historical present, *-s* is extremely rare when the subject is *they*. This pattern follows a rule that can be traced to fourteenth-century Scotland and operates also for the verbs *be* and *have*.

- (2) a. *This comes from people who **teaches** biology.*  
 b. *Some **tells** you one dog's best.*  
 c. *That's the way cattle **feeds**. They feed together.*

The pattern involving verbs with a non-adjacent personal-pronoun subject is found in old letters from the region, but apparently did not survive the nineteenth century:

- (3) a. *We have some sickness in camp of mumps and **has** had some of fever.*  
 (1862 letter)  
 b. *I am now Volenteard to gow to texcas against the mexicans and **Expecks** to start the last of September or the first of October.*  
 (1836 letter)

For uses of the suffix *-s* to express habitual aspect and the historical present, see sections 6.4. and 6.5.

## 2.2. Principal parts

As with the agreement and plural suffixes (sections 2.1. and 10.4.), a syllabic variant of the tense suffix may be added to verbs ending in *-st*.

- (4) *It never **costed** me one red [cent].*

AppE exhibits much variation in the principal parts of verbs. Verbs regular in general usage may be irregular in the mountains, and vice versa. More often verbs are irregular in both varieties but differ in their past-tense or past-participle forms. The list below identifies common verbs whose principal parts vary.

<b>Verb form(s)</b>	<b>Past-tense form(s)</b>	<b>Past-participle</b>
ask	ask, ast, ax	ask, ast, ax
become	became, become	become
begin	began, begin, begun	begin, begun
bite	bit	bit, bitten
blow	blew, blowed, blown	blowed, blown
break	broke	broke, broken
bring	brought, brung	brought, brung
buy	bought	bought, boughten, boughtened
catch	catched, caught, cotch, cotched	caught, catched, cotch, cotched
climb	clim, climbed, clome, clum	clim, climbed, clum
come	came, come	came, come
creep	crept, crope	crept, crope
dive	div, dived, dove	div, dived, dove
do	did, done	did, done
drag	dragged, drug	dragged, drug
draw	drawed, drew	drawed, drawn
drink	drank, drink, dranked, drunk	drank, drunk
drive	driv, drived, drove, druv	driv, driven, drove, druv
drown	drowned, drownded	drowned, drownded
eat	ate, eat	eat, eaten
fall	fell	fallen, fell
fight	fit, fought	fit, fought
forget	forgot	forgot, forgotten
forgive	forgave, forgive	forgave, forgive, forgiven
freeze	friz, froze	friz, froze, frozen
get	got	got, gotten
give	gave, gin, give	gave, gin, give, given
go	went	gone, went
grow	grew, growed	grew, growed, grown
hear	heard, hearded, hearn	heard, hearded, hearn
heat	heated, het	heated, het
help	helped, hept, holp, holped	helped, holp, holped
hold	held, helt	held, helt
kill	killed, kilt	killed, kilt
know	knew, knowed	knowed, known

lean	leaned, lent	leaned, lent
learn	learned, learnt	learned, learn
reach	reached, retch, retched	reached, retch, retched
ride	rid, rode	rid, ridden, rode
ring	rang, rung	rang, rung
rise	riz, rose	risen, riz, rose
run	ran, run	ran, run
see	saw, see, seed, seen	saw, see, seed, seen
set	set, sot	set, sot
shake	shook, shuck	shaken, shook, shuck
sing	sang, sung	sung
sit	sat, sit, sot	sat, sit, sot
skin	skinned, skint, skun, skunt	skinned, skint, skun, skunt
speak	spoke	spoke, spoken
spring	sprang, sprung	sprung
strike	strook, struck	strook, struck
swear	swore	swore, sworn
swell	swelled, swole	swelled, swole, swollen
take	taked, taken, took, tuck	taken, took, tuck
teach	taught, taught	taught, taught
tear	tore	tore, torn
tell	told	tell, told
throw	threw, throwed	threw, throwed, thrown
wear	wore	wore, worn
weave	wove	wove, woven
write	writ, wrote	writ, written, wrote

### 3. *Be*

#### 3.1. Present tense forms

In the present tense indicative, *are* may occur in third-person singular contexts, usually in existential clauses:

- (5) a. *They **are** [i.e. There is] another one down the street.*  
 b. *There **are** a big waste in it, you know.*

In the third-person plural, variation between *are* and *is* follows the subject-type rule identified for other verbs (section 2.1.).

- (6) a. *The rocks **is** still there yet.*  
 b. *I know a lot [of people] that has gone on and lots that **is** a-livin' yet.*

With the expletive *there* (commonly pronounced *they*), *is* or *'s* generally occurs whether the subject of the clause is singular or plural:

- (7) a. *There's lots of mountains.*  
 b. *They's about six or seven guitar players here.*

### 3.2. Finite *be*

Although frequently employed by writers of fiction set in Appalachia, finite *be* is obsolescent and extremely rare in the region's speech. It does not express habitual or repeated actions, as in African-American English, and in main clauses it occurs regardless of the number and person of the subject.

- (8) a. *I **be** too old for such tomfoolery.*  
 b. ***Be** you one of the Joneses?*

More often *be* is found in subordinate clauses introduced by *if*, *until*, or *whether*, contexts that are historically subjunctive.

- (9) a. *If it **be** barn-cured tobacco, you have a different thing.*  
 b. *He would ... leave [the tobacco] until it **be** so hard when it would come out it would never get dry and crumley.*  
 c. *... whether it **be** just providing materials so that you wouldn't have to ship cargo from way off.*

### 3.3. Past tense forms

In traditional AppE, *was* and *were* may be used for both singular and plural, but there is today and apparently has long been in all persons and numbers a strong preference for *was*, which is far more frequent than *were* with subjects of all types.

- (10) a. *I stayed there from the time I **were** about fifteen years old.*  
 b. *There **weren't** even a sprig of fire in his place! The fire **were** plumb out.*  
 c. *They **wasn't** doing anything yet.*  
 d. *Wherever you went, you **was** welcomed.*  
 e. *The older people **was** inclined that way.*

*Was* may be contracted to *'s* (*I's* 'I was', *they's* 'they was', etc.)

- (11) *I knowed **I's** a new duck.*

### 3.4. Negative forms

In negative contexts, contracted forms of *am*, *is*, and *are* are the rule, but these vary from general usage in several ways. The verb form may contract with either the subject (*he's not*) or with *n't* (*he isn't*; see section 9.6.). In all persons and numbers *ain't* is a common alternative of *am*, *are*, or *is*. Especially in clause-initial position, the variant *hain't* occurs.

- (12) a. *I ain't gonna let ye go.*  
 b. *It ain't half as big as it used to be.*  
 c. *Hain't no use to tell you anything about my sickness, Dr. Abels. I ain't got no money.*  
 d. *They hain't a-going to do that.*

To negate a verb, *don't* is occasionally added to *be*, especially in an imperative clause with a progressive verb form.

- (13) a. *Don't be a-takin' it down till I tell you a little.*  
 b. *Don't be wearing your good clothes out to play in.*

## 4. *Have*

### 4.1. Present indicative forms

In the present tense inflected forms of *have* parallel those of *be*. *Have* occurs in the third singular, but apparently only in existential clauses.

- (14) *They've been a big change.*

In the third-person plural, variation between *have* and *has* follows the variable subject-type rule for other verbs (section 2.1.) and for *be* (section 3.1.). *Has* is often used with plural nouns, but not with *they*.

- (15) a. *The young folks has left that place.*  
 b. *They have three sisters that is a-living now, them four babies has.*

### 4.2. Perfective uses

*Has been* frequently occurs with adverbials that take the simple past-tense in general usage, especially phrases having the form *ago*.

- (16) a. *It's been twenty year ago they offered me a house and land.*  
 b. *That's been a way back yonder.*

In AppE *have* and *had* may be separated from their past participle by a direct object.

(17) *We **had** all our work **done** up and **eaten** a good camp supper.*

#### 4.3. Negative forms

In negative contexts contracted forms of *have* and *has* are the rule, but the verb forms may contract with either the subject (*she's not*) or *-n't* (*she **hasn't***; see section 9.6.). In all persons and numbers *ain't* is a common alternative of *have* in the present tense and, less often, in the past tense. Especially at the beginning of a clause, the variant *hain't* may occur in a stressed position.

- (18) a. *I **ain't** seen nothin' of him.*  
 b. *They **hain't** found it yet.*  
 c. ***Hain't** nobody never set it for any bears since. That's been thirty years ago.*

#### 4.4. Deletion and addition of *have*

Auxiliary *have* and *had* may be elided or deleted, especially between a modal verb and a past participle.

- (19) a. *I guess it  $\emptyset$  been five or six year ago maybe.*  
 b. *You ought to  $\emptyset$  seen us all a-jumping and running.*  
 c. *Well, they was one on one side of the hill you might  $\emptyset$  seen the other day.*

*Have* occurs as a superfluous form after *had* in conditional clauses, probably by analogy with *would have*.

- (20) *Had that not **have** happened, there would have been somebody come in here with a lot of money.*

## 5. Modal and semi-modal auxiliary verbs

### 5.1. Modal verbs

Except for *mought*, an obsolescent past-tense variant of *might* (*They **mought** have done it*), modal auxiliaries differ from general usage only in usage, not in form. As in other Southern varieties of American English, *might* and occasionally *may* combine with other modals to express conditional force and indirectness.

- (21) a. You **might could** ask somebody along the road.  
 b. If you folks don't have a cow barn, you **might ought** to build one.  
 c. I **might can** go with you tomorrow.  
 d. If they'd just laid down, the snakebite **might wouldn't** have killed a lot of them.  
 e. They say I **could might** have lived to make it to the hospital.  
 f. I **may can** get it out tomorrow.

*Used to* may combine with modals and other auxiliaries.

- (22) a. The drummers **would used** to come from Morristown.  
 b. You **used to could** look from Grandpa's door to the graveyard.  
 c. It came out like it **used to did**.  
 d. The children **used to would** kind of stay in the background, you know.

## 5.2. Semi-auxiliary verbs

In AppE several phrases occur in a fixed position before a verb and modify the principal action or statement of the verb. Some phrases may be inflected for tense, but others are more adverbial in their properties.

- (23) a. *belong to*  
 'to be obligated or accustomed to, deserve'  
*He **belongs to** come here today.*
- b. *fix to/fixing to*  
 'to prepare or get ready to, be about to, intend to'  
 (the base form is the source for the progressive, but has become recessive while the latter has gained wide currency throughout the Southern United States)  
*I **fixed to** stay a week to bear hunt; I'm **fixin' to** leave now; It was **a-fixin' to** come a storm.*
- c. *like(d) to*  
 'almost, nearly' (originally *had liked to*, a phrase followed by an infinitive form of the verb, often *have*). Today there is rarely evidence of a following *have* and often only the vestige 'd of preceding *had*. The final consonant of *liked* is normally elided with *to*:  
*I **like to** never in the world got away; The measles **like to** killed me.*
- d. *need* (followed by a past-participle form)  
*If you had a job that **needed** finished; That thing **needs** washed.*
- e. *used to*  
 'formerly' (in combination with *could*, *did*, *would*, *didn't*). See §7.1.

## 6. Miscellaneous verbal features

### 6.1. Progressive forms of stative verbs of mental activity or sensation

Such forms may be employed to give a dynamic interpretation.

- (24) a. *Was you **wantin'** to go to town?*  
 b. *We was **liking** you just fine.*

### 6.2. Perfective aspect

Auxiliary *did* and *done* are often used to express completed or emphatic action in two separate patterns. First, *did* may occur in negative clauses with an infinitive form and with *not* (as in general usage), but sometimes with *never* (thus, *I **never did see** 'I have never seen, I never saw'*). The emphaticness of such constructions is shown in that stress is placed on each of the words *never did see* (or other verb phrase elements).

- (25) a. *He **never did say** no more about it.*  
 b. *I **never did know** what caused it.*  
 c. *I **never did live** in a place where they was no meetin's nor singin's.*

Auxiliary *done* is roughly equivalent to 'already', 'completely', or both. It most often precedes a past participle and may be accompanied by a form of *have* or *be*. Occasionally it is followed by an adjective or *and*.

- (26) a. *I already **done** seed three.*  
 b. *We thought Pa and Ma had **done** gone to church.*  
 c. *The squirrels was **done** eat.*  
 d. *The older ones was **done** through school and married.*  
 e. *Uncle John Mingus was **done** dead.*  
 f. *She's **done** and brought her second calf.*

### 6.3. Ingressive verbs

In addition to constructions found in general usage, the beginning of an action or an action just begun may be expressed by several means involving verb phrases. While these are generally equivalent to 'begin' or 'start', they vary somewhat in sense, some indicating one action that is followed immediately by another.

- (27) a. *begin to + verbal noun: Then next day everybody **begin to** wondering what caused the blast to go off.*



- b. *come on to* + infinitive: *I went in the house when it **come on to** rain.*
- c. *commence* + verbal noun: *The dogs come in behind him and **commenced** catching him.*
- d. *commence* + *to* + infinitive: *I **commenced to** train a yoke of oxen.*
- e. *commence* + *to* + verbal noun: *He went back up to the tree and **commenced to** barking.*
- f. *fall in to* + verbal noun: *Mr. Huff said to me, "Wiley, **fall in to** eating and eat plenty, for you boys may have to stay out all night."*
- g. *fall to* + verbal noun: *Everyone **fell to** eating the corn pone, bacon, and gravy.*
- h. *get* + verbal noun: *He said them men **got** hollering at him, and he give them a pumpkin.*
- i. *get to* + verbal noun: *A bear **got to** coming into that cornfield.*
- j. *go* + verbal noun: *He'd just get a little out of his bottle and just **go** putting that on there.*
- k. *go in to* + verbal noun: *[We] all **went in to** skinning that bear.*
- l. *go to* + verbal noun: *I **went to** studying for myself.*
- m. *let in to* + verbal noun: *Then he **let in to** fussing at me because I let her go over there to spend two weeks with Amy.*
- n. *set in to* + verbal noun: *Hit **set in to** raining about dark.*
- o. *start in* + verbal noun: *Brother Franklin **started in** telling stories.*
- p. *start in to* + infinitive: *I got so I **started in to** read it by heart.*
- q. *start in to* + verbal noun: *So we **started in to** fishing near the Chimney Tops.*
- r. *start off to* + verbal noun: *They **started off to** hunting.*
- s. *start to* + verbal noun: *Then we'd all **start to** shelling [the corn].*
- t. *take* + verbal noun: *He made a dive at my brother Richard, and he took running off.*
- u. *take to* + verbal noun: *I **took to** raising hogs.*

#### 6.4. Habitual aspect

Habitual aspect is usually not marked in the present tense. The rare exception is the suffix *-s* on verbs, a feature, like uninflected *be*, primarily found in literary dialect.

- (28) a. *I **drinks** three and four cups to a meal.*  
 b. *Even if it rains, I **sticks** 'em when the sign's in the feet.*

Habitual aspect is expressed in the past tense with *used to* or *would* and also through prepositional phrases (section 14.6.).

## 6.5. Historical present

In the recounting of events, especially in narrative style, verbs (especially *say*) are made “present” by adding *-s* to indicate vicarious action in the past.

- (29) a. *They **comes** back, and Scott **says** he was a-coming over to their house when Lester come back.*  
 b. *I **thinks** to myself I’ll just slide down there and see if he’d make me holler.*  
 c. *So she **gets** up and started to go around the house to look for him to tell him what she thought.*  
 d. *“Father”, I **says**, “I’ll have to quit eating this meat”.*

7. *A*-prefixing

A prominent feature of AppE is the prefixing of *a-*, especially on present participles of verbs. Historically derived from the Old English preposition *an/on*, the prefix has little if any semantic content today. It sometimes highlights dramatic action.

- (30) a. *It just took somebody all the time **a-working**, **a-keeping** that, because it was **a-boiling**.*  
 b. *I got out there in the creek, and I went to slipping and **a-falling** and **a-pitching**.*

The prefix occurs on verbs of all semantic and most structural types, as on compound verbs and on verbs in the middle voice (i.e. active verbs whose subjects receive the action).

- (31) a. *People will up with their guns and go out **a-rabbit** hunting, **a-bird** hunting.*  
 b. *... while supper was **a-fixin**’.*  
 c. *Something happened to the child when he was **a-bornin**’.*

Less often the prefix occurs on past-tense and past-participle forms of verbs.

- (32) a. *I just **a-wondered**.*  
 b. *I would get them **a-gentled** up, and then I put the yoke on them.*

The prefix may also be used on prepositions, on nouns to form adverbs or adverbial phrases of time, place, or manner, on adverbs of position, direction, or manner, or on adjectives.

- (33) a. *I’ll shoot if he comes **a-nigh** me.*  
 b. *The bear, it made a pass **a-toward** him.*

- c. *I went back down **a-Sunday**.*
- d. *I didn't do it **a-purpose**.*
- e. *Many preachers would ride **a-horseback** as far as Gregory did from Cades Cove.*
- f. *He was **a-just** tearing that window open.*
- g. *Most of my people lived to be up in years, but I had some to die off **a-young**, too.*

## 8. The infinitive

### 8.1. The *for to* infinitive

Especially in older AppE an infinitive may be introduced by *for + to* where general usage has only *to*. In some cases this construction expresses purpose or has an intervening noun functioning as the subject of the infinitive.

- (34)
- a. *They'd turn the sap side up, and they'd use that **for to** spread the fruit on.*
  - b. *He's lookin' **for to** quit.*
  - c. *We kept [a spot] fenced **for to** grow our potatoes.*
  - d. *I like **for** people **to** like me, so I try to get along with everybody.*
  - e. *I'd like **for** you **to** advise me if it's too much.*

### 8.2. Adjective + infinitive

An apparently recent development of the infinitive is its use to express the specification or respect in which something is true. When it follows an adjective (e.g. *He was **bad to** drink*), the subject of the higher clause serves as the subject of the infinitive. *Bad* or *awful* + infinitive usually implies a speaker's judgment that a person spoken of has an unfortunate, excessive, or unhealthy inclination or tendency.

- (35)
- a. *He was awful **bad to** drink. (= He was a heavy drinker.)*
  - b. *He was a **bad man to** drink. (= He was a heavy drinker.)*
  - c. *[Bears] were **bad to** kill sheep, but not so **bad to** kill the hogs.*
  - d. *He's **awful to** tell stories.*
  - e. *The Queen family was all of them **good to** sing.*
  - f. *She's an **awful hand to** fish. (= She loves to fish; she fishes a lot.)*

8.3. Infinitives after *have*

An overt infinitive with *to* may follow *have* and its direct object, to express either causation or the occurrence or experiencing of a condition.

- (36) a. *He **had** my uncle **to** make a road.*  
 b. *She'd **have** us **to** stay together all the time.*  
 c. *I **had** an uncle **to** witch people.*  
 d. *I **had** a sister **to** die several years before I was born.*

## 8.4. Elliptical infinitives

*Want* is often followed by a preposition and has an elliptical infinitive, as *want (to get, go) in, want (to be) out*.

- (37) a. *All I **wanted out** of it was a little bucket of honey.*  
 b. *That dog doesn't know whether he **wants in** or **out**.*

## 9. Negation

## 9.1. Multiple negation

The negative markers *never*, *no*, and *not/n't* are frequently doubled or followed by other words of negative value such as *hardly* in the same clause.

- (38) a. *They **ain't** a-bitin' to do **no** good.*  
 b. *I've **not never** heard of that.*  
 c. *I **hain't** seen **nothing** of him.*  
 d. *Did he **not** get **none** of it?*  
 e. *Hit **didn't** scare me **nary** a speck **nor** a spark.*  
 f. *The snow **never hardly** got off the ground.*

## 9.2. Negative concord

AppE generally follows the rule of negative concord, whereby all indefinite elements in a clause conform in being negative.

- (39) a. *We **didn't** have **no** use for it **noways**.*  
 b. *We **ain't** starvin' **none**.*  
 c. *There's an old house up here, but **don't nobody** live in it, **not noway**.*  
 d. ***None** of us **wasn't** real singers **nor nothin'** like that.*  
 e. *He **wouldn't never** charge **nobody** a dime for **nothing** like that.*

But there are occasional exceptions to this pattern:

- (40) a. *I never did go **hardly** any.*  
 b. *I never did see Grandma do **any** work of **any** kind.*

### 9.3. *Never*

AppE uses *never* in two patterns differing from general usage. First, the form may negate a past-tense verb referring to a single event. Accordingly, *never saw* and *never seen* are both equivalent to ‘didn’t see’, and for single events AppE has an alternative to the general pattern of inserting *did* to negate a verb in the simple past tense.

- (41) a. *We **never** seen it then.*  
 b. *I **never** saw him while he lived.*  
 c. *She **never** died then.*  
 d. *We had a drought in here and **never** made nothing.*

In the second pattern, *never* is followed by *did* and the infinitive of a verb. Thus, *never did see* is equivalent to ‘didn’t ever see’ or ‘have/had never seen’ (see section 6.2.).

### 9.4. *Nor*

As in general usage, *nor* follows *neither* in correlative constructions, but it also occurs without *neither*. In these sentences *nor* more often than not follows *not/n’t* and may be seen as the negative form of *or* adhering to the rule of negative concord.

- (42) a. *I didn’t take any toll off any orphans **nor** widows.*  
 b. *She won’t bother me, **nor** she won’t bother anybody else.*  
 c. *Lightning nor thunder **nor** a good sousing **nor** anything else didn’t keep him from going.*

### 9.5. Negative inversion

A negated verb form such as *ain’t*, *didn’t*, or *can’t* may invert with the subject of a clause. (See also section 17.4.).

- (43) a. *There’s an old house up here, but **don’t** nobody live in it.*  
 b. ***Didn’t** nobody up in there in Greenbrier know nothin’ about it till they run up on it.*  
 c. ***Ain’t** nary one of ‘em married.*  
 d. ***Hain’t** nobody never set [the trap] for any bears since.*

9.6. Contraction with *not*

A modal verb, a form of auxiliary *have*, and especially auxiliary/copula verb *be* may contract with its subject (most often with a pronoun), preserving the full form of *not*. Thus, *that's not* varies with *that isn't*, etc.

- (44) a. *Now my memory's **not** as good as it used to be.*  
 b. *We've **not** got around to cooking.*  
 c. *I'll **not** say that I'm going to buck it.*  
 d. *I'd **not** care to drive a car.*

## 10. Noun plurals

## 10.1. Plural nouns of weight and measure

Plural nouns of weight and measure may lack *-s* when preceded by a numeral or other quantifier. This pattern reflects the partitive genitive from older English. This occurs most often with *mile*, *pound*, and *year*.

- (45) a. *There wasn't a church to go to within twenty **mile** of where I lived.*  
 b. *The bear weighed four hundred and seventy-five **pound**.*  
 c. *[We] took that hide off en it and cut it into four **quarter**.*  
 d. *Just after the war a few **year** I was married. I was married at the age of twenty-two year.*

## 10.2. Mass nouns

Nouns construed in general usage as mass nouns may be interpreted as plural or treated as count nouns in AppE.

- (46) a. *These **gravels** are hard on your feet.*  
 b. *We used to make **molasses** and sell 'em.*  
 c. *Have you got any easing **powders**?*  
 e. *We had several **rock** on that trail and nothing to drill those **rock** with.*

## 10.3. Plurals for animals

Plurals for animals are noteworthy in several respects. The lack of *-s* on *deer* and other animals of the wild may be extended to other nouns.

- (47) a. *He hunted **coon**, **deer**, [and] **bear**.*  
 b. *[There are] lots of **wildcat** here ...*

Second, *-s* may be added to nouns that do not take the suffix in general usage:

- (48) a. *They used to be plenty of **deers**.*  
 b. *That big old bear had one of Pap's little **sheeps** behind a big log, and it had eaten that little sheep.*  
 c. *I caught a mess of **trouts** today.*

Third, *ox* displays several tendencies. Like *sheep*, its plural may be regularized to form *oxes*. *Oxen* may be interpreted as either plural or singular, in the latter case producing the plural *oxens*.

#### 10.4. Syllabic plural forms

Nouns ending in *-sp*, *-st*, or *-sk* may preserve the longer syllabic plural form *-es* inherited from earlier English.

- (49) a. *We had **deskes**, and I remember I'd lay down and go to sleep.*  
 b. *The birds have built **nestes** in the spring house.*  
 c. *I wonder what they aims to do with these pine **postes**.*  
 d. *She taken two **dostes** of medicine. (**dose** + excrescent **t** + plural **-es**)*

#### 10.5. Associative plurals

The phrases *and all*, *and them* (often reduced to *an' 'em*), and *and those* each mean 'and the rest, and others' and are used usually after a singular noun to include associated people (especially family members) or things.

- (50) a. *I carried roasting ears, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, cabbage, **and all**.*  
 b. *I have a picture of my dad **and them** working their own road.*  
 c. *Helen **and those** were there.*

## 11. Pronouns

### 11.1. Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns in the nominative or objective case are for the most part the same as in general usage. The main exceptions are forms for the second-person plural (most notably *you'uns*) and *hit* for the third-person singular. AppE has five plural forms of the second-person pronoun (*you*, *ye*, *you'uns*, *you all*, and *y'all*) and two singular forms (*you*, *ye*). *You'uns* (usually pronounced as two syllables) is a contraction of *you + ones*. *You'uns* is the traditional periphrastic form that has been losing ground to *you all* (less often to *y'all*) for at least three generations.

- (51) a. *He knows **you'uns** and **you'uns** knows him.*  
 b. *Well, I'll see **you all** later.*  
 c. ***Y'all** come back.*

*Ye* (pronounced [ji] or [jɪ]) is a variant pronunciation of *you*, not a retention of the Early Modern English plural *ye* found in the Authorized Version of the Bible and elsewhere. It occurs as either singular or plural, usually in such unstressed contexts as a direct object, object of a preposition, or subject in inverted constructions.

- (52) a. *[Boneset is] bitterer than quinine, and hit'll kill **ye** or cure **ye** one.*  
 b. *I tell **ye**, children, both of **ye**. They got to quit deviling you.*  
 c. *You can see the ski lodge yander, can't **ye**?*

In the third-person singular, *hit* (the historic form of the pronoun) alternates with *it*, occurring most often in stressed positions (usually as a subject).

- (53) a. Stressed: ***Hit's** been handed down to him, you see, so he's the third or fourth generation.*  
 b. Stressed: *I know positive that **hit** wasn't all true.*  
 c. Unstressed: *They got up with it and they treed **hit**.*  
 d. Unstressed: *They had to raise the young one and take care of **hit**.*

The objective case of singular personal pronouns may be employed in subject position when conjoined with another pronoun or with a noun (in the latter case the pronoun usually comes first). This pattern with plural pronouns is rare, if not non-existent.

- (54) a. *So **me** and four cousins began right then and there to lay our plans to go.*  
 b. *Ever since **me and her** was engaged, I've been true to her.*  
 c. ***Her** and Jess and the girl is all buried there on Caldwell Fork.*  
 d. ***Him** and them dogs killed that bear.*  
 e. *That mine **you** and Tom Graves found, how can you go to it?*

## 11.2. Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns in attributive position usually conform to general usage. However, in absolute or disjunctive position at the end of a phrase or clause, forms with *-n* may occur instead of forms with *-s*. These developed historically by analogy with *mine* and *thine*.

- (55) a. *I thought **hern** was prettier than mine.*  
 b. *My daddy hauled **hisn** to Asheville.*  
 c. *[We] generally sold **ourn** to a man on Coopers Creek.*  
 d. *The colts is **theirn**.*



- e. *Work them just like they was **yourn**.*
- f. *What did you 'uns do with **yournses**?*

### 11.3. Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns in AppE differ from general usage in four ways. First, in a construction known as the personal dative, personal pronouns may occur where general usage has forms in *-self/-selves* or no pronoun at all. In many cases the pronouns are optional to one degree or another.

- (56)
- a. *I had **me** some coal.*
  - b. *Git **ye** chairs. (singular or plural)*
  - c. *You can catch **you** a mole.*
  - d. *You 'uns can build **you 'uns** back one.*
  - e. *He swapped that old steer off and got **him** a jackass.*
  - f. *Mary is fixing to make **her** some cotton dresses.*
  - g. *We'd just come down and see if we could find **us** a little drink.*
  - h. *Well, they'd get **them** a preacher and let him preach a while. Then they'd change and get **them** another.*

Second, following the pattern of *myself* and *yourself*, third-person reflexive pronouns may add *-self* or *-selves* to a possessive rather than an objective form:

- (57)
- a. *He was just up there by **hisself**.*
  - b. *They even carded the wool **theirselves**.*

Third, plural reflexive pronouns may be formed with *-self* or *-selves* as well as with *-selves*.

- (58)
- a. *We kept that all to **oursself**.*
  - b. *We went by **ourselves** to the head of Forneys Creek and fished.*
  - c. *Dang you ones. If you want them out, get in and get them **yourself**.*
  - d. *Step up here, boys, and he 'p **you 'unnsself**.*
  - e. *They'd all go and enjoy **themself**.*
  - f. *I like to see young people try to make something of **themselves**.*
  - g. *The county went to furnishing them **theirsself**.*

Fourth, *own* may be added to form an emphatic reflexive, which is always based on the possessive rather than the objective form.

- (59)
- a. *Now that was an experience I experienced my **own self**.*
  - b. *He has a little kit to give **his own self** a shot.*
  - c. *Everybody took care of **their own self**.*
  - d. *People doctored **their own selves**.*

## 11.4. Demonstrative pronouns and adjectives

As in many other varieties of English, *them* occurs as a demonstrative pronoun and adjective as well as a personal pronoun. *This* and *that* and their plural forms may take *here* or *there* to form compounds.

## (60) Demonstrative pronouns:

- a. **Them** looks a whole lot steeper and taller than they did in my young days.
- b. **This here** is George Thomas Baxter.
- c. **These here** was on the inside there.
- d. **That there's** Tom's boy, I guess.

## (61) Demonstrative adjectives:

- a. I've went up over **them** rocks a many a time.
- b. All **this here** poplar went to England across the water.
- c. He had one of **these here** hog rifles.
- d. **That there** sawmill I worked at was there before I married.
- e. **Them there** fellows come through here, stealing horses and things.

Also the distinction between proximate, intermediate, and distant is maintained (*this* vs. *that* vs. *yon*). *Yon/yan* and *yonder/yander* most often function as adverbs, but may be demonstrative adjectives as well.

- (62) a. Middlesboro is on **yan** side of Cumberland Gap.
- b. [Y]ou cross the big bridge goin' in **yander** way right there.

## 11.5. Indefinite pronouns

Notable usages of indefinite pronouns include *ary/ary'un*, *nary/nary'un* (see section 12.4.) and *a body* 'one, someone'.

- (63) a. Could **a body** buy that there dog?
- b. About a bushel [is] maybe what **a body** could pretty well carry.

## 11.6. Interrogative forms

To introduce a direct or indirect question, AppE has a set of interrogative forms that invert *ever* and the *wh-* element (see also section 15.1.).

- (64) a. You'd aim at **everwhat** you're shooting at.
- b. **Everwhich** one come nigh always come down to the house and stayed full half the night.
- c. **Everwho's** higher in seniority gets to keep his job.

Interrogative pronouns may be combined with *all* to stress the inclusiveness and generality of a statement or question. Thus, *who all* is equivalent to both ‘all of whom?’ and ‘who in general?’

- (65) a. *I don't know **where all** he sold it at.*  
 b. *I don't know **what all** we didn't do.*  
 c. ***Who all** was there?*

### 11.7. Personal pronouns + *all*

As suggested in section 10.1., *all* may combine with personal pronouns to emphasize inclusiveness: *theirs all*, *they all*, *you all*, *your all*, *you'un(s) all*, etc. In all of these the stress falls on the first element, not the second, making these constructions compounds rather than phrases. *You all* is the only combination to have acquired substantial properties of a personal pronoun.

- (66) a. *Cades Cove nearly took **theirs all** to Gregory Bald.*  
 b. *Old man Lon and Will all, **they all** went with him.*  
 c. ***You-all** may be [needing] it one of these days.*  
 d. *Is this table **your all's**?*  
 e. ***You'uns all** come to see me.*

### 11.8. Unstressed 'un

*One* is frequently contracted and reduced to 'un (occasionally 'n) when it is unstressed and follows a pronoun (cf. *you'uns*, section 10.1.) or an adjective.

- (67) a. ***We'uns** come from educated folkses.*  
 b. ***You'uns** is talking about rough country.*  
 c. *We'll try **another'n**, being that'un paid off.*  
 d. *The **gooder'ns's** all gone now!*  
 e. *I don't recollect any of his **young'uns**.*  
 f. *They was all sizes from **little'uns** to **big'uns**.*  
 g. *If he killed **ary'un**, it was before my recollection.*

(See section 17.2. for *one* following *or* in coordinate constructions.)

### 11.9. Relative clauses

AppE uses nine forms to introduce restrictive relative clauses: *that*, *who*,  $\emptyset$ , 'at, *which*, *as*, *what*, *whose*, and *thats* (of these, *that* is the most common; *what* and *thats*, a possessive, are the least). Four forms introduce non-restrictive clauses: *which*, *who*, *that* and *whose* (*whom* is rare, if not non-existent, in colloquial speech).

- (68) a. *I know the man **that** was lost.*  
 b. *This is Steve Cole, **that** lives in the Sugarlands near Gatlinburg.*  
 c. *And we had some old trained bear hounds **'at** turned off in the roughs.*  
 d. *I came on a party  $\emptyset$  had been fighting a bear.*  
 e. *They was two wagon loads  $\emptyset$  went out from there.*  
 f. *Then he handed it down to Caleb, **which** was Eph's Pa.*  
 g. *Tom Sparks has herded more than any man **as** I've ever heard of.*  
 h. *I knowed the White Caps **what** done the murder.*  
 i. *We need to remember a woman **thats** child has died.*

## 12. Articles and adjectives

(for demonstrative adjectives, see section 10.4.)

### 12.1. The indefinite article

The indefinite article *a* [ə] rather than *an* may occur before words beginning with a vowel sound.

- (69) a. *I had **a** uncle and **a** aunt that moved out there.*  
 b. *She done our baking in **a** oven.*

### 12.2. The definite article

The definite article is employed in place names (*the Smoky* = the main ridge of the Smoky Mountains), in the phrase *in the bed*, to indicate possession (*the old lady* 'my wife', *the woman* 'my wife'), with an indefinite pronoun (*the both of them*), and with names of diseases and medical conditions (*the fever* 'typhoid', *the sugar* 'diabetes', etc.)

### 12.3. *The* + *other*

The definite article is occasionally reduced to *t'* before *other(s)*. With the function of *t'* as an article having been lost, *t'other* may be modified by *the*.

- (70) a. *One or **t'other** of them whupped the other one.*  
 b. *When one's gone **the t'other's** proud of it.*

### 12.4. Indefinite adjectives

*Ary* 'any' (derived originally from *e'er a*) and *nary* 'not any, none' (from *ne'er a*) may occur in negative, interrogative, or conditional clauses. They may take en-clit-

ic 'un (< one) to form the indefinite pronouns *ary'un* ['æriən, æən] and *nary'un* ['næriən, nəən]. (See also section 10.5.)

- (71) a. *We didn't kill **ary** deer then.*  
 b. *We never seed **nary** another wolf.*  
 c. *If he killed **ary'un**, it was before my recollection.*  
 d. *I never seed a deer nor saw **nary'un's** tracks.*

## 12.5. Comparative forms

The comparative form of adjectives may differ from general usage.

- (72) a. *Nothin' [is] **gooder** than crumbled cornbread and milk.*  
 b. *You're **nearder** to the door than I am.*

Double comparatives are characteristic of AppE:

- (73) a. *I'd say I was **more healthier** back then than I am now.*  
 b. *I was getting closer and **more closer** with every step I took.*  
 c. *I think there are **worser** things than being poor.*

## 12.6. Double superlative forms

Double superlative forms also occur.

- (74) a. *Newport, though, is one of the **most liveliest** towns that I know of.*  
 b. *Doc was the **most wealthiest** man [in] this part of the country.*

The suffix *-est* may sometimes be added redundantly, including on adjectives that are historically superlative or absolute.

- (75) a. *She could make the **bestest** [sweetbread] in all the country, we thought.*  
 b. *Who got there **firstest**?*  
 c. *Who grewed the **mostest** corn?*

## 12.7. Present participle + *-est*

Present participles used as attributive adjectives may take the suffix *-est*.

- (76) a. *Daddy said he was the **gamest** and **fightingest** little rascal he ever hunted.*  
 b. *He had told somebody she was the **workingest** girl in the country.*  
 c. *She's the **aggravatin'est** calf I've ever had.*  
 d. *He was the **singingest** man this side of Turnpike.*

## 12.8. Anomalous comparatives and superlatives

In AppE a form of *big* together with a noun it modifies is equivalent to *most*. *Big* may appear in its positive, comparative, or superlative form and modify any of several nouns, but the meaning of the construction remains ‘the most’.

- (77) a. *A **big majority** of the people went to church pretty regular.*  
 b. *My father did the **big part** of the farming.*  
 c. *They done the **bigger majority** of their logging on Laurel Creek.*  
 d. *He rode a horse the **bigger part** of the time.*  
 e. *The **biggest half** of the people does it.*  
 f. *The **biggest majority** down there, they care.*  
 g. *The **biggest part** of them was Democrats.*  
 h. *[The] **biggest portion** of people didn't have lumber.*

Other unusual superlative forms include *onliest* ‘only’ and *upperest* ‘situated on the highest ground, farthest up’ (from *upper* ‘on high ground’).

- (78) a. *She treated it as if it was the **onliest** one she had.*  
 b. *Turkey George Palmer was in the **upperest** house on Indian Creek.*

12.9. *All the* + noun phrase

In AppE the adjective phrase *all the* ‘the only’ may modify singular count nouns or the indefinite pronoun *one* (i.e. not only mass nouns, as in general usage).

- (79) a. *I reckon that's **all the** name she had.*  
 b. *That's **all the** one they got here.*

12.10. *All the* + adjective

*All the* may also modify the positive, comparative, or superlative form of an adjective to express extent.

- (80) a. *That's **all the far/farther/farthest** I want to go. (= as far as)*  
 b. *Is that **all the best** you can do? (= as good as)*

## 13. Adverbials

## 13.1. Adverbials +-s

The suffix *-s* may be added to some adverbs of place and time.

- (81) a. *I can rest easier in the woods than **anywheres** else.*

- b. *We learned we had to call him a long time **beforehands**.*
- c. *They keep all over that mountain **everywheres** up there.*
- d. *There's a gold mine in here **somewheres**.*

### 13.2. Adverbs without *-ly*

Adverbs (principally ones of manner) without the suffix *-ly* are common.

- (82)
- a. *a **awful** ill teacher (= a very ill-tempered teacher)*
  - b. *I think it was a lady, if I'm not **bad** fooled.*
  - c. *There's not **near** so many as [there] were at the time we came here.*
  - d. *I began stone-cutting at a **powerful** early age.*
  - e. *They don't like it **real** genuine. (i.e. very much)*
  - f. *Some of that country is **terrible** rough.*
  - g. *My family done **tolerable** well.*

By the same token, *good* is a variant of *well* in adverbial contexts:

- (83)
- a. *He knows [the song] **good**.*
  - b. *She could pull a crosscut [saw] as **good** as a boy.*

### 13.3. Intensifying adverbs

AppE has many intensifying adverbs to express 'very' or 'quite'.

- (84)
- a. *That water isn't **bad** cold.*
  - b. *Newport's a **mighty** fine place for a young man to go.*
  - c. *They said he never was **much** stout after that.*
  - d. *I used to trap for 'em [but] never got so **powerful** many.*
  - e. *He was **right** young. He was just a boy.*
  - f. *It's a **terrible** bad place.*

It also has many ways to express 'all the way' or 'completely'.

- (85)
- a. *The bullet went **clean** through his leg.*
  - b. *My cattle run **clear** to Silers Bald.*
  - c. *Uncle John Mingus was **done** dead.*
  - d. *They was **plumb** sour, and they would keep **plumb** on till spring.*
  - e. *They owned all this, **plumb** up to the gap.*
  - f. *I'll be covered **slam** up.*
  - g. *We worked till **slap** dark.*
  - h. *He was **smack** drunk.*

## 13.4. Locative adverbs

AppE has many constructions not found in general usage to indicate position, distance, or direction. These are usually adverbs, but some may function also as adjectives to modify nouns.

- (86) a. *thataway*  
 ‘that way’  
*When you’re coming down **thataway**, they ain’t many places to stop.*
- b. *thisaway*  
 ‘this way’  
*I’ll go around down **thisaway** below him, and you go down in on him.*
- c. *yon/yan* (the second form is more common)  
 ‘over there’  
*I says, “**Yon’s** the White Caps now”; She’s in the field, up yan, gittin’ roughness.*
- d. *yonder/yander* (the second form is more common)  
 ‘over there’  
*They was some trees that stood all up here and **yonder** about in the orchard; I sneaked up in here with a horse from down **yander** where I showed you mine.*

## 13.5. Other adverbs

Adverbs differing from general usage English include the following:

- (87) a. *afore* ‘before’  
*I done what you told me **afore**, and it help me some.*
- b. *along* (followed by a preposition)  
 ‘approximately, somewhere, sometime’  
***Along** about Friday we’d have spelling bees.*
- c. *along*  
 ‘continuously, regularly’  
*We’d kill game **along** all the time.*
- d. *altogether*  
 ‘entirely, exclusively’  
*They worked chestnut **altogether**.*
- e. *anymore*  
 ‘nowadays, at present’ (in positive sentences)  
***Anymore** they have a hard time protecting things like that.*
- f. *anyways*  
 ‘to any degree or extent, at all’  
*If you was **anyways** near to a bear, he would charge you.*



- g. *anyways*  
 ‘in any case, at any rate’  
*Sometimes you would get more and sometimes less, but **anyways** from ten to fifteen dollars.*
- h. *around* (followed by a prepositional phrase)  
 ‘approximately, more or less’  
*The old garden was right **around** up through there.*
- i. *edgeways*  
 ‘edgewise’  
*Let’s leave time for people to get a word in **edgeways**. (similarly, lengthways ‘lengthwise’)*
- j. *everly*  
 ‘always’  
*He was **everly** going down to the store.*
- k. *noways*  
 ‘in any way, at all’  
*We didn’t have no use for it **noways**.*
- l. *right*  
 ‘immediately, exactly’  
*You find that **right** today.*
- m. *sometime*  
 ‘sometimes, from time to time’  
*He’d throw that stick **sometime**.*
- n. *someway*  
 ‘somehow, in some manner’  
*The sled got away from him and hurt him **someway**.*
- o. *used to*  
 ‘formerly’ (placed before the subject of a sentence, in clauses having a past-tense verb)  
***Used to**, you know, there wasn’t very much working on Sundays.*

### 13.6. Miscellaneous adverbial features

In Appalachia *ago* often occurs with a present-perfect verb rather than one in the simple past (see section 3.2.). *Yet* retains its usage from older English in affirmative clauses (rather than only in negative and interrogative contexts, as in modern English generally). *Yet* is semantically equivalent to, but may co-occur with, *still*, in which case *still* comes first.

- (88) a. *I believe that old good book will do to live by **yet**.*  
 b. *The rocks is still there **yet**.*

### 13.7. Adverb placement

The qualifying adverbs *about*, *much*, and *nearly* may come after the construction they modify.

- (89) a. *We had all kinds of apples anywhere you went **about**. (i.e. almost anywhere)*  
 b. *Well, they were all kinfolks **just about**, you see. (i.e. nearly all)*  
 c. *You been sleepin' all day **near about**, and you done broke a sweat, and that's good for you.*  
 d. *The weather never got any colder up there **much** than it did here.*  
 e. *I'm always at home **nearly**.*

## 14. Prepositions and particles

The dialectal character of Appalachian English is conspicuously evident in the use of prepositions.

### 14.1. Verbs of mental activity/sensation + *of*

Older AppE uses *of* after *smell*, *feel*, *taste*, or other verbs of mental activity or sensation, but the preposition has little if any semantic content.

- (90) a. *I can recollect **of** him a-going to school.*  
 b. *We didn't pay much attention to the fourth of July, as I remember **of**.*  
 c. *Smell **of** it*  
 d. *He said he tasted **of** everything he had ever killed, every varment, even a buzzard.*  
 e. *Feel **of** it now.*

### 14.2. Prepositions differing from general usage

- (91) a. *abouten*  
     'about'  
     *I never knowed a thing **abouten** it.*  
 b. *afore*  
     'before'  
     *I allowed he'd return **afore** this.*  
 c. *afteren*  
     'after'  
     *He never give me his check before, just what was left over **after'en** he had been out with the boys.*

- d. *against/again*  
 ‘by the time of, before’  
*He’ll be in town **against** nine o’clock; He didn’t make it back **again** the night.*
- e. *anent*  
 ‘close to, beside’  
*I fell back into the river and just took up right up in the water and was wet all over and got up **anent** them.*
- f. *being of*  
 ‘because of’  
***Bein’ of** that, Mr. Hood, I just can’t take anything from you for the death of Bill.*
- g. *beside of*  
 ‘beside’  
*Let me put the bag down **beside of** you.*
- h. *enduring*  
 ‘during, through’  
*Did he stay **enduring** the night?*
- i. *excepting*  
 ‘except’  
*Faultin’ others don’t git you nowhere, **exceptin’** in trouble.*
- j. *for*  
 ‘because of, on account of’  
*I couldn’t see across that log **for** the fog.*
- k. *fornent*  
 ‘opposite, beside’  
*He lived over **fornent** the store.*
- l. *offen*  
 ‘off, off of’  
*[We] took that hide **offen** it.*
- m. *on* (to express an unfortunate or uncontrollable occurrence)  
*My cow up and died **on** me.*
- n. *on*  
 ‘of, about’  
*He was never heard **on** no more.*
- o. *outen*  
 ‘out of’  
*He frailed the hell **outen** him.*
- p. *owing to*  
 ‘according to, depending on’  
*It’s **owing to** who you’re talking to.*

- q. *till*  
‘to’ (in expressions of time)  
... quarter **till** five.
- r. *to*  
‘at’  
*I belong **to** home with your Ma.*
- s. *to*  
‘for’  
*That bear was small **to** his age.*
- t. *to*  
‘of’  
*They were men **to** the community.*
- u. *withouten*  
‘without’  
*I seed him throw a steer once and tie him up **withouten** any help.*

#### 14.3. Particles extending or intensifying verbal action

A verbal particle may serve less as an intrinsic element of a phrasal verb than it does to intensify or give durative value to the basic action of the verb. The forms which appear most frequently in such contexts are *up* (as in general usage), *in*, *on*, *out*, and *down*.

- (92)
- a. *in*: *We dressed the bear and carried him **in** home.*
  - b. *on*: *[The bear] ran **on** off up the hill.*
  - c. *up*: *The storm scared us **up**.*
  - d. *out*: *Study it **out** [i.e. think it over] while you are bringing in the water.*
  - e. *down*: *I shot the bear in the mouth and killed him **down**.*

#### 14.4. Combination of forms

A remarkable characteristic of AppE is the combination of two or more locative prepositions to modify the action of the verb.

- (93)
- a. *I went right **down in on** him and give him another shot.*
  - b. *They was several houses **on up around up on** Mill Creek and **up in** there and **on up next to** Fork of the River back **up in** there.*
  - c. *The dogs was a-fighting the bear right **in under** the top of Smoky, pretty close **up to** the top.*
  - d. *It was just down where that road comes around, **on down in below** where that road comes around.*

- e. *He turned them loose [and] **down through** the sugar orchard they went **out up across over on** Enloe, back **around to** the big branch, **out across** the head of hit **over on** Three Fork.*
- f. *The old tom cat went **up in under** the chair.*

#### 14.5. Omission of prepositions

Prepositions are occasionally omitted.

- (94) a. *Back (in) old times.*  
 b. *She lives over (at) what they call Corn Pone, Cascades.*

#### 14.6. Prepositional phrases for habitual activity

Temporal prepositional phrases with *of* (especially with a singular indefinite noun as the object) indicate frequent or habitual activity, in one of three patterns equivalent to 'every'.

- (95) a. *of a + singular noun: We would have singing **of a night** and **of a Sunday**; We would gather our apples in **of a day** and peel our apples **of a night** and put them out on a scaffold.*  
 b. *of the + singular noun: They don't have no one to rely on **of the night**.*  
 c. *of + plural noun: My grandfather was troubled **of nights** in his sleep with what was called nightmares.*

### 15. Conjunctions

#### 15.1. Subordinating conjunctions

Many subordinating conjunctions either do not occur in general usage or occur with different functions there (see also section 11.6.).

- (96) a. *afore*  
 'before'  
*It rained **afore** we had a chance to plow.*
- b. *again/against*  
 'by the time that, before'  
*We'd oughta do plenty of fishin' **against** the season closes; I was repairin' the tire **again** you came.*
- c. *as*  
 'than'  
*I'd rather work **as** go to school.*

- d. *as*  
 ‘that’  
*I don’t know **as** I’ve been any benefit to the park service.*
- e. *as how*  
 ‘that, whether’  
*I don’t know **as how** I can finish it today.*
- f. *being, being as, being that*  
 ‘because, seeing that’  
*We’ll try another ’n, **being** that’un paid off; **Being as** you weren’t at the meeting, you don’t get to vote; **Being that** the president was sick, the vice-president adjourned the meeting.*
- g. *evern*  
 ‘whenever, if ever’  
*Evern you do that, you’ll come home and find a cold supper.*
- h. *everwhen*  
 ‘when’  
***Everwhen** we got there, Jack reached for his gun.*
- i. *everwhere*  
 ‘wherever’  
*They just squatted down **everwhere** they were.*
- j. *how come* (see section 17.1.)
- k. *how soon*  
 ‘that ... soon’  
*I hope **how soon** he comes.*
- l. *iffen*  
 ‘if’  
*Come into the fire **iffen** you-ones wants to.*
- m. *lessen*  
 ‘unless’  
*I won’t go **lessen** you go.*
- n. *like that*  
 ‘like, that’  
*I felt **like that** we needed the power.*
- o. *nor*  
 ‘than’  
*[It’s] no bigger round **nor** your arm.*
- p. *that* (redundant after other forms in *because that, how that, etc.*; see section 15.4).
- q. *till*  
 ‘so that, with the result that, to the point that’  
*He liked [coffee] so strong **till** you could slice it; My mama had rheumatiz, and she got **till** she couldn’t walk.*

- r. *to where*  
 ‘to the extent that, to the point that’  
*The coons was hung up **to where** they froze up and was alright; He got **to where** he was inactive.*
- s. *until*  
 ‘so that, with the result that’  
*I’ve done this **until** they could take and interpret the pictures.*
- t. *whenever*  
 ‘of a single event: when’  
*I was just eight **whenever** she died.*
- u. *whenever*  
 ‘as soon as, at the earliest point that’  
***Whenever** you get to Caldwell Fork, it’s just across the mountain to Hemphill.*
- v. *whenever*  
 ‘of a process or extended period: throughout the time that, during the time that’  
*My mother, **whenever** she was living, she just told you one time.*
- w. *whenevern*  
 ‘of a periodic or intermittent event: when’  
*There were three in the saw crew **whenevern** you cut trees.*
- x. *whenevern*  
 ‘of a one-time event: as soon as’  
***Whenevern** I seen what it was, why I went back to the shack.*
- y. *without* ‘unless’  
*They didn’t fish **without** it was just right.*
- z. *withouten*  
 ‘unless’  
*I won’t go **withouten** you do.*

## 15.2. Verbless absolute clauses

AppE has verbless absolute clauses introduced by *and* and interpreted as subordinate to the previous clause. The construction functions as though it has an elliptical form of *be*.

- (97) a. *They all wore Mother Hubbard dresses, **and** them loose.*  
 b. *That woman is doin’ too much work, **and** her in a family way.*  
 c. *He would steal the hat off your head **and** you a-lookin’ at him.*

## 15.3. Ellipsis

Ellipsis of the conjunction may occur when introducing the complement of a verb after *want*.

- (98) a. *Child, I want Ø ye should think about it all yer days!*  
 b. *They want Ø you should use the hickory on some of them rough boys.*

15.4. Redundant *that*

A redundant *that* may be used after *where*, *what*, and similar conjunctions:

- (99) a. *Not just **because that** I'm born and raised here, but I'm just telling ye what other people tells me.*  
 b. *Tell us **how that** you would find and get the sheep in.*  
 c. *I don't remember exactly **when that** they started building in White Pine.*  
 d. *He brought him out, down to **where that** they could get him in a car.*  
 e. *Maybe you can explain then **why that** it does do that.*

## 16. Existential clauses

Existential clauses display variation from general usage in three principal respects. First, they are usually introduced by *there*, its related form *they*, or more rarely *it*.

- (100) a. ***They** is something bad wrong with her.*  
 b. *I believe **they** is a cemetery there too, ain't **there**?*  
 c. *If you'd have seen what I made it with, **it** would be a lot of people would faint.*  
 d. *There was one bedroom upstairs, wasn't **it**?*

Second, *is* (usually contracted to 's) and *was* (sometimes contracted to 's) are the typical verb forms with both singular and plural subjects. *Are* appears occasionally with singular subjects.

- (101) a. *They **is** not so many there now.*  
 b. *They's all sizes from little'uns to big'uns.*  
 c. *They **are** another one down the street.*

Third, the relative pronoun following the subject is often omitted, regardless of its function.

- (102) a. *They is six trees Ø would have made anybody a good dwelling house.*  
 b. *They is people Ø gets lost in these Smoky Mountains.*



## 17. Miscellaneous patterns

### 17.1. Yes/no questions

Indirect yes/no questions may take the word order of direct questions, with inversion of the subject and auxiliary verb and with the tense conforming to that of the main clause. Indirect *wh*-questions usually pattern as in general usage, except when *how come* introduces a clause and precedes a noun or personal pronoun in the objective case.

- (103) a. *He asked me did I want to work this morning.*  
 b. *Somebody asked me was that Jim Ike's truck.*  
 c. *We finally asked would they help us.*  
 d. *I studied what was the matter.*  
 e. *That's **how come** it to be called the Devil's Courthouse.*  
 f. *That's **how come** us to leave there, you know.*

### 17.2. One

To specify alternatives, AppE often employs *one* (probably derived from *one or the other*) after conjoined forms or types of phrases, most often nouns.

- (104) a. *He was in Tennessee or Kentucky **one**.*  
 b. *I'm going home [and] see Emerts Cove or hell **one** before daylight.*  
 c. *They had [revival] meeting morning and evening or morning and night **one** all the time.*  
 d. *That hearing aid, it's either too high or too low **one**.*  
 e. *The first settlers come in here in the eighteen thirties or the forties **one**.*  
 f. *They'd set down and climb a tree or pick a fight **one**.*

### 17.3. Left dislocation

Often a noun or noun phrase is moved from its usual position to the beginning (or left-most position) of a clause, to be replaced by a simple personal pronoun in the original context.

- (105) a. *The [hunters] that went the other way into the mountain, they'd killed them turkeys.*  
 b. *The bear, it made a pass a-toward him.*

## 17.4. Interposed pronouns

An indefinite pronoun or pronoun phrase co-referential with the subject of a clause may appear in the verb phrase.

- (106) a. *The Queen family was **all of them** good to sing.*  
 b. *We don't **any of us** need anything.*  
 c. *They can **every one** sing.*  
 d. *We don't **nobody** know how long we have.*

The interposed pronoun phrase may appear in an existential sentence, a pattern that may be the basis of clauses with negative inversion (section 9.5.).

- (107) a. *They didn't **none of us** ever get snakebit, but their work animal did.*  
 b. *There'd **somebody** come around with a truck once in a while.*

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# Rural and ethnic varieties in the Southeast: morphology and syntax\*

Walt Wolfram

## 1. Introduction

Notwithstanding the popular stereotype of the American South as a uniform region, the Southeastern US represents one of the most diverse dialect areas in the United States. It is an area of robust dialect diversity, including a full range of areal, social, and ethnic variation. At least three major dialect boundaries cut across the Southeastern states of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, including a seaboard region to the east, a highland region to the west, and an intermediate Coastal Plain and Piedmont region. Within the context of dialect diversity in the South is a set of *enclave dialect communities*, that is, communities that have been set apart from mainstream populations and, in some cases, from the major dialect boundaries set forth in dialect surveys such as Kurath (1949), Carver (1987), and Labov, Ash, and Boberg (fc.). Admittedly, the notions of “enclave community” and “historical isolation” are difficult to define in a precise, objective manner (Wolfram and Thomas 2002), although these constructs generally involve geographical and/or social remoteness, historical continuity, and communicative disconnection from more widespread populations. Perhaps more important than objectifiable criteria, however, is the fact that these communities usually have a strong sense of local, oppositional identity vis-à-vis other groups.

There are several reasons why enclave dialect communities are significant for the description of language variation in the South. Such communities provide a critical basis for reconstructing the history of vernacular dialects in the US, based on the assumption that enclave dialects will be conservative in language change and that they will be relatively immune to some language changes diffusing throughout the wider population. Enclave communities have, in fact, played an important role in reconstructing the earlier status of prominent social and ethnic varieties such as African American English (Poplack 2000, Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002; Mallinson and Wolfram 2002) and Appalachian English (Montgomery 1989; Montgomery and Hall 2004). Another reason is the rapid transformation of some historically isolated dialect communities. Abrupt changes in demographic and socioeconomic conditions during the last half of the twentieth century have threatened these once-insular dialect communities, resulting in rapid dialect dissipation and, in a couple of cases, dialect intensification (Schilling-Estes 1997; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 2003).

The dynamics of dialect change under these circumstances, including the death of some traditional dialects, is of considerable interest to researchers of language variation and change. Finally, the rapid erosion of some of these remote dialect communities has resulted in a sense of urgency to document them before they are lost or drastically restructured. Given the moribund state of many enclave dialects, it seems incumbent on dialectologists and linguists to document the descriptive status of these varieties.

## 2. The construction of enclave dialect communities

Like other varieties, enclave dialects in the Southeastern US are a product of founder dialects (Mufwene 2001), language contact, language diffusion, and independent language development. Accordingly, these varieties reveal similar and dissimilar traits with other enclave communities as well as with many other adjacent and non-adjacent dialects. Enclave dialects are typified by a set of structures that are shared not only with each other but also with a relatively wide range of rural dialects in the US. Given the distribution of forms in diverse, rural areas throughout the US and their attestation in earlier varieties of English brought to colonial America, we assume that these communities simply have been conservative in their language change. For example, the use of *a*-prefixing, widely distributed in the earlier English of the British Isles and in the US, is amply documented in enclave communities in the Southeastern US and elsewhere in the rural American South (Pederson 1986–1992), but it is also found in rural contexts in New England (Kurath 1939–1943) and in the Midwestern US. (Allen 1973–1977).

A second type of distribution pattern can be traced to regional dialects of the British Isles. In earlier American English, these patterns might have shown regional distribution as well, as settlers from particular regions of England tended to cluster in particular geographical regions in America. For example, the concord pattern attaching *-s* to verbs with plural noun phrase subjects (e.g. *The dogs barks*) has been attributed to varieties in Northern England and to the dialect of the Ulster Scots immigrants who were a dominant population in the highland areas of Appalachia (Montgomery 1989). In fact, the marking of *-s* on verbs with 3<sup>rd</sup> plural subjects has now become known as the “Northern Concord Subject Rule”, in recognition of its historical regionalization in England (see the chapters by Beal and Filppula, this volume).

The assumed origin of such features in the regional dialects of the British Isles, however, raises important questions about their occurrence in enclave dialects of the Southeastern US. Ulster Scots immigrants and speakers from Northern England were certainly part of the overall mix of English-speaking settlers in the Southeast, but they were much more concentrated in some areas – in particular, the Appalachian mountain range – than they were in others, such as the Southeastern coastal

area. Nonetheless, we find traits associated with this assumed regional British dialect founder effect well beyond the original area of settlement. It is possible that the effects of some earlier varieties of English in colonial America diffused to other areas from their original locus, and may even have become part of an earlier American English koiné in the Southeast. If this was the case, then the dialect features might have persisted in enclave varieties that have had no significant contact with each other for a couple of centuries.

In the enclave dialects we survey here, we also find a few structures that are not documented in other regional varieties of American English. In most US varieties, past *be* is usually regularized to *was*, as in *We was home* or *You wasn't there* (Wolfram and Fasold 1974; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998); however, in some enclave communities, we find a pattern in which past *be* is leveled to *was* in positive sentences (e.g. *We was there*) but to *weren't* in negative ones (e.g. *I weren't home*). Within our sample, the *was/weren't* pattern is robust among groups as geographically and culturally disparate as the European Americans of Smith Island and Tangier Island in the Chesapeake Bay (Schilling-Estes 1997; Shores 2000) and the Lumbee Indians of the Coastal Plain of North Carolina (Wolfram and Sellers 1999). At the same time, there is no documentation of this pattern in other current rural dialects in the Southeast.

Although we can only speculate, it does not seem likely that regularization to *weren't* is due to a simple, direct founder effect from the British Isles (where it is very much alive, see Anderwald 2002). The feature was present in some of the varieties brought to regions of the Eastern Seaboard of America, including those varieties that originally came from Southwest England (Orton et al. 1962–1971). From that point, it probably developed into a regional feature of the coastal Delmarva dialect region (Shores 2000; Wolfram and Thomas 2002). As people from the Delmarva region moved to various coastal sites, including islands in the Chesapeake Bay and the Outer Banks, the pattern was apparently diffused along the Mid-Atlantic and Southern coasts. In this case, the earlier development of a regional variety of American English spread to other areas that then became isolated.

Like other varieties, the dialects of enclave communities also change from within. While dialectologists and historical linguists certainly acknowledge the potential for internal linguistic change in peripheral dialect areas, the role of innovation tends to be overlooked in most descriptions of enclave dialect communities. Instead, there seems to be an assumption that dialect forms in historically isolated varieties will be quite conservative with respect to innovation and that relic forms will remain relatively intact in their linguistic composition. Andersen (1988), however, argues that what we conveniently refer to here as *the relic assumption* has led researchers to slight system-internal innovations in favor of hypothetical contact situations that lead to diffusion-based explanations. Andersen (1988: 54) notes: “[...] there are internally motivated innovations which arise independently of any

external stimulus. These too have an areal dimension and may appear to spread merely because they arise in different places at different times.”

This claim certainly counters the relic assumption that remnant dialect communities will necessarily be conservative in their patterns of change and rarely favor innovation. Our investigation of dialect enclave communities in the coastal US supports the contention that language change can indeed take place fairly rapidly in enclave dialect areas and that dialect intensification – that is, the accelerated development of dialect distinctiveness – can take place through internally based language change, even when a variety is in a moribund state (Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1999). Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2003), for example, show that the remorphologization of past tense *be* is an accelerating change taking place currently in at least several unrelated enclave dialects on the mid-Atlantic coast ranging from the islands in the Chesapeake Bay to the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

The rapid rate of change within a relatively compressed time period suggests that we cannot simply assume that dialect change is necessarily slow or fast, or that it takes a unilateral path. Rather, there may be periods of rapidity of change as well as conservatism over the course of centuries of isolation. Even when enclave dialects share a common core of structures vis-à-vis dialects of the wider population, particular communities may indicate selectivity in their retention and development of dialect forms. For example, perfective *be* in sentences such as *I'm been there before* was once a fairly common dialect trait across a broad range of earlier dialects of English, including most of the communities considered here. We know that perfective *have* was a later development in the English language, and that there was widespread fluctuation with perfective *be* well into the seventeenth century. But in one of the enclave communities considered here, we find that the use of perfective *be* is still a robust, productive form, even among younger speakers (Dannenberg 2003). Furthermore, the structure has undergone some independent structural and semantic development that now distinguishes it from other varieties where it is still productive. Though the perfective use of *be* might qualify as a “relic” form given the traditional definition of this notion, it must be understood that such items are hardly static structurally or functionally. Indeed, these forms may undergo independent development within a particular community that sets the community dialect apart from other enclave dialects in subtle but important ways. If we assume that the label “relic” refers to earlier forms selectively preserved intact, then there would be very few forms that qualify; if, on the other hand, we admit that these forms are subject to change just like non-relic features, then we are hard put to show how change in relic forms differs from other types of language change, apart from the fact that relic forms involve changes in items that have receded in more widely distributed, socially dominant varieties of the language.

Finally, change may also involve parallel independent development, or “drift” among unrelated dialect communities due to the operation of the general processes

of analogy and universal tendencies to move toward unmarked forms. All of the varieties examined here, for example, show the regularization of irregular plurals (e.g. *two sheeps*), the regularization of past tense forms (e.g. *They grewed up*), and negative concord (e.g. *They didn't do nothing*). These general traits are shared not only by these enclave communities but also by a host of other vernacular communities of English that include but are not restricted to American English. The developments are simply part of the natural processes that guide changes quite independently of diffusion or language contact, or, as Chambers (1995: 242) puts it “primitives of vernacular dialects in that they recur ubiquitously all over the world.” More than anything, analogical pressures to regularize and generalize linguistic rules distinguish socially subordinate enclave communities from the prescribed standard English norm which is, according to Chambers (1995: 246), “more strictly tightly constrained in its grammar and phonology” due to the social pressures to resist some natural changes. These system-internal processes must be factored into the description and explanation of these varieties as they configure and reconfigure themselves over time in ways that are both uniform and diverse.

Notwithstanding romantic notions about enclave dialect communities existing in splendid isolation apart from all contact with outside dialect communities, we must also consider the role of language contact in the development and maintenance of enclave dialects. Regardless of the situation, there is some inevitable interaction and communication with other groups. The communities represented here are no different in this regard, and each of them has had contact with other groups in their past, as well as varying types of contact more recently. Thus, structural traits may be transferred from other language varieties. However, linguistic accommodation is not necessarily a matter of categorical structural acceptance or rejection. In fact, it is possible that *interdialectal forms* may arise – that is, “forms that actually originally occurred in neither dialect” (Trudgill 1986: 62). In our discussion of the grammatical attachment of third person plural *-s* in one of the communities considered here, Hyde County, we find that the use of *-s* attachment by African American cohorts reflects but does not precisely replicate its use by European Americans, showing a type of overgeneralization characteristic of language contact situations. Donor dialects thus worked in tandem with language contact strategies in the configuration of the earlier African American speech in this isolated, bi-ethnic context. Both intra-community and inter-community contact must be recognized, not only in the formative stages of such dialects, but also as varieties reconfigure themselves over time and as they emerge from insularity. The contact dynamics of different enclave communities must be taken into account along with founder effects, diffusion, and independent development in understanding the structuring and restructuring of enclave dialect communities.

### 3. The grammar of enclave dialects

In this section I describe some of the morphological and syntactic traits of a representative set of enclave dialect communities. The description is based on several types of communities. First, we include island communities on the Outer Banks of North Carolina (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1997; Wolfram, Hazen, and Schilling-Estes 1999) and the Chesapeake Bay area of Maryland and Virginia (Schilling-Estes 1997; Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1999; Shores 2000). These mono-ethnic, European American communities represent one of the paradigm types of the Southeastern enclave community. These are complemented by the examination of a couple of bi-ethnic enclave communities, including a longstanding African American and European American community on the coast of North Carolina (Wolfram and Thomas 2002), Hyde County, and a receding bi-ethnic community in the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina, Beech Bottom (Mallinson and Wolfram 2002). Finally, we include the case of a tri-ethnic situation involving the Lumbee Native American Indians (Wolfram and Dannenberg 1999; Dannenberg 2003). The Lumbee, who lost their ancestral language generations ago, have carved out a unique sociocultural variety that symbolizes their unique status as neither white nor black. The location of these communities is given in the map in figure 1.

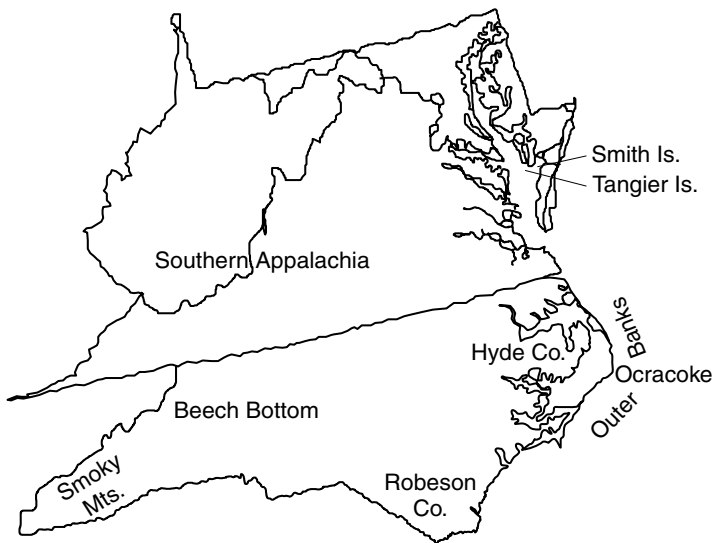


Figure 1. Rural and ethnic sites of the Southeast United States

In describing the structural characteristics of these enclave situations, I attempt to highlight the ways in which they are similar to and different from each other, as well as from other rural Southern varieties. The description is organized on the basis of major grammatical categories.



### 3.1. Verb phrase

Some of the most distinguishing traits of enclave dialect situations involve the verb phrase, including a set of specialized auxiliaries, irregular verbs, and subject-verb agreement patterns. Many of these features unify these varieties with other Southern American vernacular dialects but there are also a couple of cases that seem to be confined to enclave dialect communities.

#### 3.1.1. Finite *be*

The use of *be* as a finite form in sentences like *That's how it bes* has been attested in selected regions of the South, although its productive use among European Americans tends to be quite regionally restricted (Montgomery and Mishoe 1999). It may occur with a habitual meaning (e.g. *They usually be there*), as it currently does in contemporary African American Vernacular English (AAVE), but it is clearly not restricted to this aspectual reference in enclave dialect communities. It is rare in the enclave communities that we have examined here, excepting Lumbee English in Southeastern North Carolina, where it has become a dialect icon associated with their distinct sociocultural variety. It should be noted, however, that the Lumbee live in a county adjacent to one of the few regions in the United States where finite *be(s)* characterizes the European-American population, Horry County, South Carolina (Montgomery and Mishoe 1999). Older European American residents in Robeson County where the Lumbee reside also show vestiges of finite *be* but elderly European Americans and African Americans in other enclave sites rarely use this form.

A kind of restructuring of *be* in Lumbee English is taking place in the current generation of speakers. This development coincides to some extent with the integration of public schools in the early 1970s, an event that brought Lumbees into increasing contact with African Americans. While the use of finite *be(s)* has come to characterize the Lumbee (Wolfram and Dannenberg 1999), habitual *be* in constructions such as *Sometimes they be acting nice* is a well-known feature of twentieth-century AAVE (see Wolfram, this volume). Among older Lumbee speakers, *be(s)* may be used in habitual contexts, but it is not restricted to this function. Younger Lumbee speakers show the increased use of *be* in *v-ing* constructions with a habitual reading, the contemporary grammaticalized function of *be* in AAVE. At the same time, *be* may have verbal *-s* attachment with 3<sup>rd</sup> sg. subjects (e.g. *The train bes coming every day at noon*) and, to a lesser extent, 3<sup>rd</sup> pl. subjects (e.g. *The trains bes coming*). This pattern is unlike its contemporary AAVE use, which does not typically mark verbal *-s*. We thus observe that *be* has partially accommodated the grammaticalization that has taken place in AAVE while retaining distinctive parameters of the concord system of Lumbee Vernacular English.

### 3.1.2. Copula/auxiliary absence

The absence of copula and auxiliary for contractible forms of *is* and *are* (e.g. *She nice* for ‘She’s nice’ or *They acting silly* for ‘They’re acting silly’) is strongly associated with AAVE (e.g. Labov 1972a; Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972; Rickford 1999), but it is also shared to some extent with Southern white rural vernacular varieties of English. In Southern European American English varieties, particularly those within the former large plantation areas of the South, deletion tends to be limited to contractible forms of *are*; it is also used at reduced frequency levels compared to AAVE. In Southeastern enclave communities, copula absence is associated primarily with African American communities. For example, it is not found in the exclusively white island dialects of the Outer Banks (Wolfram, Hazen and Schilling-Estes 1999) and the Chesapeake Bay (Schilling-Estes 1997) and it is not characteristic of the European American cohort community in Hyde County even though it is found among African Americans there. Deletion is also found among African American speakers in Appalachian enclave communities (Mallinson and Wolfram 2002), where some European American speakers do sporadically exhibit deletion of *are* (Wolfram and Christian 1976). In Lumbee Vernacular English, it is found to a very limited extent (Dannenberg 2003) and used at frequency levels between those for cohort African American and European American speakers. The occurrence of copula absence in enclave communities seems attributable to contact with AAVE speakers rather than to an independent development.

Enclave dialects regularly exhibit the deletion of contracted forms of *have* as in *I been there before* or *He been there*. This is a phonological process involving the deletion of a weak final consonant rather than a morphological process.

### 3.1.3. Perfective be

Many enclave dialects alternate perfective *be* with the auxiliary *have* as in *I’m been there* for *I’ve been there* or *You’re been there* for *You’ve been there*. This is no doubt a perpetuation of an earlier pattern that included widespread fluctuation with perfective *be* and *have* well into the seventeenth century. Although perfective *be* is now relatively infrequent in most enclave dialects in the Southeastern US, it remains a robust, productive form in one variety we examined, Lumbee Vernacular English (Dannenberg 2003). Furthermore, its development in this variety distinguishes it from other varieties where it is still found. Perfective *be* is structurally restricted to contracted finite forms (e.g. *I know I’m been here* but not *\*I know I am been here*), and it has expanded semantically to apply to some simple past constructions (e.g. *I’m forgot the food yesterday*). Though perfective *be* is indicated in a wide range of enclave dialects, its restructuring in Lumbee English illustrates how a particular dialect community may selectively preserve and expand an item

to distinguish itself both from other enclave dialect communities and from dialects found in the wider population.

### 3.1.4. *A-prefixing*

The use of the prefix or proclitic *a-* with *v-ing* structures, as in *She was a-huntin' and a-fishin'* or *They came a-lookin' for the possum* is a widespread structural trait in enclave dialect communities in the Southeast as well as in other rural vernacular varieties of English. The prefix *a-* may only attach to verbs and verbal complements as in *They went a-walkin'* and *We was goin' up there a-squirrel huntin'*; it is also attached occasionally to *-ed* participles as in *It had a white sheet a-wrapped around it* or *It's supposed to be a-haunted*. It is not generally permissible with prepositions, so that a sentence like *They make money a-fishin'* is well formed but a sentence like *\*They make money by a-fishin'* is ungrammatical. This restriction is no doubt related to the fact that *a-* prefixing developed historically from a temporal locative as in *Rex was at/on fishin'*. In fact, in some communities, older speakers still occasionally use sentences like *Rex was at fishin' when we got there*. These sentences are remnants from the period when *a-* prefixing alternated with a temporal locative preposition. There are also phonetic restrictions on the current use of *a-* prefixing. *A-* prefixing does not generally occur when the following syllable is unstressed, as in *\*a-discoverin'* or *\*a-repeatin'*; this prohibition is no doubt a reflection of the prosodic restriction against words beginning with two unstressed syllables. Furthermore, *a-* prefixing is favored in preconsonantal contexts (e.g. *She was a-drinkin'*) over prevocalic ones (e.g. *She was a-eatin'*) though it is permissible in both types of contexts. All of the varieties we have surveyed exhibit *a-* prefixing to some extent, though they show great variation in their relative levels of usage. Elderly speakers on the Outer Banks use it infrequently and younger speakers rarely use it at all, while some elderly Lumbee speakers use it at high frequency levels and young speakers in more isolated Lumbee communities use it productively as well.

### 3.1.5. *Completive done and slam*

The use of *done* with the past tense of the verb, as in *They done used all the good ones* is a persistent structural trait of enclave dialects that is shared with Southern European American and African American vernacular varieties. On the Outer Banks and among the Lumbee, the variant *slam* is used in much the same way as *done*, so that we may get sentences such as *They slam used all the good ones*. In many respects, completive *done* and *slam* function like a perfect, referring to an action completed in the recent past, but they can also be used to highlight a change of state or to intensify an activity, as in a sentence like *I done/slam told you not to mess up*. It is a stable feature though not used as frequently in enclave communities as it is in some other Southern rural varieties.

### 3.1.6. *Specialized auxiliaries*

Enclave dialect communities tend to share a set of specialized auxiliaries with surrounding Southern rural vernacular dialects. We find, for example, the generalized Southern form *fixin' to* referring to an immediate future or planned event (e.g. *I'm fixin' to go now*) and double modals such as *I might could do it* in enclave dialect communities. We also find counterfactual *liketa* in *I was so scared I liketa died*, although it may differ subtly from how it is used in more widespread Southern rural varieties. In some varieties of Southern English, its use is restricted to contexts of intensified significance, with a metaphorical rather than a literal reference. In these varieties, a sentence like *They liketa went through the roof when they saw the mess* is well-formed but a sentence with a literal reference of 'almost' such as *\*They liketa went through the roof but the drill they were using wasn't powerful enough* would not be permissible. In other dialects, including the enclave dialects we have examined here, it may also be used with a literal meaning as well as a metaphorical, intensified sense so that the latter sentence would indeed be permissible. Its more expansive use in different enclave communities suggests that its restriction to counterfactual *liketa* for intensified significance was probably a later development in English. Though *liketa* is derived historically from the phrase *like to have*, it is currently interpreted as an unanalyzable lexical item.

### 3.1.7. *Irregular verbs*

Irregular verbs tend to fall well within the vernacular irregular verb patterns set forth in Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998: 331). The types of differences are enumerated as follows:

1. past generalized as participle  
*I had went down there.*  
*She may have took the car.*
2. participle generalized as past  
*He done the work.*  
*She seen something there.*
3. bare root as past  
*She run there yesterday.*  
*They come to my house.*
4. regularization of past tense  
*Everybody knowed him.*  
*They dranked the soda.*
5. different irregular form  
*I hearn something.*  
*It riz up in front of me.*

Enclave dialects are no different from other vernacular varieties of American English in the patterning of irregular verb forms. However, the retention of different irregular forms (Type 5), such as *hearn* for *heard*, *riz* for *rose*, *clumb* for *climbed*, or *holp* for *help* is much more characteristic of enclave varieties than most other vernacular varieties of English. Many of these forms are, of course, retentions of an earlier, more expansive set of irregular verb forms in English.

### 3.1.8. Subject-verb agreement

Several aspects of subject-verb agreement are noteworthy. The concord pattern in which *-s* is marked on a verb with a plural subject, as in *The dogs barks* or *People goes there*, is widely documented as a feature of American English varieties that were influenced by the Scotch-Irish, such as Appalachian English (Wolfram and Christian 1976; Christian, Dube and Wolfram 1988; Montgomery 1989), although its colonial distribution apparently was not limited to the Southern Highland region (Wolfram and Thomas 2002). In fact, we find robust patterns of 3<sup>rd</sup> pl. *-s* marking in all of the enclave dialect communities we have examined here, extending from European American communities in the Chesapeake Bay and Outer Banks to African Americans in both coastal and mountain locations, as well as in Lumbee Vernacular English in the Coastal Plain. Although it may occur at different levels of usage and is subject to different constraints in its application, it is clearly a widespread feature of enclave dialect communities in the Southeast.

There are several constraints on the incidence of plural *-s* marking, namely, the subject type and the proximity of the subject and the verb. Noun phrase subjects (e.g. *The dogs barks*) favor the incidence of plural *-s* marking over pronoun subjects (e.g. *They barks*), and collective nouns (e.g. *People likes the dogs*) and coordinate noun phrases (e.g. *Me and my dog likes to run*) favor *-s* marking over other types of noun phrases. Some enclave dialects show quite strong subject type constraints whereas others show weaker constraints. For example, the Hyde County European American community shows a categorical prohibition against plural *-s* marking with pronoun subjects whereas cohort African American Hyde County speakers show a relatively weak variable constraint (Wolfram and Thomas 2002).

The second constraint is based on adjacency. Verbs that are not adjacent to the subject because of a heavy NP (e.g. *The dogs in the trucks barks*) or a clausal complement (e.g. *The dogs that barks are hungry*) are more likely to attach a plural *-s* than those that are immediately adjacent to the subject. This appears to be a fairly constant pattern though its application is stronger in some enclave dialect communities than it is in others.

Most of the dialects we have examined show occasional *-s* attachment with subjects other than third person as well, as in *I goes down there* or *You takes you a good wife* but this is much more sporadic than 3<sup>rd</sup> pl. *-s* attachment. Furthermore, the use of *-s* with non-third person subjects tends to be idiosyncratic; a few

speakers use it with some regularity but the majority of speakers rarely use it. The attachment of *-s* on 1<sup>st</sup> person as a type of historical present in personal narratives as in *I goes down there and sees this ghost...* is also found in enclave dialect communities. These communities also use *don't* instead of *doesn't* as a 3<sup>rd</sup> sg. form, as in *She don't go there* or *The dog don't bark*. This is a widespread characteristic of American English vernacular dialects wherever they are found.

The pattern of 3<sup>rd</sup> sg. *-s* absence in sentences such as *The dog bark\_* has not been documented to any extent in the European American enclave communities we have examined in this survey. At the same time, 3<sup>rd</sup> sg. *-s* absence is a characteristic of several representative African American enclave communities (Wolfram and Thomas 2002; Mallinson and Wolfram 2002) coexisting with a cohort European American community, revealing a consistent ethnolinguistic boundary in bi-ethnic enclave communities.

### 3.1.9. Past and present tense *be* agreement

Patterns of subject-verb agreement are both similar to and different from those found in other vernacular dialects of English. On the one hand, enclave dialects participate in the widespread vernacular pattern of *be* regularization for present and past forms of conjugated *be*; *are* and *am* level to *is*, as in *The folks is home* or *Y'all is here* and past tense *be* levels to *was*, as in *The folks was there* or *Y'all was here*. Regularization is much more common in past than in present tense, as it is in virtually all varieties of vernacular English having *be* leveling. The comparison of leveling over time and place indicates that it is diminishing somewhat (Wolfram and Thomas 2002), probably due to the effect of prescriptive norms. Nonetheless, it is still quite robust in some enclave communities.

In most US varieties, past *be* is usually regularized to *was*, as in *We was home* or *You wasn't there* (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998). However, in the Southeastern coastal area extending from Maryland and Virginia to North Carolina, there is an alternate pattern in which past *be* is leveled to *was* in positive sentences (e.g. *We was there*) and to *weren't* in negative sentences (e.g. *I weren't home*). This pattern represents remorphologization of the two past *be* stems on the basis of polarity, such that *was* is now used to mark affirmative rather than singular meaning, and the *were*-stem is now used to mark negativity rather than plurality. In the Southeast, the *was/weren't* pattern is robust among groups as geographically and culturally disparate as the European Americans on the islands in the Chesapeake Bay (Schilling-Estes 1997; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 2003) and the Lumbee Indians of the Coastal Plain of North Carolina (Wolfram and Sellers 1999). Furthermore, it is found in both coastal African American and European American enclave communities (Wolfram and Thomas 2002). There is little indication that it is found among cohort rural communities in neighboring Coastal Plain regions or in the Highland South. Although leveling to *weren't* is well-represented in past

and present vernacular varieties of English spoken in the British Isles (cf. Anderwald 2002), the coastal Southeastern US is the only region outside of the British Isles where it has been documented.

### 3.1.10. Other verb phrase structures

A number of traits affecting verbs are restricted to particular lexical items and verb plus complement combinations rather than general categories of verbs. A couple of items involve the use of the complement *to* with the verb. One occurs with *v-ing* constructions as in *He started to running* or *Dad went to driving real fast*. Another involves *have to* with a causative or resultative meaning as in *She'll have him to bring the paper when he comes home*. This trait is shared with most Southern American dialects in general. Enclave dialects are also more prone than other rural varieties to retain *for to* complement constructions as in *I'll have for him to come home* or *I want for her to take it with her*. Many of these uses involve retentions of older forms that have been lost in other varieties of English and are general features shared with surrounding Southern rural varieties of English.

The use of *aim* for 'intend' or 'plan' (e.g. *I aim to do it later*), *hear tell* for 'hear' (e.g. *I heard tell you have a new boat*), *carry* for 'accompany' (e.g. *I'll carry you to the store*), and *reckon* for 'suppose' or 'surmise' (e.g. *I reckon I should leave now*) are widespread features of contemporary or earlier Southern American English that are shared with enclave dialect communities. Particular lexical differences may also characterize specific enclave communities such as the use of *mommuck* for 'harass' on the Outer Banks (e.g. *He mommucked his kids all the time*) or the use of *proggin'* for 'looking for artifacts' (particularly arrowheads as in *He was proggin' yesterday*) on the islands of the Chesapeake Bay (Shores 2000), but such differences have to be considered on an item-by-item basis for different enclave communities.

## 3.2. Adverbs

Several distinctive features of adverbs characterize enclave dialect communities. One is the placement of temporal adverbial phrases. In English, adverbial phrases may occur after the verb phrase as in *We have floods once in a while* or in pre-sentential position as in *Once in a while we have floods*, but some dialects, including the enclave dialects in our survey, also permit placement between the subject and the verb phrase, as in *We once in a while have floods*. We also find the use of *anymore* in affirmative sentences with a meaning of 'nowadays', as in *We have a lot of floods anymore*. These varieties align themselves with regional Midland dialects of American English rather than surrounding Southern varieties in this regard. Although some positive *anymore* varieties permit pre-sentential movement of the adverb as in *Anymore, we have a lot of floods*, it is only found in post-verbal

position in the enclave dialects we have surveyed. We also find an expanded reference for the adverb *whenever* in the enclave communities, in which it may be used to refer to a punctual event as in *Whenever I lost my mother a few years ago* or an extended time event in *Whenever she was living she taught me*. It is quite evident in the highland areas of Appalachia, but it is also found to some extent in coastal varieties. In most other varieties of American English, its use is restricted to recurring or conditional events as in *Whenever she goes to the store, she buys fish*.

A set of specialized intensifying adverbs characteristic of Southern dialects is also found in enclave varieties of the Southeast. The intensifier *right* retains its earlier, more unrestricted co-occurrence with general adjectives and adverbs, as in *The dog is right big* or *He hollered right loud*. In most varieties of American English, the intensifier *right* is now limited to location in place or time, as in *She's right around the corner* or *He's right on time*. The intensifier *plumb*, which can alternate with *slam*, refers to a state of completeness, as in *She fell plumb asleep* or *She fell slam asleep*. *Plumb* and *slam* are also restricted to neutral and negative attributes; accordingly, a sentence like *He's plumb ugly* is permissible but as sentence like *\*He's plumb handsome* is not. In a couple of the coastal dialect communities we have examined, *some* may be attached to an adjective, as in *The meal sure was good-some*. However, we have found it used in contrasting ways; on the Outer Banks island of Ocracoke, *-some* strengthens the degree of the attribute whereas on Smith Island in the Chesapeake Bay it weakens it (Schilling-Estes 1997). Thus, *good-some* in Ocracoke means that the food was very tasty, but on Smith Island it means that it was not very tasty. The adverbial use of *but* with a negative in *He ain't but fifteen* or *There ain't but so much I can do* also is found with a meaning of 'only' or 'no more than'.

Enclave dialects are like most other vernacular dialects of English in their regularization of comparatives, so that multisyllabic words like *beautifullest* or *awfulest* may attach the comparative suffix rather than the lexical comparative forms *more* and *most* that are used in standard varieties. Pleonastic marking in *most beautifullest* and *more older* is also found. Fairly extensive absence of adverbial *-ly* is common in these varieties, so that we find sentences like *I was exceptional scared* or *I'm frightful bad at that*. Again, this is a feature shared by many vernacular varieties of English, though it seems to be more expansively applied in the enclave dialect communities than in some other vernacular varieties (Wolfram and Fasold 1974).

### 3.3. Negation

Negative patterns in enclave varieties are quite like those in other vernacular varieties of English, including negative concord and the extensive use of the lexical marker *ain't*. Negative concord, or multiple negation, may occur with postverbal indefinites, as in *It wasn't nothing*, with preverbal indefinites, as in *Nobody don't*



like him ‘Nobody likes him’, and with inversion, as in *Don’t nobody like him* or *Ain’t nobody home*. Cross-clausal negative concord also may occur in sentences like *There wasn’t much I couldn’t do*, meaning that there wasn’t much that the speaker could do. Cross-clausal negative concord, though rare, is shared with other Southern vernaculars (Wolfram and Christian 1976) as well as with AAVE (Labov 1972a).

Like other vernacular dialects, *ain’t* is used as a preverbal negative for present tense forms of *be* (i.e. *am not*, *isn’t*, *aren’t* in *She ain’t here*) as well as for the present auxiliary *haven’t/hasn’t* in *She ain’t been there lately*. The generalized past tense variant *wont* for *wasn’t* and *weren’t* (e.g. *I wont there yesterday*), found in some mainland Southern vernacular varieties, is not found to any extent in coastal and highland enclave varieties, though it is found in the Coastal Plain and Piedmont regions. Enclave communities still exhibit vestiges of older negative adverbs such as *nary* in *I didn’t catch nary a fish last night* or *tain’t* in *Tain’t a thing that will hurt you*.

### 3.4. Nominals

Most noun phrase traits found in enclave dialects are shared with a wide range of English vernaculars, although there are also few features that may distinguish these varieties from other dialects. Plural *-s* absence with quantified measure nouns is quite prominent in most of the enclave dialects we have surveyed, as in *I caught 200 pound\_ of flounder* or *It’s four mile\_ from here*. These varieties also share in the regularization of irregular plurals, including items that shift from irregular to regular suffixation (e.g. *oxes*, *gooses*), the attachment of *-s* to zero marked plural forms (e.g. *three sheeps*, *two corns*), and the redundant marking of irregular plurals (e.g. *firemens*). In this regard, these varieties are no different from other vernacular dialects of American English.

Some noun phrase differences involve selection restrictions with articles. Certain types of diseases, for example, may routinely take an article (e.g. *the earache*, *the toothache*, *the colic*); in most mainstream varieties they do not take an article. Enclave dialect communities also tend to have a small set of unique lexical items referring to local geography (e.g. *up the beach* for ‘off the island’ in Ocracoke, *on the swamp* for ‘neighborhood’ in the Lumbee community), terms differentiating locals from outsiders (e.g. *dingbatters* for outsiders versus *O’cockers* for native islanders on the island of Ocracoke) and terms for community-based social distinctions. For example, *swamp Indian* and *brickhouse Indian* are Lumbee designations for high-status and low-status community residents and the term *Lum* is reserved for a person who has a strong sense of Native American identity. Lexical differences of this type must, of course, be catalogued on a community-by-community basis.

Pronominal differences also characterize enclave dialect communities. Most Southeastern US enclave situations participate to some extent in the widespread

Southern use of second plural *y'all*. In highland regions of Southern Appalachia, *you'uns* is an alternate form for second person plurals, including some African Americans who live in this highland region. The retention of the *-n* suffix in *his'n*, *her'n* in non-attributive position, as in *It's his'n*, *not her'n* is still found in highland enclave communities, but it is receding rapidly. The use of *me* as a possessive in *I lost me cap* is also found to a limited degree among some elderly speakers in highland and coastal communities.

Enclave varieties share the widespread Southern benefactive dative in sentences like *I got me a new car*, as well as null subject pronouns in embedded sentences such as *It's a man come over here yesterday*. The use of *what* as a relative pronoun in *That's the man what I was talking about* is rarely found, though there are vestiges of it in a few elderly speakers. Elderly speakers may also still show remnants of pronominal attachment in which the *wh*-form follows rather than precedes *ever*, as in *everwhat*, *everwho*, and *everhow* (e.g. *I do everwhat he says*), though these forms are rarely if ever found among middle-aged and younger speakers.

Enclave dialects share in the widespread vernacular regularization of reflexives *hisself* and *theirselves* as in *He washed hisself* and *They washed theirselves*; the use of objective forms as demonstratives in *I brought them dogs*; and the use of objective forms of the pronoun in coordinates in *Me and him got it*. Finally, we should note the prominence of existential *it* in *It's a new person here* for *There's a new person here*. While a couple of dialects we have examined occasionally use *they* as an existential in *They's a new person here*, existential *it* is much more pervasive.

### 3.5. Prepositions

A number of prepositional differences typify enclave dialect areas, but most are lexically specific and therefore have to be discussed on an item-by-item basis. One of the common traits is the use of genitive phrases rather than temporal locatives for times of the day and the seasons, as in *She'll be there of the morning* or *You should plant of the fall*. Island communities regularly use the preposition *to* for static locatives in *She's to the dock* or *She's to the restaurant* where other English dialects use *at*. There are other differences, but they relate to individual lexical items and phrases rather than general patterns, as in *upside the head* for 'on the side of', *agin* for 'against', *across the beach* for *on the beach*, and so forth. Some differences apply to verb + particle combinations rather than prepositions *per se*, as in *bless out* for 'curse' (e.g. *They blessed him out*), *happen in* (e.g. *The happened in on us*), *left out* (e.g. *They left out the house*), and so forth.

#### 4. Conclusion

We summarize our conclusions in several comparative charts. Descriptive studies of enclave communities include European American island communities on the Outer Banks (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1997; Wolfram, Hazen and Schilling-Estes 1999) and in the Chesapeake Bay (Schilling-Estes 1997; Schilling-Estes and Wolfram 1999; Shores 2000); bi-ethnic coastal communities (Wolfram and Thomas 2002) and highland communities (Mallinson and Wolfram 2002); and the tri-ethnic community in which the Lumbee Native Americans reside (Wolfram and Dannenberg 1999; Dannenberg 2003). To situate these varieties in terms of a broader base of vernacular varieties, general Southern rural vernacular English and non-Southern Northern vernacular English are included, based on works such as Wolfram and Fasold (1974), and Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998). Separate tables are given for the verb phrase (Table 1), for nominals (Table 2), and for other structures, including negatives, adverbs, and prepositions (Table 3). In the comparison, a check ✓ indicates that the feature is present and parentheses around the check (✓) indicate that the feature is infrequent. The checklist is naturally subject to the usual kinds of limitations associated with qualitative summary inventories of this type.

Table 1. Comparative dialect profile of the verb phrase

Grammatical Structure	Euro. Am Coastal	Afr. Am. Coastal	Euro. Am. Highland	Afr. Am. Highland	Lumbee English	Rural Southern (Euro. Am.)	Non-Southern
<i>a</i> -prefixing e.g. <i>He was a-fishin'</i>	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)	
3 <sup>rd</sup> pl. -s marking e.g. <i>The dogs barks</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3 <sup>rd</sup> sg. -s absence e.g. <i>The dog bark</i>		✓		✓			
Finite <i>be</i> e.g. <i>It bes like that</i>		(✓)		(✓)	✓		
Copula absence <i>are</i> ; e.g. <i>You ugly</i> <i>is</i> ; e.g. <i>He ugly</i>		✓ ✓	(✓)	✓ (✓)	(✓)	✓	
Perfective <i>be</i> e.g. <i>I'm been there</i> <i>I might be done it</i>	(✓)	(✓)			✓ ✓		
<i>weren't</i> regularization e.g. <i>It weren't me</i>	✓	✓			✓		
Completive <i>done</i> e.g. <i>He done fixed it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	

Table 1. (continued) Comparative dialect profile of the verb phrase

Grammatical Structure	Euro. Am Coastal	Afr. Am. Coastal	Euro. Am. Highland	Afr. Am. Highland	Lumbee English	Rural Southern (Euro. Am.)	Non-Southern
Counterfactual <i>liketa</i> e.g. <i>I liketa died</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Double modals e.g. <i>He might could come</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<i>for to</i> complement e.g. <i>I want for to get it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
causative <i>have...to</i> e.g. <i>I have him to do it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<i>was/were</i> regularization e.g. <i>We was there</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
irregular verb							
(1) generalized past/part. e.g. <i>She had came here</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(2) generalized part./past e.g. <i>She done it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(3) bare root as past e.g. <i>She give him a dog</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(4) regularization e.g. <i>She knowed him</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(5) different irregular e.g. <i>He retch up the roof</i>	(✓)		✓				

Table 2. Comparative dialect profile of nominals

Grammatical Structure	Euro. Am Coastal	Afr. Am. Coastal	Euro. Am. Highland	Afr. Am. Highland	Lumbee English	Rural Southern (Euro. Am.)	Non-Southern
-s-pl absence, measure nouns e.g. <i>40 pound_</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	
Long plural with -s + stop e.g. <i>postes</i>	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓		
Regularized plurals e.g. <i>oxes, sheeps</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2nd pl. <i>y'all</i> e.g. <i>Y'all are a crowd</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2nd pl. <i>you 'ns</i> e.g. <i>You 'uns are a crowd</i>			✓	(✓)			

Table 2. (continued) Comparative dialect profile of nominals

Grammatical Structure	Euro. Am Coastal	Afr. Am. Coastal	Euro. Am. Highland	Afr. Am. Highland	Lumbee English	Rural Southern (Euro. Am.)	Non-Southern (Euro. Am.)
Absolute -'n e.g. <i>It's his'n</i>			✓				
Benefactive dative e.g. <i>I got me a new bike</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
ever + pronoun e.g. <i>everwhat, everwho</i>	(✓)		(✓)		(✓)		
Expletive <i>it</i> e.g. <i>It's nothing to do it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)
Embedded null subject pro e.g. <i>It's a woman come here</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pronominal <i>what</i> <i>The man what I talked to</i>	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)		(✓)		
Regularized reflexives e.g. <i>He washed hisself</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Objective demonstratives e.g. <i>them people</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 3. Comparative dialect profile: Negation, adverbs, prepositions

Grammatical Structure	Euro. Am Coastal	Afr. Am. Coastal	Euro. Am. Highland	Afr. Am. Highland	Lumbee English	Rural Southern (Euro. Am.)	Non-Southern (Euro. Am.)
NEGATION							
Postverbal concord e.g. <i>It wasn't nothing</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
preverbal concord e.g. <i>Nobody don't like it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Affirmative negative inversion e.g. <i>Didn't nobody like it</i>	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	
<i>ain't</i> for <i>be + not, have + not</i> e.g. <i>She ain't there</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>nary</i> e.g. <i>It's nary a fish</i>	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)			
ADVERBS							
Verb phrase placement e.g. <i>We once and a while travel</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Table 3. (continued) Comparative dialect profile: Negation, adverbs, prepositions

Grammatical Structure	Euro. Am Coastal	Afr. Am Coastal	Euro. Am. Highland	Afr. Am. Highland	Lumbée English	Rural Southern (Euro. Am.)	Non-Southern (Euro. Am.)
Positive <i>anymore</i> e.g. <i>We watch DVDs anymore</i>	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)	(✓)		(✓)
Punctual <i>whenever</i> e.g. <i>Whenever I lost my mother</i>	(✓)	(✓)	✓	(✓)			
Intensifying <i>right</i> e.g. <i>He's right smart</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Absolute <i>plumb</i> e.g. <i>They fell plumb asleep</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	(✓)	
Intensifying <i>-some</i> e.g. <i>The food was good-some</i>	✓	(✓)					
Regularized comparatives e.g. <i>It's the most beautiful</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PREPOSITIONS							
Genitive time and season e.g. <i>She's there of the morning</i>	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)			
Static locative <i>to</i> e.g. <i>She's to the dock</i>	✓	✓	(✓)				

The comparison reveals that enclave communities in the Southeast share the majority of their dialect structures with other vernaculars of English, particularly Southern rural vernacular varieties. At the same time, there are distinctive traits that set them apart. Some of these traits are shared by all of the enclave varieties we have surveyed but a few structures are unique to a particular enclave dialect community or a subset of communities. Distinctive traits may represent conservative language change and founder effects, but they may also indicate accommodation from language contact and independent language change. The resultant configuration may unite different enclave dialects with each other and with more widespread vernacular dialects, following the principle of *vernacular dialect congruity*, but the constellation of changes may also set apart these varieties from each other and from other dialects. Although dialect surveys of the South and of American English sometimes overlook the role of longstanding enclave dialects, these varieties are clearly an essential part of the unique dialect landscape of the American South.

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# Newfoundland English: morphology and syntax

Sandra Clarke

## 1. Introduction

The corresponding chapter on Newfoundland phonology of this handbook (see Clarke, other volume) provides a brief sociohistorical introduction to the English spoken in the easternmost Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador (NfldE). As outlined therein, the distinctiveness of NfldE was shaped by a number of factors: fairly homogeneous founder populations that originated almost exclusively in southwest England and southeast Ireland; the region's peripheral geographic location, which promoted linguistic conservatism; and the general lack of economic incentives for substantial in-migration. Another important factor was the time-depth of British settlement of the area. As Kirwin (2001: 444) points out, "Newfoundland English, especially its common and folk varieties, began its development well before many English speakers had settled in the present area of Canada and at least 200 years before the United Province of Canada was created in 1841 or the Dominion of Canada in 1867".

World War II and union with Canada in 1949 played crucial roles in building and strengthening Newfoundland's ties with mainland North America. The effects on local speech varieties have been substantial – particularly with respect to the accents of younger urban speakers and younger females in general, who are increasingly adopting supralocal pronunciations, particularly in their more formal interactions. Apart from a few shibboleths of pronunciation, local non-standard grammatical features tend to be more stigmatized than local phonological features, and more subject to overt commentary and correction (as witnessed, for example, by their general absence from the Newfoundland English taped samples which accompany this volume). Yet these features – which typically represent morphosyntactic patterns inherited from source varieties in the West Country and southeast Ireland (cf. the chapters by Wagner and Filppula, this volume), with possible reshaping in the Newfoundland context – have survived remarkably well as markers of local identity, especially in the many tiny fishing communities which dot the coastline. The English and the Irish founder groups for the most part settled different areas of the island, and a number of these features continue to distinguish the speech of descendants of these two groups, though some have diffused across the ethnolinguistic boundary.

For the most part, the features documented in this chapter are associated with the vernacular grammars of working-class rural residents of Newfoundland. To-

day, some are fairly recessive, and would have been much more common a generation or two ago. The grammatical systems of educated and urban middle-class Newfoundlanders closely resemble those of their counterparts elsewhere in Canada, with some small exceptions. Since a number of the features outlined below diverge markedly from features associated with the grammars of most North American native English speakers of European origin, the range of grammatical diversity is considerably greater in Newfoundland than in much of the North American mainland. The parallels between vernacular NfldE and both African American and Caribbean Englishes are, however, at times quite striking – an observation that is less surprising than it might first appear, given the time-depth of settlement in all three cases, as well as similarities in the geographical origins of the European founder populations of Newfoundland, parts of the American South, and the Caribbean.

This chapter draws on a number of sources of information on NfldE grammatical features, among them Noseworthy (1971), Paddock (1981), Halpert and Widdowson (1996), Clarke (1997a,b), as well as the vernacular taped corpus collected in the south coast community of Burin by Catherine Lanari, phonological aspects of which are reported on in Lanari (1994). Much valuable information has also been obtained from tape recordings of older, rural and conservative speakers held by the Memorial University Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA). The majority of examples presented below were obtained from these recordings, as well as the sources named above, in particular Halpert and Widdowson (1996). Unfortunately, space generally does not permit mention of the precise source of each example cited. In order to convey some flavour of the actual pronunciations used, these examples often include eye-dialect representation, in particular *d* for *th* (e.g. *dey*), and indication of loss of syllable-initial *h* (e.g. *'ouse* for *house*).

The works cited in both Newfoundland chapters of this volume, as well as in the general bibliography, provide many further details on particular features, as well as illustrations of them. Information on the history and development of NfldE is also to be found in a number of these sources, in particular Kirwin (1993, 2001).

## 2. The verb phrase

Like English varieties in general, vernacular NfldE – understood as the conservative casual speech styles associated primarily with older, working-class, rural residents of the province – displays a simple verbal morphology. Temporal representation is based on a bipartite tense system which opposes past and non-past (present), and is encoded for the majority of verbs via a suffixal inflectional morphology. With the exception of several suffixes (notably *-ing*, representing an event in progress), aspect and modality are encoded via a set of preverbal markers which often surface – as in other spoken varieties – in reduced phonological form, e.g. *I'll*

(< *will*) *do it, I'd* (< *would*) *like to*, both of which represent irrealis modality. Vernacular NfldE, however, is characterized by its degree of phonological reduction of pre- and post-verbal morphology; as outlined below, a frequent outcome is the apparent absence of overt surface morphological marking. The verbal system of vernacular NfldE differs from that of standard English in several principal areas: its aspectual system, in particular the representation of habitual and perfect aspect; the regularization of irregular past forms; and non-past subject-verb agreement.

### 2.1. Habitual aspect

As in Standard English, the simple forms of verbs (e.g. *I see/saw her; They run/ran every day*) represent a range of aspectual meanings, notably habitual, durative/continuous and punctual. Like other varieties, NfldE displays the past habitual marker [justə] (e.g. *We used to go there all the time*), with preverbal (*would*) an alternative option (*Whenever we saw it we'd shout out*). Unlike most varieties, however, vernacular NfldE displays use of the suffix *-s* throughout the entire non-past paradigm (e.g. *we/they goes*). While suffixed verbs carry the same range of aspectual meanings as do non-suffixed forms (*we/they go*), they are most frequently associated with habitual meaning (see Clarke 1997a) – just as in a number of other dialects in which they have been investigated, among them diaspora African American English varieties, as well as conservative Devon English (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001).

The verb *be* stands out in terms of aspectual representation. This verb has two sets of non-past stems: a standard set (i.e. *am/is/are*); and the stem *be*, which represents habitual, and occasionally durative, aspect. Though it is categorically marked with the suffix *-s* in NfldE, the latter closely resembles invariant *be* in conservative African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in terms of semantic function – see for example Wolfram (on AAVE, this volume). This yields oppositions such as *They bees sick (all the time, often)* vs. *They're sick (right now)*. Habitual *bees* – today fairly recessive – is most associated with areas of the province settled by the southwest English. Though this form is also attested on the Irish-settled Avalon peninsula in the southeast corner of the province, Irish-settled areas are characterized by a competing habitual variant, unstressed periphrastic *do* [də] *be*, as in *He do be sick some lot*. Today, however, the *do be* variant is highly recessive. Since in the negative and interrogative habitual *be* requires *do*-support, just as in AAVE, *bees* and *do be* are indistinguishable in such contexts, where their frequency is perhaps greater than in affirmative declaratives (e.g. *Do he be sick a lot?*; *They don't be here that often*). The *be* stem is also fairly frequently encountered in *don't be V-ing* constructions, particularly in negative imperatives conveying disapproval (e.g. *Don't be goin' on like that*); apart from the Irish-inherited idiom *Don't be talkin'*, these typically permit a habitual reading in addition to that of a single-event-related durative.

## 2.2. The perfect: competing variants

As in standard varieties of English, the NfldE perfect consists of *have/had* + past participle; an older form of the latter, involving the prefix *a-*, occurred variably among Newfoundland vernacular speakers born prior to 1900, particularly in areas of the province settled by the southwest English, as in (*they've*) *abeen, acome, adrinked, ahung, aput, atried*. The *have*-perfect is however in competition with a number of other variants in NfldE, and is often not the form of choice to represent past events with present relevance, even on the part of educated speakers. As in North American English in general, these variants include the simple past form (e.g. *I just saw her*). They also include forms constructed with the (non-past) auxiliary *be* rather than *have*, an option restricted to verbs which involve a change of state: thus *They're already left; You're come again; They're turned in (i.e. gone to bed) now; Are you finished?; Times are changed*.

Three other perfect forms in NfldE are inherited from source regional varieties in the British Isles and Ireland (for more details on each, see Clarke 1997b). The first, often termed the “resultative” or “accomplishment” perfect, reflects an earlier perfect construction in which the past participle follows rather than precedes the direct object of a transitive verb (as in *I got a lot of it forgot, see; After he had the two of 'em killed; They got money enough sove up*, the latter two from Halpert and Widdowson 1996). This construction regularly occurs in NfldE, as in other varieties for which it has been documented, with dynamic rather than stative verbs, e.g. *they('ve) got it built (already)*, but not *they('ve) got it loved*.

The second is the Irish “after perfect” *be + after + V-ing*, as in *I'm (already) after doin' that*, which though most frequent on the southeastern, Irish-settled Avalon peninsula area is by no means limited to this portion of the province. The *after*-perfect displays the full semantic range associated with the *have*-perfect, including the representation of a long-standing event with present relevance, e.g. *I'm after havin' eleven rabbits eaten (by dogs) this last three months; I'm after burning now (in the sun) about three times*. The NfldE *after*-form is thus not restricted, as apparently it may be in some varieties of Irish English, to a “hot news” representation of a very recent event. For deep vernacular or basilectal speakers in Irish-settled areas of the province, the *after*-perfect constitutes the usual variant in affirmative statements, though it is less commonly found in negatives and interrogatives. Even speakers who do not use the form regularly may have recourse to it to emphasize the negative consequences of an event (e.g. *She's after gettin' some fat; Now you're really after doin' it – i.e., 'You're in real trouble now'*).

While both the accomplishment perfect and the *after*-perfect are frequently encountered in present-day NfldE, this is not the case of the third inherited variant, which likewise occurs in Irish-settled areas of the province. This is the use of a simple non-past form to represent an event that began in the past and continues

through the moment of speech, as in the example *I'm off* ('not employed') *a year now*, from Lanari's Burin corpus.

The most striking perfect variant in NfldE is a highly localized one, documented to date only on the south coast Burin peninsula area of the island. This is a form consisting of the auxiliary *been* (pronounced [bɪn]) plus past participle, as in the following examples, from Noseworthy (1971: 69): *I been heard it* ('I heard it'); *Have 'ee (< dee, i.e. 'thee') been eat?* ('Have you eaten?'); *been* + past participle also appears after *ain't* ('haven't'), as in *I ain't been done it*. According to Noseworthy, these forms appear to represent an event that occurred further in the past than an event represented by the *have*-perfect. There are obvious parallels here with AAVE – indeed, this NfldE usage may possibly constitute the only documented case of "remote *been*" outside African American varieties.

### 2.3. Irregular verbs: past forms

Like other vernacular varieties of English, vernacular NfldE displays extensive regularization of its irregular (i.e. "strong" or "mixed") past forms, those in which the past tense and past participle are based primarily on vowel change (e.g. *drive, drove, have driven; catch, caught, have caught*) rather than the regular pattern of suffix *-ed* addition (e.g. *like, liked, have liked*). As outlined below, three basic patterns of regularization are in evidence: the first involves incorporation of irregular verbs into the regular *-ed* paradigm; the second and third, morphological levelling through generalization of either the past tense or past participle as a single past form. Some verbs display more than one pattern of morphological levelling; regional and social correlates for individual verb usage have yet to be described in any detail.

- (1) Irregular verbs regularized by addition of the *-ed* suffix to the non-past stem, resulting in such past tense/participle forms as *blowed, comed, dealed, dranked, falled (down), freezed (up), goed, growed, hearded, knowed, leaved, lied (down), maked, runned, seed, taught, throwed*.
- (2) Past tense generalized as a single past form, replacing the past participle, as in *Have they drove home already?; He haven't went there yet; Have she tore her jacket?; They've took it back; also drank, wore*.
- (3) Past participle with or without the suffix *-(e)n* generalized as a single past form, as in *They done/seen/sung/rung it (already); He swum across the pond; It riz (rather than rose) up good; past tense become, begun*. These cases may involve verbs in which the vowel of the past participle coincides with that of the non-past form, giving the appearance of generalization of the bare root (e.g. *She come here last week; He already eat it; They give 'im a good talking-to*).

Minor regularization processes also characterize NfldE, among them the double marking of past forms (e.g. *drownded, ownded, bursted, beated*, as well as *frozded*). Many past participles in *-en* lose the participle marker (e.g. *I haven't forgot; Have*

*the bread riz yet?*). At the same time, new irregular past forms have appeared, including *scrope* for *scraped*, and *sove* and *wove* rather than *saved* and *waved* (cf. general North American *dove* instead of *dived*). Some irregular verbs exhibit past forms that differ phonetically from those of standard: these include *sot* instead of *sat* as the generalized past of *sit* (*They sot down*), *bet* as the past of *beat*, and [mɛd] as the past of *make*. An extremely recessive variant of the regular verb past suffix /əd/ contains a tense vowel ([id]), and has been attested in such verbs as *fittied*, *loadied*, and *wan(t)ied*.

#### 2.4. Subject-verb agreement

As noted earlier, the *-s* suffix occurs readily throughout the non-past lexical verb paradigm. This is the case no matter what the person and number of the subject (*I likes*, *we eats*, *they runs*, *the dogs barks*). Suffixation is not constrained in vernacular NfldE, as in a number of varieties, by the nominal vs. pronominal nature of the grammatical subject: *-s* marking is as common with adjacent personal pronoun subjects as with other subject types (see Clarke 1997a). The *-s* suffix thus serves as a generalized (though variable) non-past tense marker for lexical verbs. Though it is confined to casual speech styles, it none the less commonly occurs in both rural and urban NfldE. Cross-dialect comparison rates (see Godfrey and Tagliamonte 1999) suggest that verbal *-s* is more frequent in NfldE than in other vernacular varieties in which it has been documented (e.g. Devon English, diaspora AAVE).

*Have* and *do* exhibit special status in vernacular NfldE. As in southwest England, there is a morphological distinction between their function as lexical verbs and as auxiliaries: among conservative speakers, the former are marked with *-s* for all grammatical subjects, while the latter take a zero suffix. In addition, analogical levelling may affect the verb stem, yielding *haves* and *doos* [duz] throughout the non-past lexical verb paradigm (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Have* and *do* in vernacular NfldE

<i>Have/do</i> as lexical verb	<i>Have/do</i> as auxiliary
<i>She does/doos lovely drawings.</i>	<i>He don't want to leave; Do she want to see you?</i>
<i>They does/doos a lot of good work.</i>	<i>Don't they want to go tomorrow?</i>
<i>He has/haves a new car.</i>	<i>He haven't got no fire; Have she left already?</i>
<i>They has/haves their dinner early.</i>	<i>They haven't seen her yet</i>

Though (non-habitual) *be* does not display a parallel suffixal contrast between auxiliary and non-auxiliary function, its paradigm is characterized by analogical levelling of the verb stem, in both the non-past and past tenses. Thus 1<sup>st</sup> singular

*am* ('m) may generalize to all other persons, i.e. *we'm, you'm, they'm, (s)he'm*; more rarely, 3<sup>rd</sup> singular *is* ('s) is extended to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> persons, as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> plural (*I's, we's, you's, they's*). However, these regularized non-past auxiliary and copula forms are now extremely recessive. In the past tense, *was*-levelling is considerably more common, e.g. *We was down there; They was some mad; I knowed you waddn('t) ('wasn't) happy*. Third singular indicative *were*, e.g. *he were(n't) sick*, has also been attested, though very rarely; its occurrence in the subjunctive is more common in NfldE, particularly in standard varieties (e.g. *I wish she were here*), along with non-past subjunctive *be* (e.g. *They requested that he be there tomorrow*). A century ago, highly conservative forms of (indicative) *be* were in evidence, including the 2<sup>nd</sup> singular *dee* (< *thee*) subject forms *dee bis(t)* ('you are'), *bain't (d)ee* ('aren't you?').

## 2.5. Absence of surface marking

Vernacular NfldE is characterized by a number of phonological processes, notably assimilation and consonant cluster reduction, which may result in loss of overt morphological marking. Most striking here is final /t/ and /d/ deletion, which affects the past tense and participle not only of historically regular verbs that form their pasts through addition of *-ed*, but also the many irregular verbs which have been absorbed into this class. To the untrained ear in particular, there often appears to be no phonetic difference between bare (non-past) and past forms in such verbs as *slip, live, happen, as(k)* (e.g. *He live there for years*), as well as in regularized verbs like *begin, drink, fall, run, see, throw*, etc. (e.g. *She fall down and broke her leg; They begin to eat*). While the /t/ or /d/ of the suffix is more likely to be articulated before a vowel, it may be absent even in pre-vocalic environment. The suffix may also be deleted in verbs ending in an alveolar stop (e.g. *invite, start, persuade, pound*) where standard varieties require the /əd/ allomorph, resulting in such past forms as *He pound on the door; They start back to the road; De woman want me 10 years longer and I wouldn't stay*.

Likewise, preverbal aspect and modality markers, notably 'll (< *will*), 'd (< *would*), 've (< *have*) are subject to deletion, particularly but by no means solely in pre-consonantal position. This gives rise to such apparently unmarked surface strings as the following, all from an older rural female speaker:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| (Woul)d deletion | <i>Father p'raps bring over one in de spring when he go fishin'.</i><br><i>The name of it be cobe I believe.</i> (speaking of the best-quality flour) |
| (Ha)ve deletion  | <i>How long de sacks been gone?</i>   |

Rapid speech processes may also result in deletion of unstressed auxiliaries and even occasionally copula *be*, as in ... *when dey (were) up dere*.

Deep vernacular speakers are characterized by a high rate of application of the phonological processes noted above. The overall effect is that of a minimally marked, almost creole-like verbal system containing two principal suffixes, non-past *-s* and progressive/continuative *-in'* (*-ing*). Since unmarked surface forms carry a range of verbal functions (past tense, past participle, “future”, past habitual, etc.), disambiguation is often context-dependent.

## 2.6. Other verb phrase structures

Vernacular NfldE contains many verb + particle constructions. These may correspond to simple verbs in standard varieties, but may also offer a more succinct representation of an event than the standard provides. They include *pass out* (‘die’); *kill up* (e.g. *he killed it up wit' de gun*); *sing out* ‘call [out]’; *come in* (e.g. *when de trawlers come in*, i.e. ‘were first introduced’); *go out* (*I ain't made much in jars since de molasses wen' out*, i.e. ‘since they stopped getting molasses’). At least one of these has undergone nominalization, and occurs in the common phrase *(the) last goin'-off*, meaning ‘finally, at the end’.

A number of verb phrases common in NfldE are not generally found in standard varieties. Among these are counterfactual *had liketa* (‘had like to’), as in *I had liketa lose all my money*, as well as *hear tell of* in the sense of ‘hear of’.

## 3. Negation

Negation patterns in vernacular NfldE are similar to those found in other vernacular varieties of English. Negative concord is commonplace, and usually involves double negative marking, as in *(He) couldn't get no further, I don't want no dinner* (Halpert and Widdowson 1996 contains many such examples). A clause-initial negative indefinite may be followed by a negated verb, as in *Nobody don't recognize him* (‘Nobody recognizes him’). *Never* is commonly used as a generalized negator instead of *not*, whether on its own (*That time she never come up so far*) or in combination (*Nobody never came*). As in other varieties, preverbal *ain't* is used to negate both non-past *be* and auxiliary *have*. The latter is illustrated by the following examples from a traditional rural speaker, the second of which displays multiple negation: *You ain't asked me about makin' butter yet; I don't have no breakfast when I ain't got none* (i.e. ‘cereal’). However, the use of *ain't* appears to have declined considerably in recent years; an alternative variant of *haven't* – *(h)an't* – has all but disappeared. Negatives may also occur with *only* or *but*, as in *We couldn' have 'em only once a day*, meaning ‘It was only once a day that we could have them’.



Several fairly common vernacular NfldE negators exhibit a distinctive phonetic form. (*T*)*iddn* ‘(it) isn’t’ and (*t*)*waddn* ‘(it) wasn’t’ derive from sibilant assimilation (see Clarke, other volume), yielding examples like *Tiddn’ no good if tiddn’ good is it?* (‘It isn’t good if it isn’t good is it?’) and *I waddn’* (‘I wasn’t’) *getting’ enough to eat*. Negative *weredn*’(*t*), presumably an analogical form, is also attested, though much less frequently. *Neither*, typically realized as *nar* or *ne’er* [nɛ.ɹ], has the generalized indefinite meaning of ‘no’ or ‘none’, as in ... *couldn’ get nar drink*; *There’s nar one of ‘em livin’ in dat ‘ouse* (i.e. ‘None of them is living in that house’). Its affirmative counterpart is *ar* (< *either*), meaning ‘any’, as in *Ar water in that?*

#### 4. The noun phrase

While vernacular NfldE exhibits several nominal features that distinguish it from standard varieties, distinctions are particularly marked with respect to pronominals.

##### 4.1. Noun plurals

In NfldE, nouns follow the regular pattern of *-s* plural marking, outside of a phenomenon often attested in vernacular varieties: the absence of a plural suffix in phrases involving a numerical quantifier (e.g. *three ton of bricks*, *ten mile*). Even when the quantified noun displays plural marking, it may be processed as a notional singular, as indicated by the singular determiner agreement in a phrase like *this last three months*.

NfldE makes frequent use of the associative plural *and* (*th*)*em*, to designate family, friends, or habitual associates. Though this feature has been claimed to be of creole origin, its appearance in a number of vernacular varieties of English suggests a regional British ancestry. In NfldE, *and they* occurs as a less frequent associative plural variant, along with possessive *and their(s)*: *How’s Joan and them makin’ out?*; *Mr. Edwards and they teached our Pad*; *He went for Bob’s and their sister* (all from Lanari’s 1994 Burin corpus). A corresponding *and that* form is also found as an inanimate pluralizer.

##### 4.2. Determiners

In NfldE, the definite article is often used as a proximal demonstrative with measures of time, e.g. *the fall*, *the year*, meaning ‘this (past or coming) fall, year’. *Them* is frequent as a distal demonstrative meaning ‘those’ as in *them days* ‘times past’, *them sheep over there*; an alternative variant is *they*, e.g. *for to lanch* (‘launch’) *one o’ dey schooners*. In generic NPs, *the* may occur in more conservative varieties.

ies of NfldE in instances where present-day standard English would opt either for no article (e.g. *in the bed*; *with the fright*; *he was fond of the gun*) or else for indefinite *a(n)*, e.g. *when they'd get the cold*; *lots o' times when I had de cow*.

#### 4.3. Noun + prepositional phrase

Vernacular NfldE is characterized by a number of noun + PP constructions in which the prepositional phrase is often redundant, among them *the spring/fall of the year*, *a meal of food*, *a job of work*. Similar to this is the following now recessive construction, from a speaker born before 1900: *There was tree* ('three') *brothers of 'em*; *There was tree sisters o' we*.

#### 4.4. Pronominals

The pronominal system of vernacular NfldE exhibits a number of features inherited from southwest England, which have continued for the most part to be restricted to areas of the province that were settled by the English rather than the Irish. Though today these features are stereotypically associated with conservative rural working-class speech, many are in common use among younger residents of rural communities. They include grammatical gender for inanimates; the object pronoun *en/un*; and pronoun exchange. In addition, both Irish- and English-settled areas of the province display a number of inherited second person pronouns, while all NfldE vernacular varieties are characterized by several pronominal features that occur in many parts of the English-speaking world. The latter include reflexives based on a possessive stem (e.g. *hissself*, *theirselves*); the unstressed possessive determiner *me* (e.g. *me book*), which also appears in *meself*; and the somewhat less common existential *it*, as in '*Cause 'tis a big beach down Little Harbour where de caplin rolls in*; *Lot o' guys through here this year, is it?*; *There should be more people coming though, I thinks, than it do*. Finally, Pro-drop, or the deletion of a subject personal pronoun, is extremely common in vernacular NfldE.

##### 4.4.1. Grammatical gender

In the conservative NfldE pronominal system found in English-settled areas of the province (see, e.g., Paddock 1981, 1988), the pronoun *it* refers exclusively to non-count nouns (e.g. *rain*, *frost*, *truth*). Count nouns are classified on the basis of mobility: those with non-mobile referents are represented as masculine (*he*, *his*), and with mobile referents, as feminine (*she*, *her*). The latter grouping includes ships and vehicles (e.g. *boat*, *sleigh*, *car*), as well as such moving objects as waves or the tide, e.g. *In she come again*. The former represents the unmarked or default category, ranging from flora to buildings to computers, e.g. *(H)e's bad*, said of a cut hand, or *(H)e looks good on ya*, said of a coat. Occasionally, feminine gender

is found with a wider semantic range than that of mobile object. Though often difficult to gloss, *she/(h)er* in many such examples refer to ‘the situation at the time’, as in a reference to the economic depression of the 1930s: *Depression, whatever you might call ‘er*. Compare the common expression *She’s gone, boy, she’s gone* (i.e., ‘the economic situation is really bad’) and an example from Lanari’s Burin corpus describing a night out drinking: *Every now and then I gets out and lets ‘er go, right, when I get there...* Wagner (2003) contains an excellent overview of gender distribution in NfldE, as well as in its source varieties in southwest England.

#### 4.4.2. Third person object forms

While standard English uses *him* as both a direct and indirect object pronoun for masculine animates, an alternative variant is common in English-settled areas of Newfoundland, just as in southwest British English. This is the object pronominal *en* or *un* ([ən]), which derives from the historical direct object form (cf. Old English *hine*) rather than the indirect object *him*. In vernacular NfldE, the *en* form is used regularly, in both direct and indirect object contexts, for non-mobile count nouns as well as masculine animates: *He got a half tub o’ coal for to carry home with en; I fell down and cut en* (i.e., ‘hand’); *Why don’t ya buy en* (‘a coat’)? Rarely, the *en* form designates a feminine referent.

#### 4.4.3. Pronoun exchange

Also inherited from southwest England is the use of subject-like pronouns in stressed object position, as in ... *for we fellas; And dere was ‘Melier* (‘Amelia’) *next to she* (i.e., ‘in age’); *I had to give dey* (i.e., ‘oats’) *to de hens, once a day; Dis doctor (who) was to we* (i.e., ‘our doctor’). Though this is a highly salient feature that is subject to overt commentary, it is surprisingly frequent in English-settled rural communities today: Newhook (2002) found it used in approximately one quarter of the stressed object contexts she examined in a small southwest-coast fishing community, with significantly greater usage by males than females. Considerably more rare today is the use of an object-like pronoun in unstressed subject position, as in *Where’s ‘em* (‘them’) *to?*

#### 4.4.4. Second person pronouns

The 2<sup>nd</sup> singular subject pronoun (*d*)*ee*, from the historical object form *thee* (e.g. *Did ‘ee see en?* ‘Did you see him/it?’) is nowadays highly recessive in those English-settled areas of the province where it was in common use in former centuries. While *you* (unstressed *ya*) is the usual form in both singular and plural, *yous* (unstressed version [jəz]) is an alternative plural variant in some areas of the province. *Yous* is not however typical of the Irish-settled Avalon, where the usual (stressed)

vernacular plural is *ye* [ji], with corresponding possessive form *yeer(s)*. Within a single community, there may be a number of competing variants: among the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural forms observed by Noseworthy (1971) in the small English-settled south coast community of Grand Bank are *yous*, *ye all*, *'ee all*, *y'all* and *all yous*.

## 5. Other lexical categories

### 5.1. Intensifiers

Vernacular NfldE is characterized by a number of adverbial intensifiers that are adjectival in form – that is, intensifiers that have resisted the *-ly* adverbial marker, as has *real* in most vernacular varieties, e.g. *real good*. Among these intensifiers are *wonderful*, *terrible*, and *ugly* (*She was a wonderful smart lookin' girl*; *Them times was terrible bad*). As Paddock (1981) notes, *-ly* is not a productive derivational suffix in vernacular grammar for adverbs in general; rather, *-like* fills this role, e.g. *Foolishlike*, *I went and stepped on the gas instead of the brake*.

Two adjectivals in present-day standard English are commonly used as adverbial intensifiers in Newfoundland: *right*, and the very frequent *some* as in *He was right strange*; *It was some nice party*. Likewise, forms functioning as adjectives of degree in vernacular NfldE may differ from their standard counterparts, as shown by *all* and *every bit* in the following examples, from a conservative rural speaker: *When we was growin' up sir we had to drink all molasses*; *'Twas every bit fresh butter* (the sense in both is 'nothing but' or 'completely'). A sequence of two adjectives of similar meaning is occasionally used for intensification, as in (*a*) *little small (book)*. Finally, as in many vernacular varieties, comparatives and superlatives may be doubly marked, e.g. *more handier*, or marked in a non-standard fashion, e.g. *beautifullest*.

### 5.2. Prepositions

A common feature among urban and rural Newfoundlanders of all social classes and regions is the use of *to* as a stative as well as a dynamic preposition. Thus *to* may correspond to standard English *at* (e.g. *He sat to the table*; *They knocked to the door*; *Next thing I was to the rock*), or to a zero preposition (*Stay where you're to*). *Into* with a stative meaning (e.g. *This bottle has a cork stopper into it*) is somewhat more restricted in its social distribution. *To* and *in* are frequently absent after directional prepositions like *down*, *up*, *over*, e.g. *down Little Harbour*. Also noteworthy is the Irish-like use of *on* to signify negative impact, as in *It broke on me*; *she ('a boat') blowed around twice on he*.

## 6. Syntactic patterns

### 6.1. Relativization

Relativization strategies in NfldE are similar to those in standard North American English. Ongoing changes include the increased use of *that* with animate referents, to the detriment of *who* (e.g. *the people that's been displaced from their jobs*); and the extension of possessive *whose* to inanimate referents (*a book whose pages were stuck together*), along with innovative *that's* (*an item that's use is declining slightly*). In addition, vernacular NfldE exhibits two non-standard relativization strategies which it shares with other vernacular varieties. The first is the use of *what* as a relative pronoun, as in *red one* ('potato') *what you don't see now very often*; *They couldn't put the milk away ... what come out the cows*. This usage is highly recessive today. The second is much more common, namely, the tendency to delete subject relative pronouns, as in *There's no one pays any attention to that*; *Couple o' fellas got der boats wrecked up in Cow Head is here*.

### 6.2. Complementation

Among the features NfldE shares with other vernacular varieties is subject-auxiliary inversion in embedded clauses that would otherwise be introduced by *if* or *whether*, in particular embedded questions (*They asked me did I do that; ... to see would he meet anybody*). Infinitival phrases of purpose may retain the *for to* [fəˌdə] complementizer, which lost out in standard English to the competing variant *to*: *Not a bit o' collection* ('money for the collection plate') *if I want* ('wanted it') *for to carry to church; ... piled in a lump for to drain out de lye*. The *for to* construction is occasionally found in other types of infinitival complement, as in *I managed for to do it*.

### 6.3. Other embedded clauses

Vernacular NfldE makes use of a number of inherited subordinating conjunctions that either belong to a different lexical category in standard English, or else exhibit a somewhat different meaning. These include (*ac*)*cordin'* (*as*) ('while'), (*a*)*fraid* ('so that... not, in case'), *till* and *where* (both in the sense of 'so that') and *without* ('unless'):

*The woman got to watch her steps where she won't go down between and break her leg*  
(Paddock 1981)

*Bake me (a) cake mother ... till I goes off to see where Tom is*  
(Halpert and Widdowson 1996)

*And she got to keep her eye on him 'fraid he's going to go off'... and fall down...*  
(Paddock 1981)

*The women isn't satisfied now without they'm goin' around stark naked*  
(MUNFLA tape C186)

At least one embedded clause type has been inherited from Irish English, and occurs, though infrequently today, in Irish-settled areas of the province. This is the subordinating *and* construction that represents a concessive clause (e.g. *She went out for a walk and it raining*). A present participle may also correspond to a temporal clause introduced by *when*, as in *We comin' along (de) shore, de squalls was dat hard she blowed aroun' twice on he*.

## 7. Lexicon

The morphosyntactic structure of vernacular NfldE displays many conservative features inherited from its regional source varieties in southwest England and southeast Ireland. As the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* (Story, Kirwin and Widdowson [1982] 1990) attests, the same observation may be made of its word stock, which contains numerous lexical and semantic retentions largely unknown in mainland Canada, though some are shared with the Canadian Maritime provinces and to a lesser degree, New England. The Irish Gaelic substratum has given rise to lexical borrowings some of which are in common use today (e.g. *sleveen* 'rascal', *scrob* 'scratch'), and language contact is reflected in a small number of borrowings from French (e.g. *caplin* 'a salt-water smelt') and Inuktitut (e.g. *komatik* 'sleigh'; see Kirwin 2001 for an overview). Other common lexical items were originally nautical terms that have undergone semantic generalization: these include *clew up* in the sense of 'finish' (*They clewed up their work*), *fair* (meaning 'straight' or 'even'), and *rig(-out)*, in the sense of 'clothing'. Some lexical items in frequent use in fishery-related contexts have undergone a more subtle broadening of meaning, such as the verbs *haul* and *hoist* in the examples *haul out a chair* or *hoist a picture up on the wall*. A number of NfldE items represent neologisms, or at least cannot be traced to a precise historical source with any degree of certainty.

## 8. Conclusion

This brief survey of the salient grammatical features of vernacular NfldE provides some indication of the degree of divergence of this variety from standard North American English. As noted above, a striking characteristic of the grammatical sys-

tem of NfldE is its conservatism, in the sense of retention of features transported to Newfoundland by early settlers from the British Isles and Ireland. NfldE displays a number of noticeable parallels with other regional and non-standard varieties that have early roots in the New World, among them African American English (e.g. habitual *be*, remote *been*, verbal *-s*, associative noun plurals). Yet though the features documented in this chapter have survived for several centuries, in the past fifty or so years they have come under the increased threat of encroaching supralocal norms. Extensive out-migration to mainland Canada from rural fishing communities – coupled with generally negative attitudes among many younger Newfoundlanders towards overt linguistic symbols of local identity – suggests that these traditional features may play a diminished role in the grammars of future generations.

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# Urban African American Vernacular English: morphology and syntax\*

Walt Wolfram

## 1. Introduction

Although the roots of contemporary African American Vernacular English (AAVE) were no doubt established in the rural South, its twentieth century development as a sociocultural variety is strongly associated with its use in non-Southern urban areas. Descriptive studies of AAVE that helped launch the modern era of social dialectology concentrated on Northern metropolitan areas (Labov et al. 1968; Labov 1972; Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972), and this urban focus has continued up to the present (Spears 1982; Baugh 1983; Rickford 1999; Dayton 1996; Labov 1998). A tradition of descriptive studies of rural Southern AAVE now complements the urban focus (Wolfram 1974; Wolfram and Thomas 2002; Bailey 2001; Bailey and Maynor 1985, 1987, 1989; Cukor-Avila 2001), but large metropolitan areas continue to be at the center of many of the linguistic, social, and educational concerns attendant to AAVE.

The emergence of urban AAVE was certainly a by-product of the Great Migration in which African Americans moved from the rural South to large metropolitan areas of the North in the early and mid-twentieth century, though demographic movement *per se* is not a sufficient explanation for the cultural shift in which urban areas became the contemporary norm for AAVE. In 1910, almost 90 percent of all African Americans in the US lived in the South and 75 percent of that number lived in communities of less than 2,500. According to the Census definition, rural residents generally live in unincorporated places of less than 2,500 and metropolitan areas are counties of 100,000 or more with central cities of more than 50,000 people. Census-based definitions do not, however, consider social and cultural factors that may defy demographic criteria. Starting with World War I and continuing through World War II and beyond, there was a dramatic redistribution of African Americans as they left the rural South for northern cities. By 1970, 47 percent of African Americans lived outside of the South, and 77 percent of those lived in urban areas. More than a third of all African Americans lived in just seven cities – New York, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Los Angeles, and Baltimore (Bailey 2001: 66). The large influx of African Americans in these metropolitan areas led to intensified racial isolation and, along with other social and cultural ramifications of such de facto segregation, a social environment conducive to the maintenance of ethnolinguistic differences.

Population movement among African Americans has shifted somewhat in the last several decades, as the influx of Southern in-migrants slowed and more African Americans move from the inner city to suburban areas, but this has hardly affected inner-city segregation. The 2000 US census indicates that approximately 60 percent of all African Americans now live in the non-South and that approximately 6 million African Americans live in the large metropolitan centers mentioned above. Some of these cities have become even more densely populated by African Americans than they were several decades ago. For example, the city of Detroit is now 83 percent African American (2000 US Census); in the mid-1960s, when the author conducted his fieldwork, it was only 37 percent African American (Wolfram 1969: 21). Furthermore, a half-century ago, the vast majority of middle-aged and elderly African Americans living in Northern urban areas were born in the South. In the 1960s, less than 10 percent of African Americans in Detroit over the age of 40 were born in the North; today the majority of African Americans were born there or in another metropolitan area. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the population demographics of non-Southern urban areas reveal the continued existence of well-established, largely segregated African American populations, especially for those living in poverty.

There are several reasons for the earlier and current interest in urban AAVE, ranging from personal and practical reasons to descriptive and theoretical interests. To begin with, most linguists who worked on AAVE in the 1960s lived near Northern metropolitan areas, where the contrast between African American speech and the varieties of the surrounding European Americans was most salient. During the launching period for AAVE studies (Labov et al. 1968; Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley 1967; Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972), there was also an apparent link between AAVE and significant social and educational problems in American society, including urban poverty and racial disparity in school performance. These problems were acute in metropolitan areas, where they affected large numbers of a rapidly growing African American population. In fact, early studies of AAVE such as Labov's landmark study of AAVE in Harlem (Labov et al. 1968) and Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley's study of Detroit speech (1967) were funded by the US Office of Education because of the concern for an apparent correlation between vernacular speech and low educational achievement. Early sociolinguistic studies often addressed prominent educational issues such as literacy and educational achievement in addition to their focus on dialect description (Labov 1972a; Fasold and Shuy 1970).

As the study of AAVE progressed and encompassed rural Southern varieties of AAVE (Wolfram 1974; Bailey and Maynor 1985, 1987, 1989; Cukor-Avila 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002), questions about language change within African American speech emerged, largely subsumed under the *divergence hypothesis* (Labov 1987; Bailey and Maynor 1989; Poplack 2000; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001). This hypothesis maintains that contemporary AAVE is evolving indepen-

dently in ways that increase the difference between AAVE and other vernacular dialects of English. The debate over the nature and extent of innovation continues, but most researchers (Bailey and Maynor 1987, 1989; Dayton 1996; Poplack 2000; Labov 1998; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001) agree that the locus of independent innovation within AAVE is largely urban and that change within AAVE is diffusing from urban to rural contexts.

The significance of urban versions of AAVE is also connected to the establishment of contemporary language norms related to African American youth culture. Morgan (2001) observes that there is a new urban language ideology that relies, among other behaviors, on the differential use of linguistic features. As Morgan (2001: 205) puts it: "Thus, urban African American life is not simply represented in relation to in-group intersubjectivities, but through cultural symbols and sounds, especially linguistic symbols, which signify membership, role, and status so that (...) words, expressions, messages circulate as commodities".

The center of African American youth culture today is primarily urban, and many norms and models of behavior, including language, seem to radiate outward from these urban cultural hubs as the norms of contemporary, supraregional AAVE follow the lead of speakers in these urban areas.

## **2. The construction of urban AAVE**

Historically, urban AAVE was established on the basis of transplant dialect communities of Southern rural speakers who moved to non-Southern cities during the early waves of the Great Migration in the first half of the twentieth century. There were patterns of interregional movement in which African American residents from coastal Southern states such as Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia tended to move northward to cities such as Washington, DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York and residents of Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas tended to move to cities such as St. Louis, Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit, as well as westward to Los Angeles, but most urban neighborhoods were mixed in terms of their Southern regional roots. The increasing number of African American in-migrants in these urban contexts, the shared Southern rural cultural heritage, the segregated living conditions, and the bi-racial ideology characteristic of most Northern urban cities certainly provided an ideal context for nurturing ethnolinguistic distinction.

The contrast between urban AAVE and the speech of the surrounding European American cohort communities is hardly at question; there is ample descriptive and subjective sociolinguistic evidence for this division. The intriguing questions about urban AAVE relate to issues of dialect leveling, accommodation, and innovation. To what extent are these urban varieties similar to and different from the rural AAVE varieties that were brought to the area originally? Which features of their Southern regional founder dialects have been retained and which have been

lost? How have these varieties accommodated to the regional dialect forms of the benchmark European American regional varieties in these urban contexts? What types of linguistic changes now differentiate urban AAVE from its Southern rural counterparts? And what is the significance of such differentiation? These are questions that must be addressed in a comprehensive examination of AAVE as it has developed during the twentieth century. Although most of the discussion of urban AAVE since the 1980s has centered on the extent to which it shows independent development and divergence from European American vernaculars (e.g. Labov 1987; Bailey and Maynor 1985, 1987, 1989; Dayton 1996), the sociolinguistic construction of urban AAVE is much more complex than the issue of independent innovation within AAVE.

There are several different kinds of language change that need to be considered in the comparison of contemporary urban AAVE and the Southern rural roots that provided the founder input (Mufwene 2001). First, there is a kind of dialect leveling in which traditional, localized Southern features may be reduced or lost. For example, in urban Northern AAVE there is no evidence of 3rd plural *-s* in *The dogs barks* even though this trait was a characteristic of some earlier regional varieties in the South (Schneider 1989; Montgomery and Fuller 1996; Wolfram and Thomas 2002). Similarly, past tense *be* leveling to *weren 't* based on polarity (e.g. *I weren't there*), a regional trait of earlier African American varieties spoken in the Mid-Atlantic coastal region (Wolfram and Thomas 2002), is not found in Northern urban AAVE.

Earlier, generalized traits of Southern rural AAVE may also be lost, such as *a*-prefixing in *She was a-fishin'* or the use of *for to* complement as in *I want for to go now*. Although earlier studies of urban AAVE (Labov et al. 1968) recognized this type of change, it has become more evident with the expansion of studies of AAVE in the South (Cukor-Avila 2001; Bailey and Maynor 1985, 1989; Wolfram and Thomas 2002).

As already noted, change in urban AAVE may also derive from independent language innovation. Studies of *be* + *V-ing* as a 'habitual' marker (Bailey and Maynor 1985, 1987, 1989; Dayton 1996; Rickford 1999; Cukor-Avila 2001) suggest that it is largely an innovation of the post-World War II era and that the change has spread from an urban locus outward. While independent studies (Bailey and Maynor 1987, 1989) confirm this pattern of innovation and diffusion for habitual *be*, the status of other structures, such as the resultative-conditional *be done* in a sentence such as *If you leave it in the tub the chicken be done jumped out the tub by the time you get back* and narrative marking *-s* attachment in *He goes and sit down* is more disputable (Rickford 1999).

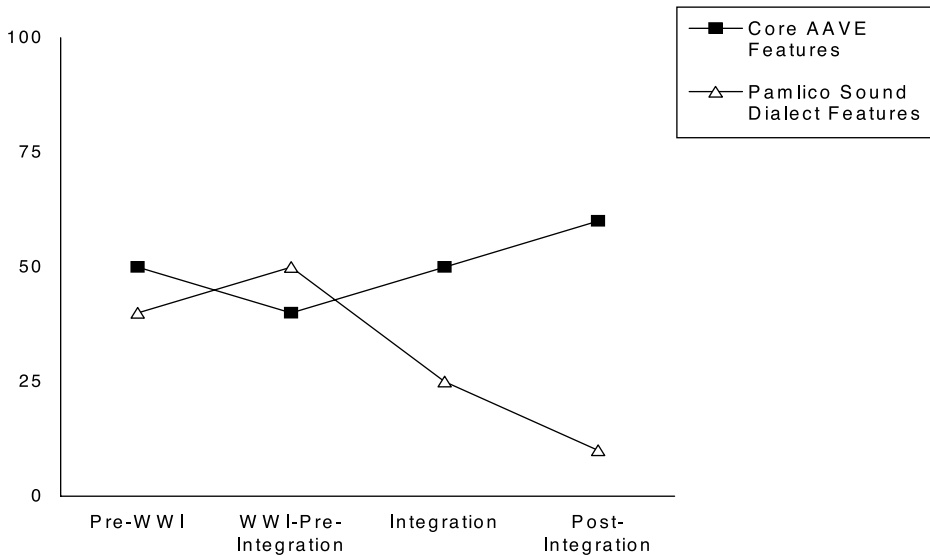
One type of sociolinguistic process associated with urban AAVE is *linguistic camouflaging*, in which a vernacular form resembles a standard or different vernacular form so closely that it is simply assumed to be identical to its apparent structural counterpart. However, this similarity may disguise the fact that the

form carries a distinctive semantic-pragmatic meaning or is constructed in a subtly different way. Spears (1982) shows that the use of a semi-auxiliary *come* in the sentence *They come talking that trash about him* seems quite similar to the standard English use of *come* with movement verbs as in *They came running when they heard the news*. Close examination of the use of *come* in the former sentence, however, indicates that it fills a unique semantic-pragmatic role indicating speaker indignation. In an analogous way, camouflaging may also involve syntactic expansion based on a shared semantic-pragmatic reading, as in sentences like *They call themselves dancing*. While counterfactual *call oneself* is quite common with noun phrases in most English dialects (e.g. *They call themselves linguists*) or adjective phrases (e.g. *They call themselves intelligent*), its structural expansion to include *V-ing* complements sets AAVE apart from most other American English dialects. Some camouflaged structures, especially those involving grammaticalized semantic-pragmatic forms (Spears 1982; Baugh 1984), seem to be characteristic of subtle changes within urban AAVE, though it is of course possible that these structures simply may have been overlooked in rural varieties.

Thus far, we have discussed urban AAVE only in relation to its change from Southern founder dialects and its independent development, but part of its uniqueness may be found in its relationship to surrounding European American varieties. One of the distinctive traits of Northern Urban AAVE appears to be its relative immunity to the linguistic changes taking place in cohort white communities. Although this exclusion tends to be more salient in phonology than in morphology and syntax, a similar pattern of resistance may be found for regional grammatical patterns. Many AAVE speakers in Midland dialect regions such as Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, do not adopt regional morphosyntactic traits such as positive *any-more* (e.g. *We watch a lot of DVDs anymore*), *need* + past participle (e.g. *The car needs washed*), and 2nd plural *youns* or *yous*. Part of the construction of AAVE as an ethnic variety in its urban context is certainly related to its apparent lack of regional accommodation.

Up to this point, we have treated rural and urban AAVE as if it were an obvious binary distinction, but this does not necessarily match the reality of contemporary African American culture and language. Such a distinction cannot simply be based on demographic statistics such as the size of the metropolitan area or population density, as one might be apt to do if relying solely on census data. Furthermore, the distinction between urban and rural may not be as relevant for contemporary AAVE as it once was. Thus, Cukor-Avila (2001) and Wolfram and Thomas (2002) show that traits formerly associated with urban AAVE are present among younger African American speakers in remote rural areas of the South. At the same time, African Americans in these regions may be abandoning local regional traits, showing a movement away from local dialect traits as they acquire traits associated with urban AAVE. For example, Wolfram and Thomas (2002) show a trajectory of change in which regional dialect features recede and structures associated with

urban AAVE intensify over four generations of speakers in Hyde County, North Carolina, a sparsely populated, outlying coastal region of North Carolina. Figure 1, an adaptation of the figure given in Wolfram and Thomas (2002: 200), shows an idealized change slope for four generations of speakers divided on the basis of different sociohistorical periods: speakers who were born and raised in the early twentieth century up through World War I; speakers born and raised between World War I and school integration in the late 1960s; speakers who lived through the early period of school integration as adolescents, and those who were born and raised after integration.



*Figure 1.* Idealized model of change for African Americans in Hyde County

The trajectory of change shows that African American speech has shifted rather dramatically over time, both in its intensification of features associated with urban AAVE and in its divergence from the local regional dialect norms. Can we truly say that African Americans in this remote region are now urban when they reside in a county inhabited by less than 10 people per square mile and having no public transit system, no shopping centers or malls, and no fast food stores? Wolfram and Thomas (2002) suggest that contemporary AAVE is characterized by a movement towards supraregional AAVE norms and a movement away from, or lack of accommodation to, local regional norms so that the urban-rural distinction is dissipating. At the same time, we recognize that current change is radiating from urban centers outward. Given the current status of AAVE, the use of the urban-rural distinction in this description must be interpreted in terms of its historical

context and the current pattern of diffusion within AAVE rather than in terms of a strict, demographically based dichotomy between urban and rural African American populations.

### 3. The grammar of urban AAVE

In this section, I outline some of the major structures of urban AAVE grammar. Given the historical connection to rural varieties of AAVE, the existence of supra-regional norms, and current patterns of diffusion, there are many traits of urban AAVE that are shared with non-urban varieties. In fact, the shared core of AAVE structures is an essential part of the unique linguistic story of AAVE. Nonetheless, there are ways in which Southern-based, rural and non-Southern, urban varieties differ. In describing the characteristics of urban AAVE in the following sections, I attempt to highlight some of the ways in which contemporary urban AAVE is similar to and different from other varieties, including rural Southern African American and European American varieties, non-Southern vernacular European American varieties, and standard English. For convenience, the description is organized on the basis of grammatical category.

#### 3.1. Verb phrase

The most noteworthy traits of AAVE have typically been associated with the verb phrase, including the use of tense, mood, and aspect. For several decades now, researchers (Fasold 1972; Labov 1972a, 1998; Dayton 1996; Baugh 1983; Rickford 1999) have acknowledged that these dimensions distinguish AAVE from other varieties of English, although there is no consensus on its distinctive aspectual parameters. Although there are a number of distinguishing traits, the most prominent features are a distinct set of preverbal particles or auxiliaries.

##### 3.1.1. Copula/auxiliary absence

The absence of copula and auxiliary for contractible forms of *is* and *are* (e.g. *She nice* for 'She's nice' or *They acting silly* for 'They're acting silly') has been one of the most often described structures of AAVE (e.g. Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972; Baugh 1983; Rickford 1999). Although there are a number of descriptive and explanatory dimensions of copula absence that remain in dispute, including whether it is derived through a grammatical or phonological process (Fasold 1976), there is general agreement about its ethnolinguistic status. Wolfram (1974) and Feagin (1979) note that AAVE shares copula absence with some Southern white rural vernacular varieties of English, but that there are some qualitative and quantitative differences in the respective varieties. Copula absence is

quite pervasive in urban AAVE but is not found at all in Northern urban benchmark European American varieties. In Southern European American English varieties, mostly the former large plantation areas, it tends to be limited to forms of *are* and used at reduced frequency levels compared to AAVE. Studies of copula absence in apparent time and in different regions (Bailey and Maynor 1985, 1987, 1989; Cukor-Avila 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002) show that the process has been quite stable in AAVE for some time now, and that differences in urban and non-urban use are quantitative rather than qualitative.

### 3.1.2. *Invariant be*

Invariant *be* in sentences such as *Sometimes they be playing games*, also referred to as non-finite *be*, habitual *be*, and *be*<sub>2</sub>, is probably the most salient grammatical trait of AAVE, to the point of becoming a stereotype. Its structural and functional properties have now been studied in a number of different urban (Labov 1972a; Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969) and rural settings (Wolfram 1974; Bailey and Maynor 1985, 1989; Cukor-Avila 2001), as well as its development and diffusion over time and place. Although there is disagreement as to how *be*<sub>2</sub> might be represented in the grammatical system of AAVE (e.g. Fasold 1972), most analyses agree that *be*<sub>2</sub> marks a unique aspect referring to an intermittent activity, hence the reference to ‘habitual *be*.’

To begin with, the use of ‘habitual’ *be* or *be*<sub>2</sub> needs to be distinguished from several other uses of *be*, including those derived through phonological processes that affect contracted forms of *will* and *would*. In constructions such as *She be there in a minute*, the *be* comes from the loss of /l/ before a labial (*she’ll be* → *she be*) (see Edwards, other volume), whereas in a construction like *If they get a DVD player they be happy*, the form is derived from the loss of /d/ (*they’d be* → *they be*), since /d/ before a labial may geminate to the /b/ and then be lost in a general phonological process of degemination (e.g. *good bye* → *goob bye* → *goo’bye*). The difference between the phonologically derived forms, represented in (1) and (2) and the use of *be* in (3) is readily apparent in tag forms (1a, 2a, 3a) and negatives (2a, 2b, 3b).

- (1) *She be here in a minute.*
  - a. *She be here in a minute, **won’t she?***
  - b. *She **won’t be** here in a minute.*
- (2) *If they get a DVD player, they be happy.*
  - a. *If they get a DVD player, they be happy, **wouldn’t they?***
  - b. *If they get a DVD player, they **wouldn’t be** happy.*
- (3) *Sometimes they be playing tag.*
  - a. *Sometimes they be playing tag, **don’t they?***
  - b. *Sometimes they **don’t be** playing tag.*



Sentence (3) illustrates the fundamental syntactic and morphological properties that distinguish *be*<sub>2</sub> from its counterpart in other varieties of English; it does not alter its form in finite uses and takes *do* support in a way that is comparable to main verbs. Over the last half century, the habitual reference of *be*, particularly with *V-ing*, has grammaticalized in a change that has been spreading from urban centers outward. Practically all studies of AAVE show that younger vernacular speakers use *be V-ing* more than older speakers (Wolfram 1969; Cukor-Avila 2001; Bailey and Maynor 1987, 1989), and that urban speakers are more likely to use it than non-urban speakers (Cukor-Avila 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002). It is also possible that the use of habitual *be* may be age-graded, and that younger speakers who use it frequently will reduce its use as they get older, since it now has a strong association with black youth culture.

A more recent aspectual change is the semantic expansion of invariant *be* beyond its reference to habituality. Alim (2001), for example, notes that *be* is commonly used in hip-hop equative sentences such as *I be the truth* or *Dr. Dre be the name* in a way that seizes upon its iconic status as a marker of black speech. Under earlier analyses (e.g. Fasold 1972; Wolfram 1969), such stativity would have been considered ungrammatical, since it is incompatible with a habitual reading. Dayton (1996) proposes that highly affective utterances such as these may signify shift towards intensified stativity, or super-real status, rather than habituality. As with the original grammaticalization of *be V-ing*, this most recent change appears to be taking place in more urban versions of AAVE and spreading outward from that point.

### 3.1.3. *Completive done*

The use of *done* with the past tense of the verb, as in *They done used all the good ones*, is a persistent structural trait of AAVE that is shared with Southern European American vernacular varieties of English. Although the verbal particle *done* also occurs in Caribbean creoles, its syntactic configuration in AAVE and its semantic-pragmatic function differ somewhat from its creole counterparts. In AAVE, *done* occurs only in preverbal auxiliary position with past tense forms whereas it occurs with a bare verb stem (e.g. *They done go*) and can occur in clause-final position in some creoles (Holm 1988: 162). In many respects, it functions in AAVE like a perfect, referring to an action completed in the recent past, but it can also be used to highlight the change of state or to intensify an activity, as in a sentence like *I done told you not to mess up*. It is a stable feature, but it is more frequently used in Southern rural versions of AAVE than in urban AAVE.

### 3.1.4. *Sequential be done*

AAVE may also show a combination of *be* and *done* together in sentences such as *My ice cream be done melted by the time we get there*, marking a resultative or a future conditional state. On one level, this construction seems to function like a future perfect similar to standard English *will have melted* in the example given above. Dayton (1996) suggests that a newer use of this form functions more like a future resultative-conditional, referring to an inevitable consequence of a general condition or a specific activity, as in a sentence like *If you love your enemy, they be done eat you alive in this society*. According to Dayton (1996) and Labov (1998), the resultative-conditional meaning, which is often associated pragmatically with threats or warnings, is a newer semantic-aspectual development. This meaning, like some of the other nuanced meanings of auxiliaries discussed in the following sections, seems to be characteristic of urban AAVE. Although Dayton (1996) documented numerous examples of this type during her years of participant observation with AAVE speakers in Philadelphia, it still seems to occur rather infrequently in most varieties of AAVE.

### 3.1.5. *Remote béen*

The stressed use of *béen* with a past tense form of the verb may denote a special aspectual function that marks an activity that took place in the distant past. In sentences such as *I béen had it for about three years* or *I béen known him*, it refers to an event that took place, literally or figuratively, in a distant time frame. In some contexts, the form may be interpreted as the deletion of a contracted form of the perfect (e.g. *She's béen married*), thus camouflaging some of its subtle semantic difference from other varieties. For example, Rickford (1975) showed that European Americans and African Americans, when given the stimulus utterance *She béen married*, had quite different responses to the question *Is she still married?* European Americans interpreted the stressed *béen* as a deleted perfect form (e.g., *She's been* → *She been*) and as implying that the referent is no longer married, whereas African Americans interpreted it as a distinctive aspectual marker indicating that the referent had been married a long time. With the exception of the phrase *I béen known* or *I béen knowin'* (phonetically quite similar if not identical to *known* [noun]) in casual speech, the use of remote *been* in urban areas appears to be receding.

### 3.1.6. *Simple past had + verb*

One of the newer features of AAVE is the narrative use of the auxiliary *had* with a past or perfect form of the verb (see the section on irregular verbs) to indicate a simple past tense action, as in *They had went outside and then they had messed up*

*the yard...* . This use is equivalent to the use of the simple past (e.g. *They went outside and then they messed up the yard*) in Standard English. Whereas earlier descriptions of AAVE (Labov et al. 1968; Fasold and Wolfram 1970; Fasold 1972) do not mention this feature at all, recent descriptions (Cukor-Avila 2001; Rickford and Th  berge-Rafal 1996) observe that this construction may be quite frequent in the narratives of some preadolescents. Descriptions of AAVE document the narrative use of *had* + verb in both urban (Rickford and Th  berge-Rafal 1996) and rural AAVE settings (Cukor-Avila 2001). The fact that this feature is so frequent among preadolescents raises the possibility that it may be age-graded, and that AAVE speakers will diminish its use as they become adults, although this interpretation is discounted in some of the data from Cukor-Avila (2001). Of course, age-grading and language change are not necessarily incompatible notions, and it may be that it is a newer feature that shows some degree of age-grading.

### 3.1.7. *Specialized auxiliaries*

Several auxiliaries fill specialized semantic-pragmatic roles that subtly set apart AAVE from other vernacular varieties of English. Among these auxiliary-like constructions are the use of *come* to indicate a state of indignation, the use of *steady* to mark a continuative intensifying activity, and the use of *finna* to indicate an immediate future or planned event. The use of *come* with V-ing in the sentence *He come walkin' in here like he owned the damn place* (Spears 1982: 852) indicates a speaker's annoyance about the action or event. Structurally, this use closely resembles the use of *come* with movement verbs (e.g. *She came running*) in other varieties, and is thus a camouflaged form.

Another apparent camouflaged form is *steady* in sentences such as *Ricky Bell be steady steppin' in them number nines* (Baugh 1983: 86), where the adverb *steady* indicates an intensified, persistent activity. The specialized auxiliary *finna* in *I'm finna go*, related to the generalized Southern form *fixin' to* (also *fixta*, *fitna*, and *fidda*), refers to an immediate future or planned event. Camouflaged forms such as indignant *come* seem to be more recent developments concentrated in urban varieties, although it may be the case that these forms simply have not been noticed in Southern varieties because of their relative infrequency and structural similarity to related forms in benchmark European American varieties.

At the same time, the use of other auxiliaries in urban AAVE seems to be receding when compared with their use in Southern vernacular counterparts. Whereas double modals such as *I might could do it*, counterfactual *liketa* in *I was so scared I liketa died*, and causative *have to* in *I'll have him to do it* can be found in contemporary urban AAVE, they tend to be much more robust in rural Southern versions of this variety.

### 3.1.8. Irregular verbs

The irregular verbs of urban AAVE follow those found in other vernacular varieties of English, in particular, rural Southern white varieties. These include the extension of past as participle (e.g. *I had went down there*), the participle as past (e.g. *They seen it*), the bare root as past (e.g. *They run there yesterday*), and regularization of past tense (e.g. *Everybody knowed him*). Unlike rural Southern varieties, it does not tend to retain some of the older different irregular forms (e.g. *hearen* for *heard* or *clumb* for *climbed*).

### 3.1.9. Subject-verb agreement

Two aspects of subject-verb concord are prominent in urban AAVE, one relating to the attachment of the verbal suffix *-s* and the other relating to the conjugated forms of past and present *be* forms. Practically all studies of urban (Labov et al. 1968; Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972; Rickford 1992) and rural AAVE (Cukor-Avila 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002) have documented the current-day pattern of 3rd sg. *-s* absence in sentences such as *She walk* for *She walks* and *She have money* for *She has money*. The incidence of 3rd sg. *-s* absence is so high for younger AAVE speakers in some sociolinguistic studies of core vernacular adolescents – reaching levels of between 75–100 percent for some speakers – that it has prompted several researchers (Labov et al. 1968; Fasold 1972) to speculate that contemporary urban “AAVE has no concord rule for verbal *-s*” (Fasold 1972: 146). This extensive pattern of absence seems to contrast with earlier Southern rural versions of AAVE, which are more prone to have variable attachment of verbal *-s* with 3rd sg. subjects. Furthermore, in some cases, Southern rural AAVE had verbal *-s* attachment with subjects other than 3rd sg., particularly 3rd pl. subjects as in *The dogs barks a lot* (Cukor-Avila 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002) but also with 1st and 2nd subjects (Schneider 1989; Cukor-Avila 1995). Evidence (Cukor-Avila 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002) indicates that 3rd sg. *-s* absence is shared by urban and non-urban verbal AAVE varieties, with some intensification of this pattern in core urban vernaculars taking place over the past half-century. Although it has been suggested that a specialized narrative use of verbal *-s* occurs in constructions such as *She takes your clothes and lend them to people* in one urban variety of AAVE (Labov 1987), this pattern has not been confirmed in other studies (Rickford 1999), and has been disputed as an innovation in AAVE (Wolfram and Thomas 2002).

The second concord pattern affecting urban AAVE is the regularization of present and past forms of conjugated *be*. AAVE is much like the vast majority of other vernacular varieties of English in its use of *be* leveling; in the present tense, *are* and *am* level to *is*, as in *The folks is home* or *Y'all is here*, while past tense *be* levels to *was*, as in *The folks was there* or *Y'all was here*. Past tense *be* leveling is

much more common than present tense leveling in AAVE, as it is in virtually all varieties of vernacular English having *be* regularization. The comparison of leveling over time and place indicates that the incidence of *be* leveling is diminishing somewhat (Wolfram and Thomas 2002), probably due to the effect of prescriptive norms. Nonetheless, *be* leveling, particularly with past tense, remains an integral and robust pattern within urban AAVE.

### 3.1.10. Other verb phrase structures

There are other types of verb structures that distinguish AAVE, but these are restricted to particular lexical verbs and their complements. For example, the verb *beat* in AAVE may function as an intransitive verb, as in *We beat* for 'won', whereas it is required to co-occur with an object in other varieties of English as in *We beat the team*. This use of intransitive *beat* is quite common in urban versions of AAVE. Or, a verb plus particle may function together lexically as in *blessed out* for 'scold' or 'swear at' in *She blessed him out*. This use is common in both urban and rural contexts and is shared with Southern European American English. The use of *say* to introduce a quote, as *She told him, say, "Where you been?"* is similar to its use in some creoles, prompting speculation that it is a vestige of creole influence (Rickford 1999: 9). *Say* may also be extended in AAVE to refer to non-human and inanimate objects, as in *The rock say "boom"*, which distinguishes its use in AAVE from other varieties using the general quotative *go*, as in *The rock went "boom"*. The verb *go* in the construction *Here go the house* functions as a static locative in AAVE, distinguishing it from benchmark European American varieties that use it only as a dynamic locative. There are a number of differences of this type that distinguish AAVE from other varieties but they are related to individual lexical items or phrasal complements and not to the overall grammatical configuration of AAVE.

## 3.2. Negation

The formation of negation in AAVE is not particularly distinct from other vernacular varieties of English in the US and beyond. To begin with, it participates in negative concord, or multiple negation, in which a single negative proposition may be marked both within the verb phrase and on postverbal indefinites, as in *It wasn't nothing* or *They didn't do nothing about nobody having no money or nothing like that*. In this respect, it is no different from the majority of vernacular dialects of English (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998). In urban areas, the incidence of negative concord is sharply stratified; some low-status speakers show the categorical realization of negative concord while middle-class speakers often show very low frequency levels or no negative concord at all in their sociolinguistic interviews (Wolfram 1969: 156).

AAVE also participates in a type of negative concord that involves a preverbal indefinite and verbal negative as in *Nobody don't like him*, which is equivalent to the standard sentence *Nobody likes him*. In standard varieties of English, it is possible for the two negative propositions to cancel each other, as in the long-standing American TV advertisement phrase, *Nobody doesn't like Sara Lee* [pastries], which of course implies that everyone likes the product. Although some isolated sentences of this type might be syntactically ambiguous, the intent of most sentences is readily apparent from the context in which they are uttered.

Related to the preverbal negative pattern is a type of inversion of the negative auxiliary and indefinite subject, as in *Don't nobody like him*, meaning 'Nobody likes him' or *Ain't nobody home* for 'Nobody is home'. Constructions like these are often used for emphasis, especially if the indefinite is stressed, as in *Don't nobody like him*.

Negative concord can also be transferred across clauses, as in a well-known example cited by Labov (1972: 130), *It ain't no cat can't get in no coop*, referring to the fact that cats are not able to get into the bird coops built on the roofs of apartment buildings. Although it has been speculated that this type of cross-clausal negation might be unique to AAVE, Southern-based European American vernaculars (Wolfram and Christian 1976: 113) also use cross-clausal negative concord. This type of concord is quite infrequent in AAVE, as it is in other varieties where it is found, and there are lingering questions about the default interpretation of cross-clausal negatives.

Like other vernacular dialects, AAVE uses *ain't* as a general preverbal negative for present tense *be* (*am not*, *isn't*, *aren't*) and for the perfect auxiliary *haven't/hasn't* as in *She ain't here* or *She ain't been there lately*. In this respect, AAVE is no different from other vernacular varieties of English. However, AAVE is unlike most European American vernacular varieties in generalizing the use of *ain't* for *didn't* as well, as in *She ain't do it*. This distinctive use is fairly widespread in urban varieties of AAVE, although it is camouflaged by other, shared uses of *ain't*. The generalized past tense variant *wont* for *wasn't* and *weren't* in *I wont there yesterday*, found in some Southern vernacular varieties, is not typical of urban AAVE. Finally, *ain't* and *don't* may be used with *but* to indicate 'only' or 'no more than' as in *She ain't but three years old* or *He didn't take but three dollars*. As with most other aspects of negation in urban AAVE, this is shared with Southern rural African American and European American vernacular varieties.

### 3.3. Nominals

Although many of the characteristics of the noun phrase in AAVE are shared with a wide range of English vernacular varieties, there are also a few traits that set it apart from European American vernaculars in the US. Perhaps the most noteworthy of these is the absence of inflectional *-s* on possessives and plurals.

The absence of possessive *-s* in sentences like *The dog\_ tail was wagging* or *The man\_ hat was old* are rare among other American English vernaculars. This is a relatively stable feature in AAVE wherever it is found in the US, though Rickford (1999: 271) suggests that it may be subject to age-grading since it is more frequent among younger speakers.

The formation of plurals in AAVE is noteworthy for several reasons. First, there is the pattern of *-s* absence related to measure nouns with quantifiers, as in *I got 50 cent\_* and *It's four mile\_ from here*. The absence of the plural *-s* with measure nouns is a characteristic of a number of Southern-based varieties of English as well as some Northern rural vernacular varieties (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998; Wolfram and Christian 1976), and is probably more robust in Southern-based, rural varieties than it currently is in urban AAVE. However, AAVE may also have a more generalized absence of *-s* plural unrestricted by the type of noun, as in *some dog* or *two boy*. Although generalized plural *-s* absence is a trait of urban AAVE, it is relatively infrequent, with typical absence levels less than 10 per cent out of all the cases where it might occur. Older, more rural versions of AAVE show a higher incidence of generalized plural *-s* absence, with some speakers showing levels up to one-third of all potential cases. Another type of plural marking involves the regularization of irregular plurals, including shifts in word class status from irregular to regular (e.g. *oxes, geeses*), the attachment of plurals to forms that have zero marking in other varieties (e.g. *three sheeps, two corns*), and redundant marking of irregular plurals (e.g. *two firemens, childrens*). In this regard, it is like other vernacular varieties of English, apart from some differences in frequency levels.

It has been suggested (Labov et al. 1968) that a type of associative plural *an 'em* in AAVE, as in *Jerome an 'em* for 'Jerome and his friends', is more similar to English creoles than to other varieties of English, but this type of associative plural is not unusual in other varieties of American English, including Southern and Northern European American varieties. The use of the second person plural *y'all* in *Y'all done now* or *It's y'all ball* is quite common in both Southern and Northern versions of AAVE and therefore contrasts with second person plural formation in regions that are characterized by variants such as *youse, you guys, or youns*.

A couple of distinctive traits of AAVE are found in the possessive pronouns. The use of the possessive pronoun *they* in *It's they book* is quite robust in most urban and rural regions of the US, and it usually distinguishes AAVE from benchmark European American vernaculars. The regularization of *mine* to *mines* in *The book is mines* is quite robust in most varieties of AAVE, though it appears more typical of preadolescent speakers than older speakers.

AAVE shares a number of pronominal traits with other vernacular varieties of English, including the regularization of the reflexive *hissself* as in *He washed hisself*, the extension of the objective form *them* for attributive demonstratives such as *She likes them apples*, and the use of objective forms in coordinate subjects

as in *Me and him got style*. It shares benefactive datives as in *I got me a new car* with Southern dialects. Urban AAVE also shares null subjective relative pronoun in embedded sentences such as *It's a man come over here talking trash*. The use of *what* as a relative as in *That's the man what I was talking about*, found in some forms of earlier AAVE, is no longer found to any extent in urban AAVE.

### 3.4. Question formation

There are two aspects of question formation that distinguish AAVE syntax, both involving subject auxiliary inversion. First, questions may be formed without subject-auxiliary inversion, as in *Where that is?* or *Why I can't go?*. These non-inverted forms tend to occur with *wh*- questions and syntactically simple sentences. While the productive use of simple non-inverted question order may be receding, it is still quite common in some fixed phrases such as *What it is?* or *Who that is?* At the same time, embedded questions may retain subject-auxiliary inversion, as in *I asked her could I go with her*, contrasting with the standard pattern in which *if* or *whether* is used with non-inverted order, as in *I asked him if I could go with him*. This is a stable pattern shared with a number of vernacular varieties.

## 4. Conclusion

The descriptive profile of urban AAVE grammar given in the above sections indicates a robust, dynamic sociocultural variety that maintains continuity with its historical Southern rural roots while becoming the locus of current innovation within AAVE. At this stage of development, factors of social class, speech community, identity, and language ideology are probably as essential as the rural-urban dichotomy but the historical role of this relationship cannot be disputed. Large metropolitan areas appear to be the current sociocultural centers for innovation and the establishment of supraregional norms in AAVE, with change diffusing from these urban locations into more rural regions (Cukor-Avila 2001; Wolfram and Thomas 2002).

In tables 1–3, we summarize the status of the major grammatical structures surveyed in this description: Table 1 summarizes innovative and intensifying features of urban AAVE; table 2 summarizes receding features; and table 3 summarizes stable features. Our primary basis for comparison is rural AAVE during the period of the Great Migration, simply labeled Southern AAVE, but we also compare urban AAVE with earlier AAVE (the nineteenth century), Southern European American vernacular English, and Northern European American vernacular varieties. In the comparison, a check ✓ indicates that the feature is present and parentheses around the check (✓) indicate that the feature is infrequent. The checklist is naturally subject to the usual kinds of limitations associated with qualitative



summary inventories of this type. In this case, the limitation includes our differing levels of knowledge about the status of some structures in earlier AAVE and benchmark European American varieties.

Table 1. New and intensifying structures in urban AAVE

Structure	Urban AAVE	Rural AAVE	Earlier AAVE	Southern EAVE	Northern EAVE
habitual <i>be</i> + V-ing e.g. <i>I always be playing ball</i>	✓	(✓)			
intensified equative <i>be</i> e.g. <i>She be the diva</i>	✓				
preterit <i>had</i> + V e.g. <i>Then had tripped</i>	✓	✓			
resultative <i>be done</i> e.g. <i>She be done had her baby</i>	✓				
indignant <i>come</i> e.g. <i>They come talkin' that trash</i>	✓				
3rd sg. -s absence e.g. <i>She run everyday</i>	✓	✓	✓		
<i>ain't</i> for <i>didn't</i> e.g. <i>I ain't go yesterday</i>	✓	(✓)	✓		
counterfactual <i>call oneself</i> e.g. <i>He calls himself dancing'</i>	✓	✓		(✓)	

Table 2. Receding urban AAVE features

Structure	Urban AAVE	Rural AAVE	Earlier AAVE	Southern EAVE	Northern EAVE
remote <i>béen</i> e.g. <i>I béen ate it</i>	(✓)	✓	✓		
double modals e.g. <i>I might could do it</i>	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓	
<i>a</i> -prefixing e.g. <i>I was a-huntin'</i>		✓	✓	✓	
leveling present <i>be</i> to <i>is</i> e.g. <i>We is here</i>	(✓)	✓	✓	(✓)	
3rd pl -s e.g. <i>The dogs barks</i>		(✓)	✓	✓	

Table 2. (continued) Receding urban AAVE features

Structure	Urban AAVE	Rural AAVE	Earlier AAVE	Southern EAVE	Northern EAVE
counterfactual <i>liketa</i> e.g. <i>I liketa died</i>	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓	
causative <i>have...to</i> e.g. <i>We'll have him to do it</i>	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓	
<i>wont</i> for past <i>be</i> e.g. <i>I wont there yesterday</i>		(✓)		✓	
different irregular forms e.g. <i>It riz in front of me</i>		✓	✓	✓	
<i>for to</i> complement e.g. <i>I want for to bring it</i>		✓	✓	✓	
<i>what</i> as a relative pronoun e.g. <i>The man what took it</i>		(✓)	✓	(✓)	
non-inverted simple questions e.g. <i>What that is?</i>	(✓)	✓	✓		

Table 3. Stable urban AAVE features

Structure	Urban AAVE	Rural AAVE	Earlier AAVE	Southern EAVE	Northern EAVE
copula absence e.g. <i>She nice</i>	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	
completive <i>done</i> e.g. <i>She done did it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
negative concord e.g. <i>She didn't do nothing'</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
preverbal indefinite e.g. <i>Nobody don't like it</i>	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	
negative inversion e.g. <i>Didn't nobody like it</i>	✓	✓	(✓)		
<i>ain't</i> for <i>be + not have + no</i> e.g. <i>I ain't been there</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
regularized <i>was</i> for past <i>be</i> e.g. <i>We was there</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
irregular verbs past for participle e.g. <i>I had went</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 3. (continued) Stable urban AAVE features

Structure	Urban AAVE	Rural AAVE	Earlier AAVE	Southern EAVE	Northern EAVE
participle for past e.g. <i>I seen it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
bare root past form e.g. <i>Yesterday I run fast</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
regularized past form e.g. <i>I knowed it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
different past e.g. <i>It riz up in front of me</i>		✓	✓	✓	
<i>finna</i> quasi auxiliary e.g. <i>I finna do it</i>	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	
quotative <i>say</i> e.g. <i>He told him say, "Leave"</i>	✓	✓	✓		
stative locative <i>here go</i> e.g. <i>Here go the pencil</i>	✓	✓	(✓)		
Plural					
measure noun pl. abs. e.g. <i>three mile</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
generalized <i>-s</i> abs. e.g. <i>three boy</i>	(✓)	✓	✓		
regularized irregulars e.g. <i>oxes</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)
subject relative pro deletion e.g. <i>It's a man took it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
benefactive dative e.g. <i>I got me a new car</i>	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	
possessive <i>-s</i> absence e.g. <i>the girl hat</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
regularized <i>mines</i> e.g. <i>It's mines</i>	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	
regularized <i>hissself</i> e.g. <i>He shaved hissself</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
possessive <i>they</i> e.g. <i>It's they book</i>	✓	✓	✓		
2nd pl. <i>y'all</i> e.g. <i>Will y'all be there</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
demonstrative <i>them</i> e.g. <i>I love them shoes</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 3. (continued) Stable urban AAVE features

Structure	Urban AAVE	Rural AAVE	Earlier AAVE	Southern EAVE	Northern EAVE
associative <i>an 'em</i> e.g. <i>Derek an 'em will be there</i>	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	(✓)
existential <i>it</i> e.g. <i>It's a J Street in DC</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
existential <i>they</i> e.g. <i>They's a J Street in DC</i>	✓	✓	(✓)		
inverted embedded questions e.g. <i>I asked could I go</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)

By far, the largest inventory of structures is represented in table 3, which lists the stable structures of AAVE. These traits were present in the Southern rural varieties of AAVE originally transplanted to urban non-Southern areas, thus showing the historical and current continuity of AAVE as it now transcends regional boundaries. There is certainly innovation and intensification as shown in table 1, as well as recession as shown in table 2, but these inventories are not nearly as exhaustive as the stable core of AAVE regardless of region. Notwithstanding some regional variation, there is strong support for a supra-regional core of AAVE, affirming the primary sociocultural and ideological basis for the construction of present-day AAVE.

It is also noteworthy that the non-Southern, urban context of AAVE tends to stand in stark opposition to benchmark European American varieties in these metropolitan areas. In an important sense, urban AAVE is more, though not isomorphically, aligned with Southern rural European American vernacular varieties than it is with surrounding European American Northern vernaculars. This dynamic is probably a reflection of the bi-racial ideology that defines most urban areas in the US and the developing oppositional identity that has developed in African American youth culture. As Fordham and Ogbu (1986) observe, young African Americans in urban areas do not want to 'act white'. In this context, 'speaking white' is the most salient indicator of white behavior. Although the notion of 'talking black' is constructed in such a way that it cannot be reduced to a simple inventory of structural traits as described here (Morgan 2001), linguistic features are certainly a part of this construction, and provide support for the perpetuation of ethnolinguistic distinctiveness. Urban AAVE may change and redefine itself over time and with changing social conditions, but it seems certain that it will remain the most prominent and significant sociocultural variety of American English for some time to come.

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# Earlier African American English: morphology and syntax

Alexander Kautzsch

## 1. The sociohistorical background for the evolution of AAVE

This section briefly summarizes the socio-historical context under which AAVE might have emerged. What is responsible for the extent to which slaves learned approximations of white dialects or restructured the English they used is likely to depend on the nature of the contact between black and white. Regional differences in and temporal change of settlement patterns, demographics, and economics of the US South suggest varying conditions for the slaves' language acquisition within the former colonial area of the US South (Rickford 1997; Winford 1997; Mufwene 2000). From a temporal perspective four "phases" need to be considered (Winford 1997: 314): the seventeenth century, the eighteenth century, the nineteenth century until reconstruction, and the post-reconstruction period.

At the beginning of colonization in the seventeenth century "Africans were scattered and integrated within a European majority" (Mufwene 2000: 237). This refers both to Virginia (founded in 1607) and South Carolina (founded in 1663). Nothing suggests the development of a pidgin or creole (Mufwene 2000: 237), although Winford (1997: 315) assumes that "creolized forms of English" (from the Caribbean or Africa) "existed side by side with the English dialects in at least some areas". Caribbean influence at this early stage is disputed (con: Mufwene 2000; pro: Rickford 1997; Winford 1997).

In the eighteenth century a regional distinction between the coastal areas of South Carolina and Georgia (founded in 1733) and the remaining area is necessary. In coastal South Carolina and Georgia, slave labor became more and more important because of the growing cultivation of rice and indigo (Winford 1997: 315). As a result a setting emerged that is similar to the one in the Caribbean, and it was likely that this context gave rise to Gullah (Mufwene 2000: 243; Winford 1997: 315). On the other hand, the slaves in the piedmont areas of Virginia, South Carolina and North Carolina may have continued to learn the settlers' dialects on small farms of Scotch-Irish settlers (Winford 1997: 315), on which the contacts between blacks and whites were probably fairly close. It is likely that "various second-language varieties" existed at this stage, which ultimately provided "the broad base on which AAVE continued to evolve" (Winford 1997: 315–316).

Due to increasing demands for cotton for the evolving textile industries (Mufwene 2000: 247), the nineteenth century sees an "expanding settlement of the

Lower South, particularly the Gulf states” (Winford 1997), i.e. Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas, in particular. This movement resulted in a relocation of about 250,000 slaves (Winford 1997: 316), which obviously contributed heavily to the spread of the “relatively stable AAVE vernaculars” (Mufwene 2000: 247) that had evolved by that time.

The Civil War (1861–1865) and the abolition of slavery brought only little economic improvement for former slaves. Due to the Jim Crow Laws (1877) in the southern states, which “disfavored African-Americans in the competition for jobs and for welfare entitlements” (Mufwene 2000: 248), segregation increased and reduced interaction between African and European Americans. As a consequence, thousands of African Americans started migrating to the North and West in the 1870s. This tendency continued when during the Great Migration (1910–1930) almost one million African Americans left the South. Finally, by the 1970s about 6 million had “outmigrated” (Mufwene 2000: 250). Of those who had left, a large majority had to live in urban ghettos, socializing among themselves, and interacting “with other populations only at work” (Mufwene 2000: 250). This might indeed be the temporal starting point for the distinction between present-day urban and rural AAVE (cf. Wolfram, this volume), and it is likely that in this context some linguistic patterns, namely those primarily associated with AAVE today, emerged as signs of identity or “ethnic markers” (Mufwene 2000: 251) within the relatively homogeneous urban African American communities all across the US.

I am aware of the fact that this is a very sketchy description of the sociohistorical background, but it will meet the present needs. Note, however, that it is

important to recall that each colony developed at different times along different lines, with different settlement patterns and demographic ratios between whites and blacks. Moreover, different types of agricultural activity made for different community settings both across colonies and within each colony, resulting in rather different kinds of contact between Africans and Europeans, and hence different linguistic outcomes. (Winford 1997: 319).

## 2. Sources for the historical reconstruction of AAVE

The linguistic description of a historical variety is first and foremost dependent on the quality of the sources used in the reconstruction process. Early studies of the history of AAVE have relied upon “literary representations of the dialect in earlier centuries, travelers’ reports, diaries, letters, newspaper announcements, and the like” (Schneider 1989: 2–3); but these types of sources are regarded as problematic today, especially because one of the main concerns in the study of Earlier AAVE is the quantitative description of this highly variable variety.

In the last two decades, however, quite a number of sources have been unearthed that provide us with various types of material that have turned out to be



reliable sources for a valid reconstruction of Earlier AAVE on an empirical basis. Since the evaluation of sources in this field has become a very prominent and important issue, I will discuss the types of evidence that have been used in turn. (Bibliographical details of the source texts appear on the CD-ROM.)

### 2.1. Written accounts of Earlier AAVE speech

Apart from those mentioned in the quotation above, the first source used were the WPA ex-slave narratives (ESN; Rawick 1972), on selections of which, e.g., Schneider (1989) is based. The reliability of Rawick (1972) has been disputed because of severe cases of editing, but Rawick's *Supplement* (1977/79) – a collection of the earlier unedited narratives – does lend itself to linguistic investigations (Kautzsch 2002: 12–19). An offshoot of ESN, namely the narratives conducted in Virginia and published separately by Perdue, Barden and Phillips (1976), has been shown to be a valuable source due to the proficiency of one interviewer in particular (Kautzsch 2002: 20–22). A further precious source are Harry Middleton Hyatt's (1970–1978) interviews with hoodoo doctors, which come very close to modern socio-linguistic interviews. (cf. Kautzsch 2002, amongst others). What is necessary when using these kinds of sources as linguistic evidence is a careful selection of samples with special reference to the quality of the fieldwork.

### 2.2. The ex-slave recordings (ESR)

The only extant audio-samples of Earlier AAVE have been discovered by Guy Bailey and his associates (Bailey, Maynor and Cukor-Avila 1991) and have been analyzed in a variety of publications (e.g., all articles in Bailey, Maynor, and Cukor-Avila 1991; most articles in Poplack 2000; Schneider 1989; Kautzsch 2002). Although doubts have been raised about the representativeness of this relatively small sample, they remain an invaluable starting point for the evaluation of any new “written” source.

### 2.3. Diaspora varieties and insular communities

A research group around David Sankoff and now especially Shana Poplack and Sali Tagliamonte aims at describing the language of the African American Diaspora. They discovered fairly isolated African American communities both in Samaná (in the Dominican Republic; Samaná English, SE) and Nova Scotia (Canada; African Nova Scotia English, ANSE). The assumption that isolated communities are likely to preserve older stages of a variety due to lack of contact to outsiders makes these sources a valuable part of the reconstruction process. Having produced a fairly large body of research (e.g., all articles in Poplack, 2000; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001), the central aim of this research group is to pin down the English heritage of (Earlier) AAVE.

Walt Wolfram and associates (e.g. Wolfram, Thomas and Green 2000; Wolfram and Thomas 2002) use data from a “longstanding, relatively isolated, biracial community” (Wolfram, Thomas and Green 2000: 316) in Hyde County, North Carolina. The English(es) spoken there by different generations of both black and white residents should “provide insight into the extent to which earlier AAVE shared in local dialect patterning” (Thomas and Green 2000: 316).

The third group in this category are former slaves who were sent to Liberia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. John Singler (e.g. Singler 1989) analyzes their descendants’ speech (Liberian Settler English), assuming that they have preserved some traits of Earlier AAVE up to the present. What is interesting in this context is that this variety of Earlier AAVE has the strongest resemblances to creoles.

#### 2.4. Private correspondence

The last group of sources are collections of letters written by African Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although it is likely that there is a multitude of letter collections slumbering in US archives, the linguistic analysis of this type of source has been fairly limited.

The sources analyzed so far are samples from the Federal Bureau Letters (FBL) published in Berlin et al. (1982, 1985, 1990, 1993), letters of former slaves who had been freed to Liberia (Wiley 1980) and of a slave family from Alabama, who partly migrated to Liberia (Miller 1978). (Letters from the latter two sources will be referred to as LAL in this article). Finally, there is a collection of letters from freed blacks who settled in Sierra Leone (Fyfe 1991; Sierra Leone Settler English, SLSE).

Especially when using letters as linguistic data some caution is necessary because literacy was the exception with African Americans at that time. Montgomery (1999) suggests that only writers who are obviously struggling with the written medium should be used as linguistic informants. Nonetheless, it is likely that certain linguistic features do not occur in written correspondence, either because of the limited size of the respective sources or because of norms that prevent or reduce non-standard forms in writing (cf. Kautzsch 2002: 253).

### 3. Core issues in Earlier AAVE morphology and syntax

This section surveys the features of Earlier AAVE studied most intensively, as well as a selection of less prominent realms of the grammar useful for cross-variety comparison. Although this handbook seeks to provide primarily qualitative information on morpho-syntax, it is hardly possible to describe (Earlier) AAVE without mentioning quantitative distributions of linguistic features because it is mainly the proportional occurrence of variants that distinguishes (Earlier) AAVE

from other varieties of English. From a merely qualitative point of view, Earlier AAVE has to offer only a few unique items, such as zero copula or *ain't* for *didn't*. The most prominent “distinctive” features of present-day AAVE – such as remote *been*, habitual *be + V-ing*, or the camouflaged forms *come* and *steady* – seem to be innovations established in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (cf. 1; Wolfram, this volume).

The whole section will show that on the one hand AAVE has come a long way in terms of internal diachronic evolution, on the other it needs to be kept in mind that at every stage there was a considerable amount of synchronic internal variation, implying that Earlier AAVE cannot have been a monolithic whole at any stage, but rather consisted of a bundle of varieties ranging from more or less creolized ones to fairly close approximations to white dialects. (cf. Kautzsch and Schneider 2000 for a detailed account of “differential creolization” in Earlier AAVE exemplified by ESN data from South Carolina).

### 3.1. Verb morphology and tense/aspect

At the center of present tense morphology there is the highly variable presence of verbal *-s*. It occurs in all persons, but is never required. The primary grammatical person for verbal *-s* is 3<sup>rd</sup> singular, but it might also occur frequently in 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> plural, with hierarchies of the plural contexts changing from source to source. (cf. Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 186; Schneider 1989: 69). What is more, even the constraints on or the conditions for its appearance differ widely. As far as phonological conditioning is concerned, some sources (e.g. ESN) revealed that after sibilants verbal *-s* tends to be omitted (*he wish*), while vowels and other consonants don't show a pattern, in others (ANSE, SE) vowels tend to favor verbal *-s* (*he goes*) and consonants tend to disfavor it (*she run*) (Schneider 1989: 70; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 188–190). The type of subject might also have an effect on the occurrence of verbal *-s*. Noun phrase subjects – as opposed to pronoun subjects – sometimes favor verbal *-s* (*the woman speaks, he speak*) (SE, ANSE, FBL; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001; Montgomery and Fuller 1996, FBL), however, this effect can be irrelevant, too (Hyde County elderly African Americans [Wolfram, Thomas, and Green 2000: 336–337]). In some varieties of earlier AAVE verbal *-s* is more likely to occur when the respective subject does not immediately precede the verb (i.e. when the two are non-adjacent; *the man who is ... speaks*). Sometimes this effect can be seen with pronoun subjects only, sometimes also with noun phrases (Montgomery and Fuller 1996; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001). Finally, in some sources (SE and ANSE; not: FBL) verbal *-s* is favored in habitual context (*she always speaks*) (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001; Montgomery and Fuller 1996).

Past-reference verbs in Earlier AAVE can either be morphologically marked for past tense or appear as stem forms. On the whole, scholars agree that the majority is in fact overtly marked, either by the attachment of the past tense suffix *-ed*

– sometimes involving nonstandard regularization as in *knowed* – or by means of irregular past tense forms. (Schneider 1989: 81, ESN; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 118, ANSE; Montgomery 1999: 11, SLSE).

Here, the conditions for explicit past marking are again quite variable. SLSE, in the first place, does not display clear conditioning effects at all (Montgomery 1999: 11). In those sources which do, the major constraint seems to be the phonetic context: before and after consonants the unmarked stem is clearly favored (*she talk to ... yesterday*) (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 125–126; Schneider 1989: 81). In addition, in some varieties (SE and ANSE; not ESR) habitual aspect might have promoted *-ed* deletion (*my dad chop wood every...*) (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 124, 127).

The second group of past-reference verbs are those which do not (only) form the past tense by means of the suffix *-ed*. There is a large number of nonstandard forms that involve consonant cluster reduction (*kep', tol'*), devoicing of final /d/ (*killt, turnt*), double marking (*stoled*), invariable base form (*run* as past tense), past and participle switch (*drunk* as past tense), and nonstandard vowel change (*brung*) (Schneider 1989: 90–91).

Again, it seems that the majority of past-reference irregular verbs appear in their marked form. SLSE has only 12% of zero past tense marking (Montgomery 1999: 11). Poplack and Tagliamonte's (2001: 118) figures for stem forms in past contexts with strong verbs range from 23% (ESR; Samaná; North Preston, Nova Scotia) to 27% (Gaynesborough Enclave, Nova Scotia). When unmarked forms are used with past reference, however, they are likely to appear either with verbs that use their stem forms as participles (*come*), or in habitual contexts (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 132).

The formation of present perfect and past perfect by means of *have/had* + past participle is basically identical to other varieties (Schneider 1989: 114, 117). Earlier AAVE can also delete *have* in structures like *have been* + V-ing/past participle (*I been making ... / I been hit by ...*). One somewhat striking but rare phenomenon in this section is that *been* + Vinf (*he been stay in de swamp*) can be used for past reference – equivalent to Standard English past tense or past perfect. From a structural point of view, this feature is similar to present-day AAVE's remote stressed *been*, but in Earlier AAVE the action denoted does not have to be remote (Schneider 1989: 114–120). In addition, perfective aspect can be expressed by *done* + past participle (or rarely Vinf) as in *I done told you, She done write* with both present and past as reference points. *Done* can also be preceded by a form of *be* or *have* to mark present or past tense, respectively (*He is done gone / I had done quit*) (Schneider 1989: 121–124).

Progressive aspect in Earlier AAVE has not received wide attention, but seems to be identical to Standard English. In connection to this, prefix *a-* before V-ing (*I'm a-huntin'*) is a fairly stable feature, which only occurs on a very limited basis in present-day AAVE (Schneider 1989: 143–148).

What we know about the expression of future events in Earlier AAVE so far is that both *will* and *going to* (*gonna*) future are the two main variants of about equal frequency, while present simple and progressive have only minority status (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 218–234; SE and ANSE). As far as constraints on the usage of *will* vs. *going to* are concerned, it seems that the latter is favored in future-in-the-past and in subordinate clauses, is avoided with verbs of motion, and does not imply proximity of future action, as is the case in other varieties of English (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001: 227).

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that three of the four features that play a central role in the description of present-day AAVE are clearly innovations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, namely the high frequency of invariant *be* before V-ing (*he be waking up at nine*) and the infamous aspectual markers *come* (for indignation; *they come talking that trash*) and *steady* (continuative; *she be steady stepping in there*). The existence of the fourth feature, habitual *be* (*We be here every day*), in Earlier AAVE is somewhat disputed. Some data, but definitely not all, suggest that habitual uses of *be* might have developed in or before the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3.2. The copula in Earlier AAVE

This section surveys the most prominent type of auxiliary of Earlier AAVE: the copula *be*. In principle, this variety of English has the choice between using an overt form of the copula, viz. the full forms *am*, *are*, *is* or the contracted forms ‘*m*, ‘*re*, ‘*s*, or not (zero  $\emptyset$ ).

Since zero copula is relatively rare (< 15%) with first person singular subjects, copula analyses mostly deal with the forms of *are* and *is*. Comparing a variety of sources, zero *is* seems to be quantitatively stable in spoken Earlier AAVE (13%–24%), while zero *are* has relative wide margins across sources (31%–71%). In letters the copula is rarely absent (< 2%), and in fact occurs near-categorically in its full form (Montgomery 1999: 9; Kautzsch 2002: 238).

The varying degree of copula absence is closely connected to the type of subject preceding it and the type of grammatical item following it, but also to the phonetic context. As far as subject type is concerned, personal pronouns favor copula absence over noun phrase subjects, at least in spoken sources (*she running*; *the woman’s/is running*). (cf. Kautzsch 2002: 242–243 on letters). The grammatical categories that can follow after the copula are *gonna*, V-ing, adjectives, locatives and noun phrases. In most sources copula absence is most frequent with the two verbal complements *gonna* (*he gonna go to...*) and V-ing (*he running*) and least likely with noun phrases (*he’s/is a man*). Adjectives (*she’s/is/Ø pretty*) and locatives (*he’s/is/Ø in the house*) are intermediate and their relative impact on copula absence varies greatly across sources. (For details see Rickford 1998; Kautzsch 2002; amongst others). In addition, the phonetic environment has some influence on the form of the copula, too: a preceding consonant favors the full form of *is*

(*the cat is ...*), a preceding vowel promotes contraction (*she 's...*). A following consonant favors zero *is* (*he Ø bad*), while a following vowel equally favors full and contracted *is* (*this man 's/is awful*) (Kautzsch 2002: 133-134).

The copula in past tense environments is overtly realized as *was* or *were* in most cases. Past tense copula absence (“... hadn’ bought his check, I’d car’y him free, ‘cause he Ø so sca’ed.’ I like ter vomited.” Simon Hare; Rawick 1977: 921) is the exception (Kautzsch 2002:93).

As regards the usage of *was* and *were*, some varieties of Earlier AAVE (e.g. ANSE) exhibit *was* leveling, i.e. *was* is the predominant form in standard *were*-contexts. Moreover, elderly African Americans in Horry County, NC, for example, level *was* (*you was ...*) in positive constructions and *weren’t* (*he weren’t ...*) in negative ones, which is clearly a reflex of the white vernacular in that region (Wolfram, Thomas and Green 2000).

### 3.3. Negation

Negation in Earlier AAVE is in principle very similar to other non-standard varieties of English. Full verb negation is mostly achieved by means of *don’t/doesn’t/didn’t*. The norm for present tense copula negation is clearly *ain’t*, although some sources also display some amount of *am/are/is + not*. The past tense copula forms are mostly *wasn’t/weren’t*. Present tense perfectives can be negated both by *ain’t* and to a lesser degree by its standard counterpart *haven’t/hasn’t*. Notice, however, that differences across sources can be great. With past tense perfectives *had’t* seems to occur categorically (Kautzsch 2002: 44).

What is special about Earlier AAVE is the (rare) usage of *ain’t* as a full verb negator, i.e. as an alternative for both *don’t/doesn’t* (“I hop’ ya ain’t wanna kno’ much mo’ ‘cause I ‘bout through.” [Perdue, Barden and Phillips 1976: 210]) and *didn’t* (“...but ah have went all ovah the house. An’ ah ain’t see nothin’. Like no kinda machine or nothin’.” [Hyatt 1970–1978: 4565]) (cf. Schneider 1989; Kautzsch 2002). Moreover, *ain’t* + past participle can also occur in non-perfective past tense contexts (“Marse Fleming ain’t cared how much we dance, but ole overseer would raise de debbil.” [Perdue, Barden and Phillips 1976: 224]) (Schneider 1989: 201–202; Kautzsch 2002: 44). Interestingly, in letters (LAL, FBL) *ain’t* does not occur at all, which might be a reflex of the impact of some amount of literacy on writing (Kautzsch 2002: 226).

Of course, in combination with indeterminate items like *anything/nothing/never* and the like, Earlier AAVE makes use of all kinds of negative transfer (negative concord, negative attraction, negative postposing). Negative concord (or multiple negation), where a negative element is present both in the predicate and in an indeterminate item (*I don’t know nothing*), is clearly preferred over the standard pattern (*I don’t know anything*) (Schneider 1989: 192; Kautzsch 2002: 62). In letters, however, the reverse is true (LAL, FBL; Kautzsch 2002: 227).

In negative attraction the negative is transferred from the predicate to a preverbal indeterminate (*Nobody knows it; I never saw...*). This pattern is the norm in Earlier AAVE, but its nonstandard counterpart, where the negative indeterminate is followed by a negated predicate (“No white folks didn’t leave me nothing but de wide world.” [Perdue, Barden, and Phillips 1976: 77] “A dirt dauber got a wisdom dat yo’ an’ yore mother nevah ain’t learnt.” [Hyatt 1970–1978: 1329]), also occurs, though only as a minority variant (Kautzsch 2002: 78). Personal letters only contain the standard patterns (LAL, FBL; Kautzsch 2002: 230). A peculiar construction in connection with preverbal *never*, is the usage of *did* + Vinf sometimes replacing the past tense form of the predicate (“We never did pay him, ‘cause we ain’t never had nothin’.” [Perdue, Barden, and Phillips 1976: 14; Kautzsch 2002: 81]).

Finally, negative postposing is also very frequent, with negation being expressed in a postverbal indeterminate (“In wah times a man wuz no more den a varmint.” [Rawick 1977: 1347]). In instances with preverbal *never* the negative element tends to be repeated in an indeterminate, resulting in something like a mixture between negative attraction and negative postposing (“He never had no children.” [Hyatt 1970–1978: 912; Kautzsch 2002: 82]).

### 3.4. Relativization

Earlier AAVE has basically the same relativizers as Standard English: *who*, *which*, *whom*, *whose*, *that*, and zero (i.e. relative marker deletion) when it is not the subject of the relative clause (*the man Ø I saw; the man Ø I gave the book to*). In spoken sources, however, the *wh*-relativizers – especially *whom* and *whose* – occur only to a very limited extent. In addition, there are two frequent non-standard usages, namely zero in subject position (*The man Ø came round the corner was my daddy*) and *what* (*The man what came around the corner...*). Interestingly, the latter is virtually absent from written correspondence. Finally, some sources contain the (marginal) usage of *that which* (“But these, these little fellahs that which had stayed befo’ God prayin’, they didn’t go an’ drink the wine ...” [Hyatt 1970–1978: 4718]) and non-spatial *where* as relative markers (“My father was one o de founders o’ de Underground Railroad where help de slaves to run way to de North ...” [Perdue, Barden, and Phillips 1976: 17; cf. Kautzsch 2002: 172]).

As all other kinds of variables, relative marker choice can also be due to a variety of factors. The number one criterion obviously is the syntactic function of the relative marker. It appears that – at least in spoken sources – zero and *that* tend to be preferred in non-subject (*The man Ø I saw*) and subject position (*The man that came ...*), respectively, while *what* is not favored in either. In written sources of private correspondence *that* is first choice both as subject and non-subject (Kautzsch 2002: 244).

Further constraints are the humanness or non-humanness of the antecedent as well as its grammatical category (such as pronoun, definite or indefinite noun

phrase), and also the adjacency or non-adjacency of the relative marker to its referent. Table 1 (cf. Kautzsch 2002: 210, 252) surveys these for spoken sources. Items printed in bold type are those on which spoken and written sources agree.

Table 1. Constraints on the choice of *that*, *what* and *zero*

subject <i>that</i>	adjacent, <b>non-human, definite NPs/pronouns</b>
subject <i>what</i>	adjacent, human, definite NPs/pronouns
subject zero	<b>non-adjacent, human, indefinite NPs</b>
non-subject <i>that</i>	adjacent, <b>human</b>
non-subject <i>what</i>	non-adjacent, non-human, (definite/indefinite) NPs
non-subject zero	<b>adjacent pronouns</b>

### 3.5. Noun morphology: plurals and possessives

In principle, plural marking is very similar to Standard English. There is regular pluralization by means of the suffix *-s* and irregular plural marking.

What is special here, again, is that the plural suffix *-s* is variably present in regular nouns. Interestingly, rates for plural marker absence have a fairly wide range from 2% to 40% across sources. And the conditions for unmarked plurals are also highly variable. What seems to be a very important constraint are other indications of plurality in the noun phrase. Numerals and other types of quantifiers, such as plural demonstratives (*these*) or items like *all* or *many* might have a favoring effect on zero plural (ESN, Schneider 1989; SE, ANSE, ESR, Poplack, Tagliamonte and Eze 2000; SLSE, Montgomery 1999). The phonetic context may also play a role, with slight tendencies towards zero plural before and after consonants. But variation is still considerable (SE, ANSE, ESR, Poplack, Tagliamonte and Eze 2000: 83).

What is definitely at work in Earlier AAVE is a tendency for particular lexemes to remain unmarked for plural. But again, different sources have different preferences: *head*, *mile*, and *year* are on top of the ESN list for non-marking (Schneider 1989: 153), and so are *time* and *day* for ANSE, SE and ESR, where *year*, on the contrary, favors overt plural marking.

As regards plural formation of Standard English irregular nouns, there are three possibilities in Earlier AAVE. The first is to use a regularized form instead of an irregular one (*mans*), the second to attach plural *-s* to the irregular form (*mens*), which is called double marking, or finally to use the unmarked form (*man*), with the latter possibly being the most popular amongst the non-standard forms. On the whole, there is a high degree of variation once more, ranging from the occurrence of very few isolated standard forms (*goose* and *ox* in ESN, Schneider 1989: 159) to a relatively stable standard majority (59% in SLSE, Montgomery 1999: 16).



The second inflectional suffix on nouns in Earlier AAVE is genitive *-s*. It has only been studied by Schneider (1989: 162–167), who reports that its absence is rare both in ESN (9,3%) and ESR (10,3%). The only favoring effect for zero genitive seems to be a preceding sibilant.

### 3.6. Pronominal system

Personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns are briefly surveyed in Table 2 (ESN, reproduced from Schneider 1989: 170–174).

Table 2. Personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns of Earlier AAVE

pronouns	singular	plural
personal		
1 <sup>st</sup> person	<i>I, me</i> (rare)	<i>we, us, we 'uns, we-all</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	<i>you, you all</i> (very rare)	<i>you, you all, youse all, you 'uns</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	masc: <i>he, him, hims</i> (the latter two are rare) fem: <i>she, her</i> (rare) neuter: <i>it, hit</i>	<i>they/dey</i>
possessive		
1 <sup>st</sup> person	<i>my, me</i>	<i>our, us</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	<i>your</i> (orth. variation)	<i>your, you</i> (very rare), <i>you 's</i> (very rare)
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	masc: <i>his, he, him, hims</i> fem: <i>her, she</i> (very rare) neuter: <i>its, hits</i>	<i>their, they</i>
absolute forms		
1 <sup>st</sup> person	<i>mine</i>	<i>our 'n, ours</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	<i>yourn</i>	
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	<i>hisn, his, hern, hers</i>	
reflexive		
1 <sup>st</sup> person	<i>myself</i>	<i>ourselves, ourself, us ownse 'fs</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	<i>yourself</i>	<i>youahseves</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	<i>himself, hissself, his own self, hese 'f, herself, itself</i>	<i>theyselves, dey ownse 'fs, theirselves, themselves</i> (very rare)

In some sources it might be likely to encounter isolated cases of creole forms, such as *he* with female reference, or *we* both as personal (subject and object) and possessive pronoun (ESR, Schneider 1989: 175; note, however, that the informant is Wallace Quarterman, a native speaker of Gullah.).

Demonstrative pronouns are *this* and *these* for near reference, sometimes used in combination with *here*. For distant reference *that* and *them* are the norm. *Those* occurs only rarely (Schneider 1989: 174–175).

A very widespread pattern in the realm of pronouns is pronominal apposition, in which a noun phrase is immediately followed by a pronoun (*Marse Peter he makes a speech.*). This feature seems to be favored by definite human noun phrases in subject position and is almost exclusively restricted to 3<sup>rd</sup> person contexts (Schneider 1989: 186–191).

#### 4. Major issues in current research

The three main interests in current research are the discovery and validation of sources that might represent earlier stages of AAVE (see section 2 above), quantitative analyses to prove or disprove creole and/or British dialect connections, and – closely related to this – the investigation of the divergence claim. This section surveys the latter two.

The origins of AAVE “loom large in the discussion of the development of African-American Vernacular English” (Rickford 1998: 154). Traditionally, creolists and dialectologists had opposing views. The former held that AAVE started out as a full-fledged creole similar to the ones spoken, for example, in the Caribbean today, while the latter saw AAVE just as a dialect of English which the newly arrived slaves acquired from their masters or the white people they worked with. (References for both views appear on the CD-ROM.) This dichotomy is, however, not a categorical one. The dialectologists have never “excluded the possibility of a previous creole stage of Black English, especially with respect to the initial stages of slavery, nor have they denied the existence of African or creole remnants in the present-day dialect” (Schneider 1989: 25). On the contrary, most creolists admit that some influence of white speech on black “is clearly to be expected, but the degree and importance of this influence is thought to be relatively limited” (Schneider 1989: 25).

The topicality of this debate is exemplarily reflected in two recently published volumes: Rickford (1999) represents a moderate version of the creolists’ view, Poplack (2000) and associates aim at documenting the “English History of African-American English”. It seems that varying opinions towards the development of AAVE are strongly a matter of degree and largely depend on the focus of the respective investigation. Rickford (1998: 189) argues “that *at least some* of the predecessors of modern AAVE arose from a restructuring process similar to that

which produced the English-based creoles” (my emphasis). Quite differently, the group around Poplack emphasizes that the development of the grammatical core of present-day AAVE is entirely English. To some extent, the two approaches are complementary. Taken together, AAVE developed out of an English grammatical core, but has been steadily reshaped – at least in fringe sections of its grammar – by creole or substrate influences from outside or by creolization or imperfect second language learning from within.

What is necessary to put at the center of the discussion, however, is to realize that AAVE used to be much more heterogeneous in its early days than it is today (cf. Mufwene 2000; Kautzsch and Schneider 2000); and an integrative approach that takes into account both sides is most likely to deliver the most accurate assessment of the status and the evolution of AAVE.

The second big issue is the claim that present-day AAVE is structurally becoming more and more different from other varieties of English, which is usually referred to as the “divergence hypothesis” (For references see CD-ROM.) From a socio-political point of view, divergence means that, although attempts have been made to integrate black people into mainstream US society, the segregation of the ethnic groups in the US is still great. On the other hand, this tendency can also be seen as “part of a symbolic statement of today’s young people of awareness and pride of their African American identity” (Rickford 1999: Preface xiii). The central linguistic features that are assumed to be divergent – which means that they are proportionally increasing in number – are invariant *be*, the deletion of third singular and possessive *-s* and of the copula. On the contrary, some features are also reported to remain stable or in fact converge with the white ones, as for example plural and past marking. (For a tabular survey of stable, converging and diverging features cf. Wolfram’s survey in this volume.)

As far as methods are concerned, it is necessary to “go back in time, both to the historical records and as far as possible to all of the other available evidence to see what was going on” (Rickford 1997: 60). This brings us back to one of the central statements of this article: what we can learn about Earlier AAVE is only as good as the sources we use.

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# Gullah: morphology and syntax\*

Salikoko S. Mufwene

## 1. Introduction

Gullah is one of the offspring of English spoken primarily among descendants of Africans on the coastal marshlands and islands of South Carolina and Georgia in the United States. Like its speakers, it has also been identified by the derogative name *Geechee*. Linguists have characterized it as a creole, and even stipulated it to be a separate language, but to its native speakers and this author, it is as much English as other nonstandard dialects that evolved concurrently with it. These include African American vernacular English (AAVE, spoken among African Americans elsewhere), Appalachian English, and Old Amish English, among others which are also socially stigmatized.

A reason commonly invoked to set Gullah apart from other North American English varieties is that it is not intelligible to speakers of other English varieties. However, mutual intelligibility is not a reliable criterion for determining whether a particular language variety is a dialect of a language or a separate language. Besides, there are numerous English dialects that are not intelligible to many other speakers, including the classic case of Cockney, which nobody has ever claimed to be a separate language.

Another reason is that Gullah is contact-based, as is putatively made evident by the several structural features it shares with Caribbean English creoles, as illustrated in section 2. However, the history of European immigrations to English North America suggests that all English varieties that developed in the relevant colonies are contact-based (Mufwene 2001). It is also highly debatable whether creoles can be characterized as a special type of languages based on their typological features alone and whether, in the first place, the features they share are due primarily to the non-English contributions to their developments.

Linguists have generally professed to following the sentiments of native speakers in determining whether a particular variety is a dialect or a separate language. Ironically, the same principle has not been followed in the case of creoles (and pidgins). Linguists have typically disregarded the fact that most of their users say they speak English (albeit a nonstandard and stigmatized variety) or any other relevant European language. Gullah and the like can very well be considered disfranchised varieties of Germanic and other Indo-European languages.

Unlike its sister AAVE, whose origins can be associated with the tobacco and cotton plantations of the American southeast, Gullah developed on the large South

Carolinian and Georgian coastal rice fields of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, a few decades after the first British colonists and their African slaves settled in Charleston, from Barbados, in 1670. The earliest written attestations of it date from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, in William Gilmore Simms' *The book of my lady* (1833), although there are reports in 18<sup>th</sup>-century colonial newspapers of some runaway slaves speaking "broken" English, especially those who had been on the plantations for a few months only.

Given all the negative attitudes toward Africans since the beginnings of the American colonization by the English, the fact that Gullah remained undocumented for so long—although it must have started diverging from other American Southern English varieties in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century—reflects a number of factors, including the following:

- (1) American English has always been spoken variably among (descendants of) Africans, as among (those of) Europeans. Interpreted as a continuum of basilectal and lower mesolectal varieties relative to the national or some regional standard variety, Gullah is not spoken by all the native coastal African Americans identified by the same name, not any more than AAVE can be associated with all African Americans in other parts of the USA, or southern English with all White Southerners.
- (2) During the earlier colonial times, especially during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, most of the locally-born African Americans must have spoken like the locally-born White Americans with whom they grew up and interacted regularly in the same homestead. Before major plantations had developed, the Africans were generally minorities, the societies were not rigidly segregated, and all adults joined efforts to survive the harsh challenges of life in their new physical ecology. Note that the earliest forms of colonial English must have been as proletarian as most of their European speakers, who were often destitute and from the lowest ranks of the European societies.
- (3) As observed in Mufwene (2001), Gullah as an ethnolect spoken by a significant proportion of locally born descendants of Africans was probably not identifiable as a distinct variety before the second quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, after the rice plantations increased in size and number. Then, their slave labor increased more by importation than by birth (Wood 1974; Edgar 1998), the population turnover was rapid, and language was being transmitted to learners more from non-native than from native speakers. This fostered more and more room for substrate elements to influence Gullah's divergence away from other American southern varieties, although in many, if not most, cases the influence meant favoring particular variants of colonial English that would be disfavored in the other varieties. For instance, this appears to have been the case in the selection of preverbal *duhz/does* [dəz] as a marker of habitual activities, as in *how you duhz cook hog maw?*, of preverbal *duh* [də] as the

durative marker, and of the pronunciations of *bear* and *carry* as [b<sup>h</sup>ɛ] and [k<sup>h</sup>a:] respectively.

Specifics about how the divergent restructuring proceeded away from other varieties remain as controversial as regarding the development of creoles in general. The traditional explanation in terms of language contact raises more interesting questions than it provides conclusive answers to them. The attribution of its divergence to the particular influence of the Black African languages that had been spoken by the slaves who developed it (Turner 1949) would be less controversial if the African languages were typologically homogeneous and if one did not have to account for the competition and selection mechanisms that favor some particular substrate influences over other competitors. While substrate influence seems obvious, determining how it prevailed, and whether it could have done so if there had not been particular congruent features in colonial English itself remain open questions (Mufwene 2001).

## 2. Gullah and Atlantic Creoles

Gullah has been identified as a Creole for a number of reasons, chiefly because it evolved under socio-economic conditions similar to other new nonstandard vernaculars of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans called creoles. As noted above, it also shares several structural features with these vernaculars. Moreover, its primary speakers are of African descent, just like those of the other vernaculars previously identified as creoles. However, the term *creole* itself is unknown to its speakers and has not been used locally in the histories of South Carolina and of Georgia to designate either the locally born populations of non-indigenous stock or this new language variety. It was assigned to Gullah, as to other such English vernaculars, by linguists, on the mistaken assumption that creoles have evolved by nativization from erstwhile pidgins. This assumption is supported by no shred of evidence from the socio-economic histories of the territories where creoles and pidgins developed, viz., settlement and trade colonies, respectively (Mufwene 2001).

Among the features that Gullah shares with other Atlantic English creoles are the following, some of which are discussed more informatively in Part 3: 1) extensive use of preverbal free morphemes, rather than verbal inflections for tense and aspect (e.g. *bin* for past or past of past, *go/ga* [gə] for future, *duh* [də] for progressive, and *done* ‘finish’ for perfect); 2) partial gender and case distinctions in the pronominal systems (thus *him* is used for all three genders and is used both as object and subject); 3) use of *say* not only as in English but also as a complementizer (e.g. *we hear say you gone to da city* ‘we heard that you [were] gone to the city’); 4) use of *fu*h [fə] (from English *for*) as a non-factive complementizer (as in *we tell um fu*h *come* ‘we told him to come’); 5) modal use of *fu*h (as in *Fonzo bin fu*h



come 'Fonzo had/was expected to come'); 6) extensive use of serial verb/predicate constructions (as in *come kyah me to d'hospital* 'come and take me to the hospital'); 7) use of an invariant relativizer *weh* derived from *what* (and perhaps also relativizer uses of *where*) in nonstandard English; 8) nonindividuated nouns for generic or mass reference (as in *kyat don eat raw tato* 'a cat does not eat raw potato' or 'cats don't eat raw potato'); 9) common usage of the associative plural (as in *Sara dem very nice people* 'Sara and her family/friends/associates are very nice people'); 10) predicate cleft (as *duh talk he duh talk!* 'he is really talking!'); and 11) similar pronunciations of words such as *oil* [a<sup>3</sup>l], *cat* [k<sup>3</sup>at], *fair* [f<sup>3</sup>ε:], variable stopping of interdental fricatives, and variable [b] or [β] pronunciations of /v/ and /w/ (as in [βεrɪ βεl] 'very well').

Some of these similarities are only partial and in fact there is no fixed set of features that a vernacular must have of necessity to be identified as a creole. For instance, 1) Gullah has an indefinite article *a* (pronounced only as [ə]) where other English creoles use the singular quantifier *one*; 2) it actually has a schwa (which is not attested in Caribbean creoles); 3) it uses prenominal *dem* (as in *dem boy*) both with the meaning 'those boys' and the meaning 'the boys', whereas Jamaican Creole uses prenominal *dem* for the plural demonstrative meaning only and has *di* + Noun + *dem* for definite plural; 4) it has a wider set of negators (*aint*, *don*, and narrow-scope *no* within a noun phrase) where Jamaican Creole, for instance, uses only *no*; 5) it has a special habitual marker *duhz*, which only Guyanese Creole has been reported to have (in the form of *doz*, because it has no schwa); and 6) it also has the option of using *tuh/to* [tə] (often voiced to [də]) to introduce non-factive verb phrases (e.g., *Uh start duh run* 'I started to run'), as well as 7) that of omitting the complementizer *fuh* or *tuh* after the verbs *want*, *start*, and *try* (as in *Uh try tell um* 'I tried to tell him').

Gullah shares some of these features that distinguish it from other English creoles with AAVE and neighboring White English vernaculars, for instance uses of: 1) prenominal *dem* for plural demonstratives; 2) *aint* as a negator in contexts where standard English would use *did not* or *have/has not* in full or contracted form; 3) an indefinite article *a* which need not become *an* when the noun starts with a vowel; 4) *yall* as a more common second person plural pronoun (instead of *unu/una* which is not the dominant variant in other Atlantic creoles either); and 5) invariant *be* for repeated states of affairs (as *he be so sick/ staring at me*). One can actually also argue that Gullah is a subvariety of African American English spoken where there used to be rice fields, or that it is a separate ethnolect that is structurally between AAVE and Caribbean English creoles. There is no clear structural boundary between Gullah and AAVE. Mufwene (2001) claims that both can be considered regional varieties of African American English, with the former confined to coastal South Carolina and Georgia. In more or less the same spirit, Kautzsch and Schneider (2000) argue for a geographical continuum in which "creole" features decrease as one proceeds inland. Similarities and dif-

ferences between AAVE, Gullah, and Caribbean creoles have hotly been debated since the 1960s.

Differences between Gullah and other Atlantic/Caribbean English creoles have been used to argue that Gullah has “decreolized,” in the sense of losing some illusory common basilect of all English creoles, in the direction of American middle class English. AAVE would putatively be farther along on this trajectory. However, the evolution of English in North America has not been uniform, largely reflecting variation in the patterns of earliest settlements (Founder Effect) and in later population growth.

Further, heeding Labov and Harris (1986), some linguists have concluded that since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century AAVE has been diverging from White Southern English, with which it shares origins (e.g., Bailey and Cukor-Avila forthcoming). Recent forceful arguments for the English origins of several African American English features can be found in, for instance, Poplack (2000). The ongoing divergence is due to decreasing social contacts between White and African Americans and the fact that language also functions as a marker of identity within both ethnic groups. In other words, Gullah and AAVE seem to have emerged as distinct varieties from other American (nonstandard) English vernaculars in the way hypothesized by Chaudenson (2001) and Mufwene (2001) for creoles in general, viz., basilectalizing away from their colonial kin varieties spoken by (descendants of) Europeans, to which they were structurally closer in the earlier stages.

Thus the above similarities and differences, as well as others not discussed here or in the literature, suggest the following conclusions: Gullah developed from English varieties similar to those that evolved into Caribbean English creoles. The family resemblance between them, as among all creoles that developed from the “same” European language, are attributable to ecological differences that favored varying selections into each creole’s system from similar pools of competing variants. The ecologies include, among other factors: the times of settlements, the rates of population growth, the extent of ethnolinguistic diversity and the demographic strengths of particular groups at various colonial stages (especially within the substrate population), inter-group relations, proportions of Europeans and non-Europeans, and time of segregation since the founding of the colony (Mufwene 2001). A number of recurring elements from one setting to another, compounded with convergent shifts to (varieties of) the same language, account for the similarities.

### **3. Gullah’s structures**

This part focuses on various morphosyntactic features that have been discussed by various scholars, mostly myself, since Turner’s (1949) pioneering and seminal linguistics study. Unfortunately none of them will be cited here. More interested readers can consult dissertations and publications since the 1970s by Irma

Cunningham, Patricia Jones-Jackson, Patricia Nichols, Katherine Mille, Tometro Hopkins, Tracey Weldon, and myself (listed in the comprehensive bibliography on CD.) Space limitations naturally constrain both the number of grammatical peculiarities discussed below and the depth of the discussions themselves. Examples are from my own fieldwork data, some cited with informant initials and the year of fieldwork.

There are many ways in which Gullah has preserved structures that are English, for instance, the basic major constituent order in a sentence is Noun Phrase (NP) + Verb Phrase (VP), although the rule that inverts the order of the subject NP and an auxiliary verb in interrogative main clauses does not apply. Questions are typically marked by intonation, especially those starting with a *wh*-phrase or *aint* ([ɛ<sup>y</sup>n(t)], [ɛ̃], [ɪnɪ] < *aint it*), as in *Ain/Inni you see Al yes 'day?* 'Didn't you see Al yesterday?' (literally, 'Isn't it true/the case that you saw Al yesterday?'). In such a sentence *aint/inni* has scope over the whole sentence, in more or less the same way as the French *n'est pas que* does, as in *N'est-ce pas que tu as vu Al hier?* The other kind of negative question, which happens to have the same surface structure in non-creole English would be *You ain see Al yes 'day?* The wider scope *aint/inni* can co-occur with another *ain* or any other negator inside the sentence, as in *Ain you ain see Al yes 'day?* 'Isn't it true/the case that you didn't see Al yesterday?' or *Aint you don buy grits?* 'Isn't it the case that you don't buy grits?'

The object NP still follows the verb, and within the NP, the order is still Det(erminer) + Adj(ective) + N(oun) + Modifying clause. Gullah strands prepositions and does not pied-pipe them, just like nonstandard English dialects, in which constructions such as *the boy to whom I spoke* are not typical. And indeed it has prepositions and no postpositions. It has also preserved the category Adj, though adjectives are used without a copula in the predicative function, as in *Robert very tall* or *Robert taller 'n Faye* or *April more puhty* 'April [is] prettier'. Substrate influence can be identified in some details of the grammar, such as the complete obliteration of Subject + Verb Concord, uses of the same pronominal forms in subject and possessive functions, and uses of *done* pre- or post-verbally to mark nuances of perfect (see below), although such influence must be more from Kwa-like languages than from Bantu (in which the possessive pronoun is clearly marked as such and follows the head noun). Overall substrate influence in Gullah is the strongest where there was at least partial congruence between the feature of some colonial English dialect and its counterpart in some African languages. There is little in Gullah's structural system that does not have a (partial) model in some nonstandard English dialect.

Though the following discussion will focus on those respects in which Gullah differs from other English dialects, one need not jump to the conclusion that these domains of divergence justify identifying it as a creole. As noted above, creoles differ among themselves in regard to the structural features that make them different from other offspring of the same European languages they have evolved from.

The identification of some new colonial vernaculars as creoles seems to have had to do more with who their speakers are than with the particular kinds of restructuring that have produced them.

### 3.1. The noun phrase

One of the things that first caught my attention about Gullah's structures is the use of nouns in non-individuated form (i.e., without a determiner and number suffix) not only for mass reference, as in *he don eat hog maw* 'he/she does not eat hog maw', but also for generic or non-specific reference as in the following examples:

- (1) a. *you gwine cut it with knife?*  
 'Are you going to cut it with **a knife** (not assumed known to the addressee)?'
- b. *all he do is chase ooman*  
 'all he does is chase **women**/all he did was chase women'
- c. *You ever see cat eat raw tato skin?*  
 'Have you ever seen a cat eat raw potato skin?'

Worth noting in this connection is also the fact that Gullah marks nominal plural sometimes as in other English varieties, by attaching the plural suffix {S} to the noun. This practice, which has nothing to do with decreolization, is common in the mesolect, which is the variety spoken by the vast majority of its speakers, a phenomenon that is true of other creole-speaking territories, as observed by Rickford (1990). However, in the basilect, nominal plural is marked by preposing *dem* to the noun, as in *dem boy*, with the ambiguous meaning 'the boys' or 'those boys'. Co-occurrence with the plural suffix {S} is also common, making Gullah similar to other American nonstandard English varieties on the particular parameter of nominal pluralization. The plural marker is typically missing when the noun is modified by a numeral quantifier, as in *four boy(s)*, though constructions such as *four chillun* 'four children' and *four people* (with suppletive plural forms) are common. Evidence that nominal *dem* is a portmanteau morpheme for both plural and definite is provided by the ill-formedness of \**four dem boy(s)*, as opposed to *dem four boy(s)*. Gullah is also well known for its associative plural, in which a proper name or a definite NP is followed by (*an'*) *dem* or (*an'*) *nem* to associate the definite referent with a specific group, such as family, friends, and colleagues. When the head noun is a proper name, *an* 'and' is often omitted, as in *Sara (an') dem/nem*.

Regarding personal pronouns, Gullah's basilect diverges from its Jamaican and Guyanese counterparts in particular. For the first person singular, it has the subjective form *Uh* [ʌ], the objective form *me*, which also alternates in the possessive function with the more common variant *muh* [mʌ] (English *my*). The second per-

son pronoun is *you*, which remains the same in all syntactic functions. It commonly assumes the form *ye* [yi] in the possessive function, as in *ye buba* ‘your brother’. The unmarked pronominal form for the third person singular is *(h)e*, regardless of gender. It becomes *(h)im* or *um* [ʌm] in the objective function but remains *he* in the possessive. When used as the object of the verb *see*, *um* fuses with it in the stereotypical form *shum* [ʃʌm]. There is, however, also the gender-specific pronoun *she*, which remains the same in all syntactic functions. In addition, the pronoun *it* behaves more or less like *she*, except that it seems to merge with *(h)e* in the possessive function. It is thus partly inaccurate to claim that Gullah’s pronominal system is gender-less in the third person singular. Only *(h)e* and *(h)im/um* are gender-neutral. *She* and *I(t)* are gender-specific.

In the first person plural, *we* occurs in the subject function but alternates in the object function with *us*. In the possessive function the allomorph *our*, typically pronounced [a<sup>w</sup>] is used. Although the variant *you* is also used for second person plural (with the same distribution as the singular), the more common one is *yall* [yɔ:l], as in other American South nonstandard English varieties, with *yall’s* as the possessive. There is also the celebrated variant *(h)una* [(h)ənə] ~ [unə], which I have encountered only in stereotypical discourse produced in performances. The third person plural pronoun is *deh* [dɛ:], attested in the subject and possessive functions, and *dem* [dɛm] which occurs in the subject and object functions. Its weaker variant *em* [ɛm] is attested only in the object function.

With the exception of *yall’s*, all the above pronouns combine with *own* to express possession elliptically, viz., *my/muh own* ‘mine’, *you own* ‘yours’, *he/she own* ‘his/hers/its’, *we/ou’ own* ‘ours’, and *deh own* ‘theirs’. To form the reflexive, the morpheme *se(l)f* is added to whatever form also occurs in the possessive function, except *yall’s*, viz., *meself/muhsel*, *yousel/yesel*, *hesel/shesel*, *wesel/ourself*, and *dehsel/demsel*.

### 3.2. Relative clauses

It is useful to distinguish between factive and non-factive/purposive relative clauses. The latter are introduced by the complementizer *fuh*, as in *a book fuh da chillun (fuh/tuh) read* ‘a book for the children to read’. Factive relative clauses are introduced by a null complementizer or by *weh* [wɛ], from English *what*, pronounced [wæt] in some dialects and also used as a relativizer in some nonstandard English varieties, as in *everything what Alison said* ‘everything that Alison said’. This example corresponds to *everything (weh) Alison say* in Gullah. Moreover, *weh* also occurs in more or less the same form as an interrogative, as in *Weh/Way he tell you?* ‘What did he tell you?’.

The relativizer *weh* seems to function as a complementizer. When the relativized noun is the object of a preposition, this must be stranded, never pied-piped, as illustrated below:

- (2) a. *a knife fuh cut da meat wi'*  
 'a knife to cut the meet with'  
 a'. \**a knife wi' weh fuh cut da meat*  
 'a knife with which to cut the meat'  
 b. *da gyal (weh) Clinton duh look at*  
 'the girl (that) Clinton is looking at'  
 b'. \**da gyal at weh Clinton duh look*  
 'the girl at whom Clinton is looking'

When the relativized noun has a possessive function, a resumptive pronoun is needed in the construction:

- (3) a. *da man (weh) he wife die laas week*  
 'the man whose wife died last week'  
 b. *da ooman (weh) Uh meet he son*  
 'the woman whose son I met'

On the other hand, the relativized noun is gapped, along with the preposition *than*, as in other syntactic contexts, when it is the object of a comparative. The preposition *than* can be retained only when there is a resumptive pronoun.

- (4) a. *T's only ting weh covetin happier*  
 'It's [the] only thing that coveting is happier than' (AS, 1986)  
 b. *Teddy da man (weh) everybody taller than \*(him)* (AS, 1986)

The relative pronoun can also be omitted when the relativized NP is a subject, thus producing a contact relative clause, as in *Dis da young man come 'eyah las' week* (MI, 1986) 'This is the young man [who/that] came here last week'. Such facts underscore the fact that Gullah has evolved from nonstandard English, rather than from a standard variety.

### 3.3. Tense, mood, and aspect

Like other English varieties, Gullah expresses mood through modal verbs or the absence thereof. The verbs are the same, except that some of them are pronounced differently and have their own morphosyntactic peculiarities. The modal *can* is often pronounced as [kin] and its negative as [kɛː]. In past contexts, it becomes *could*, *couldn't*, or *coulda* (< *could've* < *could have*). Its syntax is the same as in other English varieties.

The modal *must* works in basically the same way as in other English varieties too (with the negator following it, in a contracted form). When it is used epistemically, it is often followed by *be* as in (5), where *must be* either precedes the main verb or occurs sentence-initially:

- (5) a. *Deh must be put um deh.*  
 ‘They must have put it there.’  
 b. *Must be deh put um deh.*

The combination may well be interpreted as an adverb, like *maybe*, but it has not been subjected to any syntactic tests. There are some cases in which the subject is repeated after *must* as in the following sentence:

- (6) *When Uh first start buyin chicken, e mus’ e bin about two cents a pound.*  
 ‘When I first stated buying chicken, it must have been about two cents a pound.’ (MI, 1986)

There are also combinations of *must be* and *could(a)* in my data, as in:

- (7) *Dem gata must be coulda go fast.*  
 ‘Those alligators must have been able to go/move fast.’ (EL, 1988)

Such a combination suggests that Gullah may not have an infinitive or a clearcut finite/nonfinite distinction. The modal *can* certainly does not have an infinitival alternative. The negation in the above example would be *must be couldn’ go fast* ‘must not have been able to go/move fast’. If *must be* is treated as a phrasal or compound modal, then this example also illustrates a double modal use (so far hardly investigated in Gullah).

The modal *will* is seldom heard, because the future marker is *ga* [gə] (see below). On the other hand, *would* and *woulda* ‘would have’ are used, as in other English dialects. It is also negated as *wouldn’*, as in *Uh wouldn’ tell a damn lie* (JR, 1988). The auxiliaries *may* and *might(a)* are also attested in Gullah, with no particular idiosyncrasies to report here. Noteworthy are also attestations of the modal *have*, often in the form [hæ] ‘have, had’ followed by the complementizer *fuh* or *tuh*. Perhaps what distinguishes this vernacular the most from other American English vernaculars is the modal use of *fuh* as below:

- (8) *Jean bin fuh come yes’day*  
 ‘Jean was to/had to/was expected to come yesterday.’

In this respect it is more akin to Caribbean English creoles, in which a similar construction is attested.

Gullah is also closer to Atlantic English creoles in the preverbal morphemes it combines with to mark tense and aspect. When the verb combines with no tense marker, reference is to the past or to a habit if it is non-stative but most likely to the present if it is stative, especially when the contextual domain does not suggest otherwise. The preverbal *bin* denotes anteriority, either past or past of past, depending on the contextual domain of its use. *Bin* is seldom used to express past, as the stativity parameter and the contextual domain provided by the ongoing discourse makes this redundant. Only at the beginning of some discourses would

it be required. Future is expressed with the preverbal marker *ga* or *gwine*. This is negated by preposing *ain* to the verbal construction. It is also a relative tense, because it can be used in some contexts to express future of past, translated by *would* in English (an option also available in Gullah).

Gullah diverges the most from other American (southern) English counterparts by the way it marks aspect. As with tense, the marker is a free preverbal morpheme. The progressive, also known as durative in creolistics, is expressed with *duh* [də] followed by a verb stem or by a present participle. The latter can also be used alone for the same purpose. Thus one can ask ‘How are you doing’ in three different ways: *How you duh do?* *How you duh doin?* or *How you doin?* (However, the phrase *Uh duh tell you!* ‘I am telling you the truth!’/‘I am not lying!’ occurs only in this idiomatic form.) The verb phrase is understood in this case as stative and the tense can be present or past, depending on context. It is negated with *ain*, as in *he ain duh talk at all* ‘he is not talking at all’. The origin of the marker seems to lie in Southwestern British English, in which periphrastic *do*, deeply rooted since Middle English and also pronounced unstressed as [də], appears to have been used similarly for both progressive and habitual states of affairs (Pargman 2002).

But Gullah is unlike most American English varieties and even some Caribbean creoles in having a specific habitual marker *duhz* [dəz], as in *How you duhz cook hog maw* (EL, 1988) ‘How **do you/did you use to** cook hog maw?’ It is also negated with *ain*, as in *You ain duhz make no hog cheese?* (EL, 1988) ‘Didn’t you make any hog cheese?’. Its tense may be universal or past, depending on the discourse context of its use. This feature, also attested in Newfoundland English, has the same origins as *duh*, though its selection may clearly have been influenced by the semantics of many black African languages which delimit verbs with different morphosyntactic devices for habits and non-habits. Like other creoles, Gullah can thus be a useful window into colonial English, from which it developed. This habitual construction should not be confused with the consuetudinal *be + V-in* /Adj/PrepP construction, *Faye be eatin* /*sick every time I visit*, which does not denote repeated activities but repeated states of affairs, which can be states or processes. The consuetudinal is used in the same way as in AAVE.

Gullah shares with Atlantic English creoles and some nonstandard American English varieties (such as Appalachian English: Christian, Dube and Wolfram 1988) the use of perfect *done* [dʌn], as in *Uh done eat dat one (already)* ‘I ate/have eaten that one (already)’. As in other nonstandard English varieties, it conveys some emphasis on the completion of the activity or its relevance to the reference time. Unlike in other nonstandard English dialects, it is not necessarily followed by a verb in the past tense or past participle. It often combines with the verb stem for exactly the same meaning. It also combines with stative verb phrases as in *he brother done dead* ‘his brother is already dead’ and *Uh kin tell you wha I done been tru* (JR, 1988) ‘I can tell you what I have been through’. It can also modify a



verb phrase already delimited with the tense marker *bin* as in *Uh done bin finish* ‘I finished a long time ago’. Unlike in white nonstandard English varieties, there is no particular evidence in Gullah that would suggest deletion of an underlying *have* or *be* in contexts where *done* is used. The interpretation of its tense is also relative, depending on the discourse context. Another interesting peculiarity is that *done* can be used post-verbally, as in *Uh eat/talk done* ‘I have eaten/spoken [and I don’t intend to do so again]’. It implicates completion with no intention on the part of the subject to re-engage him/herself in the activity.

The grammatical behavior of *done*, which is a cognate of English participial adjective *done* ‘finished’ (not the auxiliary *do*), is made possible by the fact that Gullah does not require that all predicate phrases be headed by a verb in the surface structure. It is also in the same way that the purposive preposition *for/fuh* could develop a modal use, as illustrated above in (8). In overtly anterior contexts, they can also be modified by *bin*, as in *Peter bin done dead when I come back* ‘Peter had already died when I came back’.

### 3.4. Negation and focus

Another interesting aspect of Gullah’s morphosyntax is its strategies for negation. Not counting the frozen negative forms of modal auxiliaries (discussed above), it differs from Caribbean creoles in having more than one basic negator: *ain*, *don*, *didn*, and *no*. Unlike in Jamaican and Guyanese Creoles, for instance, *no* has only two functions: 1) a wide-scope negator in elliptical, or at the beginning of, answers to *yes/no* questions; and 2) a NP-internal narrow-scope negator, as in *no hog cheese*. *Didn* is used in PAST contexts, where Jamaican Creole favors *neba* with the non-emphatic meaning ‘did not’. *Don* is used in two contexts: 1) in imperative sentences, as in *Don le’ da’ bread get cold on you* (ER, 1988) and *we tell um fuh don come* ‘we told him/her not to come’; 2) in habitual sentences, as in *da’ duh som’um Uh don buy* (JR, 1988) ‘that’s something I don’t buy’. In all other cases, the sentence, wide-scope negator is *ain*, as in the following examples:

- (9) a. *She ain tell um*  
       ‘She did not tell him/She has not told him.’
- b. *Uh ain ga go nowhere*  
       ‘I won’t go anywhere.’ (JR, 1988)
- c. *Uh ain bin a take no chance on da’ road*  
       ‘I didn’t take any chances on that road.’ (JR, 1988)
- d. *People ain duh plant no tato now*  
       ‘People weren’t planting/didn’t plant any potatoes now/then.’  
       (JR, 1988)
- e. *Yall ain duhz make no hog cheese?*  
       ‘Didn’t you make any hog cheese?’ (EL, 1988)

Like other nonstandard English varieties, it has negative concord, as in *Uh ain go nowhere*, and *nobody ain go nowhere*. *Aini* also functions as an invariant tag question marker, similar to colloquial English *right?*, London Jamaican *ini?*, French *n'est-ce pas?*, and German *nicht wahr?*. Examples include the following:

- (10) a. *Yall didn buy no clothes from town, inni?*  
 'You didn't buy (any) clothes from the city, did you?' (EL, 1988)
- b. *You ain know Harry, inni?*  
 'You didn't/don't know Harry, did/do you?' (JR, 1988)
- c. *You be cookin up all kine o' ting, inni?*  
 'You would be cooking all kinds of things, wouldn't you?'  
 'You've been cooking all kinds of things, haven't you?' (EL, 1988)

Finally, *ain* also functions as a negative focus marker in the following examples:

- (11) a. *Ain nobody ga worry wid you*  
 'There's nobody/There isn't anybody that will worry with you.'  
 (JR, 1988)
- b. *Ain Sara we duh talk 'bout; duh Faye we duh talk 'bout.*  
 'It's not Sara we are talking about; it's Faye we are talking about.'

A sentence such as (12) is ambiguous between a negative concord interpretation and double-negation interpretation. Only the discourse context can clarify such ambiguities.

- (12) *Ain nobody ain go deh*
- a. 'There isn't anybody/There's nobody who went there.'
- b. 'There isn't anybody/There's nobody who has not gone there.'

Positive focus constructions are marked with sentence-initial *duh*, as in *duh Sara we duh talk 'bout* 'it's Sara we are talking about'. This is similar to its translated English cleft construction. The only difference is that it allows bare verb stems in the cleft-focus position, as in *duh talk he (bin) duh talk* 'he/she was really talking (in an unusual kind of way)'. VPs are not acceptable in the cleft-focus position: *\*duh talk to me he de talk*. This constraint is similar to the restriction of preposition phrases from such constructions: *\*duh 'bout Sara we duh talk* is also ill-formed. The focused verb appears to occur in this position as a NP derived with a zero suffix (by simple category shifting). A similar construction is attested in several substrate languages, both Kwa and Bantu. Moreover, English allows similar verbal clefts, which must be nominalized through the gerund, as in *it's singing he prefers to playing a musical instrument*. The name Verb/Predicate Clefting by which the construction is identified in creoles is thus a misnomer which suggests misguided contrasts between English and Gullah in this respect, though there are some having to do, for instance, with how the verb is nominalized.

## 3.5. Serial verb constructions (SVCs)

Far from being a misnomer is the combination of verbs identified as serial verb/predicate construction. It consists of verb or predicate phrases concatenated without connectives between them and sharing an argument whose function can be the same (typically subject) or different (typically object of the head verb and subject of the second, serial verb). Examples include:

- (13) a. *Uh run go home.*  
 'I ran home.' (JM, 1987)
- b. *He up deh duh hammer on da' leg.*  
 'He [was] up there, hammering on that leg.' (PR, 1987)
- c. *Uh tell um stop.*  
 'I told him [to] stop.' (LW, 1987)
- d. *Uh ga see d' doctor fix medicine fuh me.*  
 'I will see the doctor to fix [some] medicine for me.' (JM, 1987)

In (13a-b), the two predicate phrases share the subject; the only differences are that the head predicate in (13b) is a preposition, which Gullah grammar allows to head a predicate phrase, the second predicate phrase is modified by a progressive marker. There are no participial forms, with uses similar to the English translation, in Gullah's basilect. In (13c-d) the object of the head verb functions as the subject of the serial verb. This construction also illustrates the fact that tense is indicated only once in a serial predicate construction. It functions as a syntactic unit which can be modified only by one negator, as in *Uh ain know fix da bread with water* (JM, 1987) 'I don't know how to bake bread with water'.

This is an aspect of creoles' grammars where substrate influence has been considered incontrovertible since Turner (1949). However, English also has constructions such as *go get the paper* and *come play with me*. The role of partial congruence between, on the one hand, the African SVCs and, on the other, this infinitival construction and the gerundive ones in, for instance, *go fishing* and *start working*, should not be discounted a priori in the development of this grammatical characteristic. The fact that most verbal inflections were lost during the development of creoles must have contributed to the wider attestations of SVCs. In any case, English varieties which evolved in settings without a significant presence of African languages do not have the wide range of SVCs attested in Gullah and its creole kin of the Caribbean, including the complementizer use of *say*, as in *she answer say she mama ain come* or *we hear say Bill ain ga come* discussed in Mufwene (1989, 1996).

#### 4. Conclusions

The above information in section 3 gives us a glimpse of a subset of Gullah's structures, highlighting both differences and similarities between it and other non-standard English varieties in the United States. Most comparisons have been in relation to Standard English and have given the unjustified impression that Gullah has diverged from English almost beyond recognition. Compared to other non-standard English varieties, it is hard to determine which variety has diverged the most; nor is it certain that one can measure the extent of divergence in ways suggested by the creolistics literature.

Colonial English was variable and also contained xenolectal features, even among the European speakers. One must remember that Ireland, which provided a lot of indentured servants, was just beginning to become an Anglophone country in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as it was becoming geographically the closest of England's settlement colonies. Besides, the other colonists came from outside the British Isles and also spoke English as a second language. The Africans who were shifting to English as their vernacular, and those acquiring it natively, were not always able to tell which European linguistic models were native and which ones were not. One can simply imagine a setting, such as in colonial Africa and Asia, in which learners appropriate a language from other non-native speakers and the European speakers are somewhat privileged. Moreover, there were no English language classes and the target language was being "acquired" only naturalistically, by immersion in the society. Even the native models varied among themselves, representing diverse dialects from the British Isles.

From a language evolution perspective, some important questions arise: 1) What are the mechanisms that regulated the competition of features between English and the other languages with which it came in contact, within English itself, and among the other languages? 2) Was competition always resolved? 3) Why isn't Gullah more different from the other American English varieties than it is? This question is significant because race segregation was institutionalized the earliest on the coastal rice plantations, to protect the Europeans from the black majority which obtained already in the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Wood 1974). 4) What is the actual nature of substrate influence in Gullah and how extensive is it?

The answer to the first question cannot be formulated straightforwardly and succinctly in the space available here. Nor can our current understanding of the mechanisms of competition and selection within a language contact feature pool answer it exhaustively. Suffice it to note that ecology-based principles of markedness, population structure, and relative degree of entrenchment of some features (having to do with the founder population) seem to have played important roles during the gradual development of this new vernacular (Mufwene 2001). The answer to the second question is obvious. Current variation in Gullah's system suggests that the competition was not always resolved.

As for the third question, the fact that Gullah's structures have remained so English(-like) despite its divergence can be explained in part by the growth pattern of the African population relative to the European population. The homestead phase produced a critical mass of non-European native speakers who would become the transmitters of the colonial vernacular even after the institutionalization of race segregation. Many of the locally-born slaves had access to varieties diverging the least from those spoken by the Europeans. They continued to offset the extent of non-native influence that the bozal slaves exerted on the local colonial vernacular. One can imagine this by simply comparing Gullah to varieties such as Sarmaccan and Sranan in Surinam, where contact with native speakers of the colonial vernacular was significantly reduced, if not completely severed, quite early in its history.

Regarding the fourth question, we should start by noting that substrate influence is made difficult to deny because all over the world any language appropriated by a different ethnolinguistic group has changed under the influence of the language(s) previously spoken by its new users. European-American English varieties are a function of how competition and selection were resolved in the various communities, although, as noted by Kurath (1928), regional differences in waves of settlement had a role to play in the process. Thus varieties that developed among groups of Africans necessarily reflect influence from African languages. The structural data suggest that most of the influence may have consisted more in (dis)favoring particular variants in colonial English than in introducing non-lexical materials in the system.

We must bear in mind that favoring some variants also entailed modification of the relevant grammatical principles in ways that made them more similar to those of some substrate languages. Identifying those particular principles and the extent of modification has remained controversial, in part because Gullah's structures, like those of other creoles, have been compared to Standard English rather than to nonstandard varieties. One must also remember that a global comparison of two or more dialects in all grammatical respects is unwarranted, because knowledge of a language is developed piecemeal and selectively, with materials originating in different sources (be these idiolects or dialects). More work and scholarship is thus needed to answer the third question.

While Gullah makes a good case for studying language divergence, the role of race segregation in its development also makes it an informative window into structural features of colonial English. This statement is not intended to support the claim by Krapp (1924) and several other dialectologists of the same period that African Americans have retained the English formerly spoken and now presumably abandoned by the low-class Europeans with whom their ancestors interacted before Emancipation. Gullah is not an archaic conservative variety of colonial English, not any more than any other nonstandard American English dialect is. It only contains features that were current in the varieties spoken during the colonial

period, some of which can also be identified today in some white nonstandard varieties.

**Sample Gullah text from Mufwene's field records (1980s) transcribed in eye dialect:**

JR *You trow way... trow way wha? En one day, Uh gone down deh... en talk bout something bin a bite! Uh bin on dat flat, en Uh had me line, Uh done ketch couple a whitin... Uh say, Uh ga put up da drop net... when Uh look up, duh look from yah to you cah deh, Uh see sompin on da damn side da shoulder comin, like a damn log. Uh watch um, en when Uh see him gone down...*

'You throw away... throw away what? And one day, I went/had gone down there... and talk[ing] about something biting! I was on that flat, and I had my line, I had caught a couple of whiting... I said, "I'll put up the drop net"... when I looked up, [I] was looking from here to your car there, I saw something on the damned side of the shoulder coming like a damned log. I watched it, and when I saw it gone down...'

EL *Hm hm!*

JR *En dat tide bin a comin in... en dat sucker swim close, closer en closer; den Uh look en Uh see dat alligator open e damn mouth!*

'And that tide was coming in... and that sucker swam close, closer and closer, then I looked and saw that alligator open its damned mouth!'

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# Chicano English: morphology and syntax\*

Robert Bayley and Otto Santa Ana

## 1. Introduction

Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States, numbering 37 million in 2000. They are not evenly distributed across the nation, but concentrated in the urban centers of a few states. For example, Latinos make up 32 percent of the population of Texas, and over 59 percent of San Antonio. In Texas, Latinos are overwhelmingly of Mexican origin. For a second example, Latinos comprise 45 percent of Los Angeles County's 9.5 million people. The national origins of Los Angeles Latinos are more varied. In Los Angeles County, for example, 76 percent are of Mexican origin, according to the 2000 census. Although many Mexican-origin Latinos claim English as their sole or dominant language, the varieties of English spoken by Mexican-Americans have received relatively little scholarly attention. More than 20 years ago, Peñalosa observed that "the most obvious discrepancy in the field of Chicano sociolinguistics is that between the extensive use of English in the Chicano community and the paucity of serious studies concerning the varieties of English used by Chicanos" (1980: 115). The situation has improved in recent years with the appearance of a number of dissertations and articles dealing with phonological and grammatical features of Chicano English (see Mendoza-Denton 1999 for a review). Nevertheless, the study of English varieties spoken by Mexican Americans remains a relatively neglected area of sociolinguistic research.

The neglect of Chicano English (henceforth ChcE) may be in part a consequence of the difficulty of defining the limits of the dialect, as well as other questions that do not figure in accounts of English varieties spoken in predominantly monolingual communities. Among these questions are the extent and nature of the influence of the Mexican Spanish substrate, the distinctions between the learner varieties spoken by immigrants and the native varieties spoken by U.S.-born Chicanos and by those who immigrated as young children, and the relationships among the varieties of English spoken by Chicanos and other vernacular dialects. In this chapter, we define ChcE as an ethnic variety of English spoken by people who acquired English as their first language, who acquired English and Spanish simultaneously, or who began to acquire English when they enrolled in elementary school, usually around the age of 5, well before the end of the critical period for second language acquisition. Speakers of ChcE are concentrated primarily in the urban *barrios* of California and the southwestern United States. However, given



the spread of the U.S. Mexican-origin population in recent years, ChcE speakers may also be found in other urban centers, particularly in cities such as Chicago that have long drawn large numbers of Mexican immigrants. Speakers of ChcE may or may not speak Spanish as well as English. Nearly all ChcE speakers, however, live in communities where Spanish is widely spoken and most have at least some passive knowledge of Spanish. Indeed, many ChcE speakers come from families where Spanish is used to varying degrees in the home. Excluded from the definition are people of Mexican ancestry who have fully assimilated into the dominant culture and who speak varieties of the standard language that are indistinguishable from those of middle and upper-middle class Anglos in the same regions.

Our definition of ChcE distinguishes this native-speaker dialect from interlanguages, or the varieties of learner language spoken by native-speakers of Spanish who immigrated to the United States as adolescents or adults. Although we recognize that the widespread use of Spanish in Chicano communities may well influence the English spoken by native English-speaking Chicanos, we reject the notion of interference that has been used to attempt to explain so many of the features of ChcE. In second language acquisition, interference, or transfer, is a psycholinguistic construct that attempts to explain how features of a learner's first language inhibit the acquisition of features of a second language. Such a construct has no relevance for describing a language variety that is the sole or dominant variety of a group of speakers. Since there are ChcE speakers who do not speak any Spanish, Spanish cannot be the proximate source of their native English dialect. Nevertheless, because ChcE speakers are often in daily contact with fluent speakers of Spanish and because many ChcE speakers live in communities where they have only minimal contact with speakers of Anglo varieties, we acknowledge the possible influence of the Spanish substrate on features of ChcE grammar.

In this chapter, we outline the grammatical features of ChcE, many of which are common to other vernacular dialects. Then, because sociolinguistic research has shown that differences or similarities between dialects are determined not so much by the presence of absence of particular forms or grammatical features, but rather by the patterning of constraints on those variants, we discuss two variables, negative concord and relative pronoun choice, that have been systematically investigated using standard sociolinguistic methodology.

## **2. Grammatical features common to ChcE and other dialects**

The majority of ChcE grammatical and syntactic features that diverge from prescriptive norms are also found in other vernacular dialects, including those spoken in non-contact situations. In this section, we summarize the morphological and syntactic features that diverge from Anglo norms and provide examples of each.

Wherever possible, we illustrate the different grammatical features discussed with examples from our own data sets. The San Antonio (SA) and northern California (NC) examples were collected by Bayley and colleagues between 1991 and 2001 in three separate projects. Except where indicated, the Los Angeles (LA) examples were collected by Santa Ana between 1987 and 1991 during several fieldwork projects. In addition to providing information about the area where the examples were collected, we also provide information about speaker gender and age after each example.

## 2.1. The verb phrase

ChcE shares a number of features of the verb phrase with other vernacular dialects, including African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Among these are regularization of irregular verbs, variable absence of 3rd sg. *-s*, and variable use of *is* and *was* with plural subjects:

- (1) Regularization of irregular verbs:  
*When I was little and that teacher hit my hand on my- my upper side of the hand- that when she **striked** me with that, that just blew my mind ...* (SA, f, 30)
- (2) Absence of 3rd sg. *-s*:  
*If somebody **come** up and **push** me then I'll just probably have to push em back or something.* (SA, f, 12)
- (3) *is* with plural subject:  
*And the people that live here **is** ....* (SA, f, 33)
- (4) *was* with plural subject:  
*They **was** like, you know little girls, "what are you doing?"* (SA, f, 29)

In addition to the structures illustrated in (1) through (4), ChcE also exhibits variable absence of past-tense marking:

- (5) *I saw some girl, she, she **look** pretty.* (SA, f, 12)
- (6) *By like the first grade I was already, you know, catching on like **de volada** then after that I **talk** English.* (SA, m, 15)
- (7) *This girl you know she hated me and everything and she was in a different gang than I was, and she had, you know, she went up to the principal go- she **tell** him that I had an illegal weapon.* (SA, f, 15)

Note that (5) and (6) contain examples of unmarked regular past-tense verbs. The absence of past-tense marking of *look* (in 5) and *talk* (in 6) might well be a result of consonant cluster reduction, a phonological process that we have investigated in

detail among both California and Texas Chicanos (Bayley 1994; Santa Ana 1996). In fact, Bayley (1994: 310) found that *-t/-d* was absent from 24 percent of regular past-tense verbs produced by a sample of San Antonio Chicanos. Moreover, unlike many non-contact varieties of English, ChcE does exhibit a fairly high rate of cluster reduction before vowels. In Bayley's study, prevocalic clusters were reduced at a rate of 21 percent (1994: 310). Thus, it seems reasonable to attribute the absence of past-marking in (5) and (6) to a phonological process that is common to virtually all dialects of English. Unmarked past reference *tell* in (7), however, indicates that a frequently-studied phonological process is not the only cause of the variable absence of past-tense marking in ChcE. Clearly, the abundance of past tense forms in the examples throughout this chapter provides evidence that the ChcE speakers, in contrast to English language learners, usually mark past reference verbs. However, as with many other ChcE variables, the possible constraints on past marking have yet to be systematically investigated.

In addition to the features discussed thus far, ChcE also exhibits occasional use of zero copula:

- (8) ... *they* Ø *like*, "you speak a little bit weird" (SA, f, 12)
- (9) *I see so many people dying of diseases and I* Ø *just like tired of it ...* (SA, f, 12)

The two speakers who provided the examples above lived in the overwhelmingly Latino west side of San Antonio and attended a school with a Latino enrollment of 97 percent. Aside from an African American boy with whom they attended school for a year – with whom they did not socialize – neither girl had direct contact with African Americans, who in any case constitute only seven percent of the population of San Antonio.

Like AAVE, ChcE, at least as spoken in Los Angeles, exhibits use of habitual *be*, although at a much lower rate, as in (10):

- (10) *Her name was Sister Dorothy. I used to hate her because it's the same reason. You* ***be doing*** *a classwork in class, and she used to tell me: "Do this".* (LA, f, 18)

Also, like many other vernacular dialects, ChcE provides examples of auxiliary deletion:

- (11) *I* Ø *been doing dancing for a long time, for eight years already.* (SA, f, 12)

In both Los Angeles (Fought 2003: 97–98) and San Antonio, ChcE exhibits variable use of the past perfect where standard English would use a simple past, as well as generalization of past tense irregular verb forms to the past participle:

- (12) *I don't know if it was my son or my nephew that* ***had*** *told me.* (SA, f, 36)

- (13) *It was in the apple that the witch had **gave** Snow White that wasn't poisonous.* (SA, f, 11)

## 2.2. Negation

Like nearly all vernacular dialects of English, ChcE speakers frequently use negative concord:

- (14) *You really **can't** do **nothing** about it because you're on welfare right, and you live here, and you barely make it, right?* (SA, f, 30)
- (15) *I **didn't** see **nothing no more**. I **didn't** have that dream **no more**.* (LA, m, 19)

This feature is one of the few ChcE grammatical structures that has been investigated quantitatively. We describe it in greater detail in section 4 below.

Like negative concord, other aspects of ChcE negation are not especially distinct from those found in other vernacular dialects. Thus, *don't* is variably used with both singular and plural third person subjects, as in (16):

- (16) *She **don't** like it here in the courts and my dad well I'm not sure 'cause he **don't** live with us.* (SA, f, 15)

The acquisition of English negation was one of the earliest topics investigated in modern second language acquisition research (see, e.g., Schumann 1978). To simplify a bit, research has shown that English language acquirers move from NO + V to unanalyzed DONT + V to analyzed DON'T + V. At first glance, then, it might be possible to attribute the type of negation illustrated in (15) to an incomplete acquisition of English negation. However, other data from the same speaker indicate that Spanish interference or incomplete English language acquisition are unlikely explanations for the non-standard use of *don't*. In contrast to what we see in transcripts from language learners, the transcript from this speaker contains numerous instances of conjugated DO+N'T, including both present and past tense forms, as in (17):

- (17) *It **doesn't** matter what color you are but in God's eyes, you know, people should be treated the same.* (SA, f, 15)

Finally, as in other vernacular dialects, ChcE speakers use *ain't* as a negative with present tense *be* and *have*:

- (18) *You fight back 'cause you know they touched you and they **ain't** supposed to do that.* (SA, f, 12)

## 2.3. Direct object absence

ChcE vernacular exhibits occasional use of zero direct objects:

- (19) *He took a bath. I gave him Ø to eat.* (LA, f, 52)
- (20) *I just told [my three year old daughter who surprised her mother by laughingly hanging out of the tailgate window of a moving car]: “Patricia, get inside the car”. Yea. You know I didn’t wanna scare her. I wanted her to get in the car. Then I told my boyfriend: “Close that back window. If you ever open Ø again I’m gonna kill you!”* (LA, f, 40)

Like many of the features exemplified here, this feature has not been studied in detail.

2.4. Quotative *go*, *be like*, *be all*

Among younger speakers, the innovative quotatives *go*, *be like*, and *be all* are common in informal speech, a development that parallels changes in other vernaculars spoken in the United States and elsewhere (Daily-O’Cain 2000). The following examples, which contain numerous tokens of *go*, *be like*, and *be all*, are from two early adolescents and an adult who live in a San Antonio *barrio*. The speakers, who are bilingual in Spanish and English, were born in Texas and attended Texas schools beginning at the age of 5. Aside from teachers or supervisors at work, none has had extensive contact with Anglos:

- (21) *When people wanna fight me I’m like* “well okay, well then I’ll fight you.” (SA, f, 12)
- (22) *Like at the exact moment that we’re supposed to take off, he’ll [her ex-husband] go like*, “I’m not taking you nowhere”. (SA, f, 36)
- (23) *Then some girl goes* “eh they jumped you right?” *And I was like*, “Oh, my god, you had to say that!” *And I was like* “No they didn’t” *And she [the speaker’s mother] was all* “what, what happened?” *I was like*, “uh nothing”. *She’s all*, “J., you better tell me”. *And I had to tell her. And I go* “well don’t, don’t go to my school. If I have to fight then I’ll take care of it, I’ll fight them by myself.” *And she goes* “Well they gave you a ticket J.” *And I, she goes*, “Does Miss A. [the school principal] know?” *So I was like*, “Yes”. (SA, f, 12)

Fought (2003) also discusses the prevalence of *be all* and *be like* among young Chicanos in Los Angeles and provides a number of examples. Although innovative quotatives have yet to be fully investigated in ChcE, preliminary analysis of our data suggests that quotative *go* is used frequently by older and younger speakers and *be like* and *be all* are common among younger speakers in California and

Texas. The widespread use of these innovative forms suggests that even speakers whose social networks are restricted to other Latinos may be more open to linguistic influence from Anglo varieties than previously supposed.

### 2.5. Focuser *like*

The quotatives *be like* and *be all* are used primarily by younger speakers. Focuser *like*, however, is common among ChcE speakers of all generations, as illustrated in the following examples taken from sociolinguistic interviews with speakers ranging in age from 18 to 54.

(24) *I talk to people a lot and a lot of times they're **like** trying to get a word in edgewise.* (SA, f, 18)

(25) *She was **like** a real thin lady.* (LA, m, 52)

(26) *So Nora like she was kind of **like** free, independent.* (N CA, m, 54)

As in the case of quotative *be like* and *be all*, in the popular mind, focuser *like* is strongly associated with the speech of young Anglo women in California (Dailey-O'Cain 2000). However, examples such as those above indicate that the one-dimensional popular conception fails to capture the reality.

### 2.6. Pronouns

In ChcE, *it* is sometimes used in place of *there* as an empty subject pronoun:

(27) *They were saying that they had a lot of problems at Garner because **it** was a lot of fights and stuff.* (SA, m, 35)

Although we have no examples from Texas, Fought (2003: 95) observed a number of non-standard pronouns in Los Angeles ChcE, including *theirselves* in place of *themselves* and *hissself* in place of *himself*. Finally, resumptive pronouns can be found occasionally in the speech of Los Angeles and San Antonio Chicanos, as in (28) and (29):

(28) *I don't think I had a teacher that I didn't really like **him**.* (LA, m, 16)

(29) *I know this lady that **she** used to live here.* (SA, f, 36)

### 3. Features specific to Chicano English

#### 3.1. Reported speech

Wald (1987) investigated reported speech among ChcE speakers in East Los Angeles. He observed three distinctions between ChcE and other vernacular dialects. First, speakers in Wald's study as well as other studies, used *tell* to introduce questions:

- (30) *I told Elinore: "Is that your brother?" She goes: "I don't think so mom".*  
(LA, f, 52)

Second, the East Los Angeles speakers, in contrast to speakers of other vernacular dialects, sometimes extended complementizer *that* to direct speech following *tell*:

- (31) *I told him that "I can't go out with you no more ..."* (Wald 1987: 58)

Third, again in contrast to speakers of other dialects, the East Los Angeles speakers Wald studied used inversion only with *wh*-questions and never with *yes/no* questions:

- (32) a. *He asked me where did I live.*  
b. *He asked did I live there.* (Wald 1987: 60)

#### 3.2. Modals

More recently, Wald (1996) studied modals in East Los Angeles ChcE. Among other issues, Wald examined the use of *would* in *if*-clauses with both stative and non-stative verbs, as in (33):

- (33) *If he'd be here right now, he'd make me laugh.* (Wald 1996: 520)

Owing to the relative rarity of the construction in his data, Wald was only able to analyze a small number of tokens. In the 39 tokens that he did examine, he found that *would* was used much more frequently with non-stative than with stative verbs (Wald 1996: 521–522) and suggested that use of *would* with hypothetical clauses might be more common in ChcE than in other varieties as a result of substrate influence.

Fought (2003) also briefly discusses the use of modals in Los Angeles ChcE. She notes the extension of *could* rather than *can* to mean competence:

- (34) *Nobody believes that you could fix anything.* (Fought 2003: 100)

Fought states that this particular usage was very common in her data. She further notes that it has not been documented for AAVE, does not appear to have any rela-

tionship to Spanish syntactic patterns, and is not found in the speech of the Anglos she interviewed. Thus, this would seem to be an independent innovation in ChcE.

### 3.3. Prepositions

The use of prepositions is one area of ChcE grammar where Spanish influence seems likely:

(35) *And we used to go stand **in** the porch cause they never used to let us in the house. You used to go stand **in** the porch and look at the t.v. through the window.* (LA, f, 52)

(36) *We start **on** July.* (SA, m, 17)

The nonstandard use of *in* in (35) and *on* in (36) appears, superficially at least, to originate in the fact that in Spanish both meanings are expressed by *en*. However, the majority of prepositions in our data are used as they are in standard English, as in (37) and (38):

(37) *I have a sister named Rachel that's **in** eighth grade.* (SA, m, 12)

(38) *I don't like um, what's it called, being **in** clubs and all that.* (SA, f, 12)

To fully understand the use of nonstandard prepositions in ChcE, we need more systematic studies to identify which prepositions are involved and whether particular contexts favor the use of forms that diverge from the surrounding dialect.

### 3.4. Zero subject pronouns

As is well known, Spanish is a pro-drop language. That is, personal subject pronouns may be expressed overtly, as in *Yo quiero...* (I want) or they may be omitted, as in *Quiero...* ([I] want). Zero subject pronouns are also occasionally found in ChcE as well, e.g.

(39) *I tried that door. Over and over and over. I moved the lock. **Ø** locks from the inside.* (LA, m, 34)

Compared to the Mexican Spanish substrate, in which most pronominal subjects are realized as null, zero pronoun use in ChcE is very rare. Without further investigation, it is premature to attribute the relatively infrequent absence of subject pronouns in ChcE to Spanish influence.



#### 4. Quantitative studies of Chicano English

Thus far, we have outlined morphosyntactic features where ChcE differs from prescriptive norms and noted that many of these features are common to a range of English vernacular dialects. In fact, Chambers (2003: 265–266) refers to a number of these features, such as conjugation regularization and negative concord, as “vernacular primitives” because they are pervasive in vernacular dialects and because they result from processes that we may expect to find in non-standard varieties of other languages as well. However, sociolinguists have long considered as axiomatic the proposition that similarities and differences among language varieties are best investigated not simply by listing features and noting which ones are shared, but by systematically investigating the patterning of constraints on the use of those features. Indeed, in his classic definition of the speech community, Labov gives “the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage” (1972b: 121) as one of the two main criteria by which membership in a speech community may be judged. Thus, to understand the relationship between ChcE and other English vernaculars with which Chicanos are in contact, we need systematic quantitative studies of ChcE. However, in contrast to many other varieties of English, there have been very few quantitative studies of ChcE morphology and syntax that use standard sociolinguistic methods. In fact, aside from the cases of negative concord (Fought 2003), and relative pronoun choice (Bayley 1999), we do not yet have the quantitative evidence that would allow us to determine whether ChcE patterns are similar to or different from other vernacular dialects. Even in the cases of negative concord and relative pronoun choice, we are limited to a results of two fairly small-scale studies. In this section, then, we will discuss the two variables that have been systematically studied with standard methods of multivariate analysis.

##### 4.1. Negative concord

Negative concord is one of the most persistent features in vernacular English dialects (Labov 1972a; Wolfram 1969, 1974; Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998). As in other vernacular dialects, multiple negation, or negative concord, is common in ChcE, as illustrated by the following examples collected from working class speakers in Los Angeles and San Antonio:

- (40) *You guys **don't** like me **no more**. You guys **don't** come visit me **no more**.*  
(LA, f, 18)
- (41) *I **can't** take it **no more**, you know.* (SA, m, 42)
- (42) *I **wouldn't** go much **nowhere**.* (SA, f, 36)

Note that all of the speakers who provided examples (40) through (42) are fully proficient in English and began to acquire the language by the age of 5, if not from birth. There is no reason to assume a priori that the type negative concord seen in these and many other examples that we could have provided represent instances of interference from Spanish, although in Spanish, negative concord is obligatory, e.g.

- (43) *No*            *sabe*                    *nada.*  
 NEG            know-3 sg present    nothing  
 ‘He doesn’t know anything.’

Although most studies of ChcE have commented on the presence of negative concord, only Fought (2003) has investigated the variable in detail, and her study is limited to a relatively small number of tokens from adolescent and young adult speakers in the Los Angeles area.

In order to examine the constraints on ChcE negative concord, Fought extracted all of the negative sentences from 28 sociolinguistic interviews, for a total of 323 tokens. She analyzed these tokens to test for the effect of one linguistic and four social factors: syntactic category, social class (middle, working, low income), gang status (gang member, gang affiliated, non-gang member, tagger), bilingualism, and sex. The results of multivariate analysis showed that among the social factors, gang status, social class, and bilingualism all significantly affected speakers’ choices between standard and non-standard negation. Overall, the speakers in Fought’s study used negative concord at a rate of 49 percent. As might be expected, the highest incidence of use was by taggers and gang members and low-income speakers. Bilinguals also favored negative concord. In this respect, the results contrasted with the results for the phonological variables that Fought investigated, where bilingualism had no significant effect. Bilingualism, however, was the least important of the factor groups that achieved statistical significance in the study of negative concord. In contrast to the results of studies of other communities (e.g. Wolfram 1969 on Detroit AAVE), sex was not significant. Women were just as likely to use negative concord as were men.

Fought’s (2003) results for syntactic type are shown in Table 1. The table includes the results of statistical analysis after non-significant factor groups had been removed from the model, percentages of occurrence in each environment, and examples of each syntactic type. Fought analyzed the data with VARBRUL, a specialized application of the statistical procedure of logistic regression that has long been used in sociolinguistics. This statistical method allows the researcher to consider simultaneously all of the factors that may potentially influence the use of a specific linguistic form.

Table 1. Negative concord in Los Angeles Chicano English (source: Fought 2003: 147)

Factor	Example	VARBRUL weight	%
neg aux + adv	<i>I won't do it no more/any more.</i>	.80	74
neg aux + pronoun	<i>I can't say nothing/anything.</i>	.65	64
neg in lower clause	<i>I don't think he did nothing/anything.</i>	.42	25
neg aux + det	<i>They didn't have a/any/no car.</i>	.35	37
neg adv + other (incl. not)	<i>I never dated nobody/anybody black. ...ticket for not having no/any/Ø/ head-lights.</i>	.21	23
neg subj + pro, adv, or det	<i>Nobody said nothing/anything.</i>	.15	22
neg in outside clause	<i>She's not dead or nothing/anything.</i>	.14	15

Fought's (2003) results suggest that negative concord in ChcE is subject to systematic linguistic conditioning. As the results in Table 1 show, the syntactic environments considered differ greatly in their effect on speakers' use of negative concord, ranging from a low of 15 percent for a negative outside the clause to a high of 74 percent for a negative auxiliary plus adverb.

In addition to reporting on the results of her study of negative concord in ChcE, Fought also compared the results with AAVE. Although she noted many similarities, including use of negative concord outside the clause, she also found differences. Overall, the incidence of negative concord in Fought's data was much lower than reported by Labov (1972a) in his study of Harlem in New York City, where some speakers used negative concord almost categorically, or by Wolfram (1974) in his study of Puerto Rican English in East Harlem, where speakers used negative concord at a rate of 87.4 percent. Finally, Fought (2003: 142–143) observed a number of qualitative differences between negative concord in AAVE and in ChcE. In contrast to previous studies of AAVE, she found no instances of negative inversion (e.g. *Didn't nobody play in the sandbox*). In addition, negative concord with a negative auxiliary was extremely rare in Fought's data. She found only one example, produced by a 17-year-old woman:

(44) *None of the girls don't like her.* (Fought 2003: 143)

Fought's results are clearly valuable, particularly given the rarity of quantitative studies of ChcE syntactic variables. However, more work needs to be done if we want to understand the relationship between negative concord and other ChcE variables on one hand and between the patterning of negative concord in ChcE and other vernacular dialects, particularly AAVE, on the other. Studies of AAVE have

revealed remarkable similarities in that dialect in cities across the United States. As yet we lack comparable work that would allow us to understand whether the patterns of syntactic variation in ChcE as spoken in cities across the United States are similar to one another or whether they differ from one another as a result of the varieties with which ChcE speakers are in contact.

#### 4.2. Relative pronoun choice

Relative pronoun choice is the second syntactic variable that has been investigated in ChcE using standard sociolinguistic methodology. In ChcE, as in other varieties of English, a relative pronoun may be realized as a *wh*-form, *that* or zero:

(45) *This is the house **which/that/Ø** I told you about.*

Although speakers' choices among the three options shown in example (45) have received less attention in working class and regional American English vernaculars than in standard varieties, a number of scholars have focused on relative pronoun use in vernacular dialects and included working class speakers in their samples (see e.g. Wolfram and Christian 1976 on Appalachian English). Research has documented a number of ways in which vernacular dialects differ from one another with respect to relative pronoun use. However, several general tendencies have emerged that differentiate relative pronoun choice in U.S. vernacular dialects from the more standard varieties. For example, the vernaculars studied to date typically exhibit a high percentage of use of *that*, particularly with human subject head nouns. In addition, vernacular dialects usually exhibit a higher percentage of zero in all grammatical categories in the embedded clause, including subject position (e.g. *I have a friend Ø did that*).

Bayley (1999) investigated 895 relative clauses, extracted from 37 interviews with children, adolescents, and adults in San Antonio and northern California. The data were coded for a range of linguistic factors that previous studies had indicated might influence speakers' choices among a *wh*-form, *that*, or zero. These included whether the antecedent was human, whether the relative pronoun and the antecedent were adjacent or separated by another relative clause or another element, the syntactic function of the relative pronoun in the relative clause, the grammatical category of the subject of the relative clause (pronoun, noun, or relative pronoun), and a number of other features of the antecedent. In addition, Bayley investigated the effects of age, geographical region, immigrant generation, and social class.

Overall results showed a number of differences between ChcE and other dialects. ChcE speakers tended to use *that* as a relative pronoun at the very high rate of 71 percent, compared to 60 percent reported by Berni (1995) for predominantly Anglo speakers in Oklahoma and 44 percent reported by Guy and Bayley (1995) for upper-class Anglo males. The overall rate of use of *wh*-forms, at only

11 percent, was correspondingly low, as was the rate of use of the zero option, 18 percent, compared to the 35 percent reported in Berni's study of Oklahoma English.

Statistical tests with VARBRUL revealed that ChcE relative pronoun choice was constrained by a complex array of linguistic and social factors. Among the social factors, only social class and age reached statistical significance. As might be expected, middle class speakers were more likely to use a *wh*-form than were working class speakers, particularly with a human antecedent, although both middle and working class speakers used *that* more frequently than any other option. The results for age present a more complex picture and suggest that younger speakers are converging both with standard and vernacular norms. On the one hand speakers younger than 25 were more likely to use *wh*-forms. On the other hand, they were also more likely to use zero. These results suggest that the younger speakers have been influenced both by the prescriptive norms taught at school and by features of Anglo or African American vernaculars.

Among the linguistic factors, perhaps the most interesting results of Bayley's (1999) study of relative pronoun choice concern the use of *that* with human antecedents as in (46):

- (46) *Some guys I find that I can't trust them. There's like one like about one that I find **that** I could.* (SA, f, 15)

These results, shown in Table 2, indicate that like speakers of other English dialects, ChcE speakers favor *wh*-forms for human antecedents and tend to use *that* or zero for non-human antecedents. However, even though ChcE speakers favor *wh*-forms for human antecedents relative to *that* or zero, the speakers in Bayley's study still used *that* for 80 percent of all human antecedents.

Table 2. Human and nonhuman antecedents: VARBRUL weights and percentages for *that*, and *wh*-, and zero (source: Bayley 1999: 129)

	<i>that</i>		<i>wh</i> -		zero	
	VARBRUL weight	%	VARBRUL weight	%	VARBRUL weight	%
+Human	.41	80	.74	12	ns	8
-Human	.58	63	.16	10	ns	28
Input	.75		.11		na	

In the cases of both negative concord and relative pronoun choice, research has shown that constraints in ChcE function much as they do among non-Chicano populations. For example, although Fought (2003) found that not all of the types

of negative concord in AAVE were present in ChcE, examples of negative concord in the environments where it does occur in ChcE may be found in AAVE and other vernacular dialects. Bayley (1999) also found that most of the linguistic constraints on ChcE relative pronoun choice operated in a similar manner for speakers of other vernacular dialects and even for upper-class Anglo speakers, although the actual percentages of use of variants differed substantially. Given these results, the view that ChcE grammatical features are due to simple interference from Spanish is untenable. Interference cannot explain the kind of orderly variation observed in Fought (2003) and Bayley (1999), particularly when we consider the fact that some speakers in those studies were monolingual in English.

## **5. Chicano English as an ethnic dialect**

The preceding sections of this chapter have shown that most of the features of ChcE morphology and syntax that diverge from prescriptive norms are shared by other vernacular English dialects. However, as we have noted, very few of these features have received the kind of systematic study required to determine if they pattern in the same way as they do in other English dialects. Such studies have the potential to contribute greatly to our understanding of everyday language use in Chicano communities as well as to our understanding of the processes of language maintenance and language shift. Speakers in communities undergoing language shift do not merely shift from one language to another. Rather, they move from one specific variety of a language to a specific variety of another language and, in some cases, create a new variety through which they may express their identity. A recent survey of Latino adults reported that 61 percent of U.S.-born respondents regarded themselves as English-dominant and 35 percent considered themselves bilingual (Brodie et al. 2002: 13). Fully 78 percent of third generation and higher respondents considered themselves English-dominant and only 22 percent considered themselves bilingual (Brodie et al. 2002: 16). While this information is useful in combating the popular misconception that Latinos are unwilling to learn English, broad surveys of self-reported language dominance tell us nothing about the kinds of English that U.S.-born Latinos speak. To answer that question, we need the kind of careful sociolinguistic work that has enriched our understanding of African American speech (see Wolfram, this volume).

The issue of possible Spanish influence presents a different but related question. As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, early accounts of ChcE were based on the outdated notion that interference from the first language was the primary cause for divergences between the speech of learners and native-speakers of the target language. Given such an assumption, researchers had no need to do more than compare features of ChcE with features of Spanish. When they found a match, they believed that they also found a cause for the divergence. Clearly

such a procedure is inadequate. Rather, before we can understand fully the possible influence of Spanish, we need to understand both the linguistic and social constraints on ChcE. Fought's (2003) finding that bilingual speakers were more likely to use negative concord than were monolingual speakers is intriguing in this regard and suggests that the obligatory nature of negative concord in Spanish may have some effect on ChcE speakers' choices of a widespread English vernacular pattern. However, we need to know whether bilingualism also influences speakers' choices of other nonstandard morphosyntactic variants. Only then we will be in a position to evaluate empirically the possible influence of Spanish and to provide a sociolinguistically adequate description of Chicano English.

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# **Bahamian English: morphology and syntax\***

Jeffrey Reaser and Benjamin Torbert

## **1. Introduction**

Given the discontinuous settlement of the Bahamas by various groups, one would expect a great deal of linguistic diversity. The geophysical separation of the islands and imposed racial boundaries have prevented the formation of a homogeneous, pan-Bahamian speech variety. Some research has noted similarities between Afro-Bahamian English (AfBahE) and African American Vernacular English (AAVE) (Holm with Shilling 1982; Shilling 1978), while other research has drawn comparisons between Gullah and AfBahE (Holm 1983). Despite this attention to potential donor sources for the Afro-Bahamian population, little attention has been paid to the linguistic status of the Anglo-Bahamian population, a group that further complicates efforts to describe “Bahamian English”. Hypothesized relatedness of Gullah, AAVE, and AfBahE, especially on southern out islands, is supported by historical settlement records that indicate a number of slaves brought to Exuma, Cat Island, and Crooked Island were likely from Gullah-speaking areas, whereas slaves or freed slaves on other islands may have come from non-Gullah speaking areas of the North American mainland. Given the range of varieties originally brought to the Bahamas during the early settlement, which (potentially) included colonial Bermudian English, British Cockney, RP, Scots English, an earlier African American variety, and Gullah, it should be no surprise that there remains a great deal of grammatical diversity in the Bahamas today.

Urban varieties spoken in Nassau and Freeport, as described by Hackert (2004), differ from those spoken in the Southern Bahamas and those on other out islands (cf. Childs, Reaser, and Wolfram 2003). Further, various researchers have noted an ability of Bahamians to style-shift between acrolectal and basilectal varieties, and an ability to imitate, at least to some degree, symbolic Jamaican indicators, depending on the discourse environment. Thus, describing all the grammatical variation in Bahamian English (BahE) would require a much more rigorous survey of islands and communities than has been done and remains outside the scope of this study.

The description found here represents the compilation of observations by many researchers, drawing especially on the work of John Holm, Alison Shilling, and Stephanie Hackert, who have contributed greatly to the knowledge of the grammatical system of BahE. This description also draws on more than 80

interviews conducted by various members of the North Carolina Language and Life Project with the residents of Cherokee Sound and Sandy Point, on Abaco Island. These speakers tend to be more acrolectal than the varieties described in other studies, which may be a reflection of skilled style-shifting on the part of our informants. It is worth noting that Abaco has a much larger percentage of Anglo residents (roughly 50%) than other islands in the Bahamas (roughly 15%) and therefore, Afro-Bahamian residents may not have undergone the same degree of basilectalization as areas with higher concentrations of Afro-Bahamian residents, including Nassau and Freeport. It appears that basilectalization may be a largely urban phenomenon, and not an active process in the formation of out islander speech.

## 2. The linguistic status of Bahamian varieties

The linguistic diversity found in the Bahamas makes labeling the variety problematic. In Ian Hancock's (1971: 509–525) original survey of pidgin and creole languages, BahE is not included as a creole variety, although he later revised this assessment. While it seems that the general consensus, based on the inclusion of Bahamian English in the work of Holm (1988–1989) and Wells (1982) as well as other publications, is that BahE (or at least AfBahE) is a creole variety, existing somewhere between AAVE and more creolized varieties such as Jamaican Creole (JamC). As Holm (1983: 314) concludes, since “such a great variety of overlapping linguistic features is involved that even within a given community one simply cannot say – except with total arbitrariness – where Gullah leaves off and black English begins”. AfBahE exists somewhere in this range, with some speech communities more clearly creolized (or basilectalized) than others. Discerning whether AfBahE is a creole or not, however, is not the goal of this chapter. For this reason, we will refer to varieties spoken in the Bahamas collectively as “Englishes” rather than “Creoles”. Further, while it is established that there is overlap of linguistic features between ethnic varieties (Holm 1980), and that locally, ethnicities and ethnic labeling is far more complex than a binary taxonomy would suggest, for clarity and concision, we will refer to the varieties of English spoken by the white or light-skinned Bahamians as *Anglo-Bahamian English* (AnBahE) and the varieties spoken by the black or mixed Bahamians as *Afro-Bahamian English* (AfBahE). Even so, we acknowledge that there are often no clear racial boundaries in the Bahamas, which include British, American, African, American Indian, Haitian, and mixed heritages of all combinations.

Given the fairly well documented history of settlement (Albury 1975; Holm 1980, 1983, 1988–1989; Craton and Saunders 1992) and the sociohistorical dynamics that have shaped the communities, linguistic data from the Bahamas may provide substantive insight into social and linguistic processes in terms of lan-

guage divergence from and convergence to American, British, or Caribbean creole norms, issues of creolization and decreolization, and ethnolinguistic demarcation and accommodation.

Skilled register shifting has been noted in other varieties of English including both creole and non-creole varieties. This shifting alone makes discerning the status of AfBahE difficult, and makes the question: “what is true Bahamian English”, a difficult or impossible question to answer. Complicating this question are differences between urban and non-urban varieties; ethnic segregation; different levels of exposure to tourism; and more and more, immigration from non-English speaking areas such as Haiti. However, much can be learned from BahE and its relation to other varieties in the Americas and beyond. What follows is a grammatical profile of prototypical AnBahE, mesolectal AfBahE, and basilectal AfBahE, organized by grammatical category.

### 3. The grammar of Bahamian English

#### 3.1. Verb phrase structures

##### 3.1.1. Copula absence and leveling

The copula has been studied extensively in American vernaculars (e.g., Wolfram 1969; Fasold 1972; Labov 1972a; Baugh 1983; Rickford 1999) in varieties spoken in transplant communities (e.g., Walker 2000: 35–72), in creole varieties of English (e.g., Rickford 1999; Patrick 1999) and in BahE (Shilling 1978; Hackert 2004). Generally, Anglo vernaculars tend to align more closely with prescriptive norms than do Afro varieties, both quantitatively and qualitatively. It is more difficult to generalize about Creole varieties, as many creoles have alternate forms such as JamC’s *da* (Holm 1984, 1988–1989) or a redistribution of standard forms. Shilling (1980: 136) reports that in the AfBahE basilect, “there is only the form *is*, with *am* and *are* very seldom appearing”. In more acrolectal Bahamian varieties, including AnBahE, leveling to *is* (*they’s nice*) occurs but at a drastically reduced rate, and present tense copula forms generally coincide with StE full and contracted forms.

Both AfBahE and AnBahE varieties conform to AmE patterning, whereby Afro varieties exhibit more extensive absence than Anglo varieties, and *are* is more prone to absence than *is*. Despite this similarity, important differences exist between these and other Caribbean and American varieties. Our own observations on mesolectal AfBahE reveal an unusual pattern, whereby *am* is more prone to absence than *is*, a pattern not attested elsewhere in the Caribbean. While other creole varieties have demonstrated significant absence of first-person copula forms, these creoles typically do not utilize prescriptive *am*, *is*, and *are* forms, making this attribute somewhat of an anomaly.

AnBahE is characterized by high rates of copula absence preceding adjectival phrases (*She\_ nice*). Elevated conditioning rates of predicate adjectives are associated with creole varieties including Gullah and JamC (Holm 1984). Shilling (1978: 27) suggests that this pattern persists “because in the basilect these [adjectives] are stative verbs”. However, while this pattern is also attested in basilectal and mesolectal AfBahE, the persistence of this pattern in AnBahE should not be considered evidence that AnBahE is a creole variety.

Absence of past tense copula is another feature often associated with creole varieties. Though relatively limited, absence of *was* (and *was* and *were* in the AfBahE mesolect) is a feature of AfBahE. This feature, however, is ethnically distributed in the Bahamas and past tense copula forms are almost categorically present in AnBahE (Shilling 1980). Like present tense leveling to *is*, leveling of the past tense verb paradigm to the single form *was* is common in varieties around the world. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998: 336) note that “[v]irtually all vernacular varieties show” this pattern. It is not surprising, therefore, to find leveling to *was* in both AfBahE and AnBahE. More basilectal varieties exhibit elevated rates of leveled and reduced forms (*/(ə)z/*) (Shilling 1980). Positive leveling to *were* is also weakly attested. As with present tense forms of *be*, more acrolectal varieties, such as those found on Abaco, more closely approximate StE norms for *was/were* distinctions.

### 3.1.2. Finite *be*

One of the most salient features of AAVE is the finite use of the verb *be* as a habitual marker (e.g. *Sometimes my ears be itching*). Shilling (1980) reports the related form *bes* for all grammatical subjects to signify habitual or durative status in AnBahE. Interviews with AnBahE speakers in Cherokee Sound included the habitual, *She bes home nearly all the time* and the durative, *He bes out in the yard*. *Bes* in Cherokee Sound is limited to third person subjects, while *be* occurs with both third person and other grammatical subjects.

Shilling (1980) found that finite forms of *be* are more frequent in AfBahE than AnBahE. AfBahE speakers almost categorically favor *be* over *bes* for all grammatical subjects, closely resembling the AAVE usage of this form. She reports that finite forms of *be* often occur in a *does+be+Verb-ing* pattern and can reference present *We does be reading play every time* or past tense, *She know two people does be sleeping in this bed* (Shilling 1980). In these contexts, the auxiliary sometimes appears in reduced forms realized as */əz/* or */z/*, resulting in utterances such as *They think they's be actin' sharp but they's just be looking tired* (Shilling 1980). The commonness of this feature in AfBahE may provide evidence for Rickford's (1974) hypothesis that habitual *be* in AAVE is derived from a *does+be+Verb-ing* pattern found in earlier AAVE. Habituals in other Caribbean creoles such as JamC typically require alternate copula forms such

as *a* or *de*, further distancing BahE from other Creoles (Winford 1993; Patrick 1999).

Recent interviews on Abaco Island suggest that *be* can be used even in non-habitual or non-durative constructions, such as the perfective *be* in *you must be ate some sometime*, produced by elderly AnBahE speaker. The AfBahE speakers from Abaco also exhibit variation with respect to widespread Bahamian patterns including the example *where the boats's be now* for 'where the boats does be now'. The form *bes* also appears in mesolectal AfBahE, but is not attested in studies of the basilect, suggesting potential accommodation to the Anglo population, which is, demographically, more numerous on Abaco (roughly 50%) than elsewhere in the Bahamas (roughly 15%).

### 3.1.3. Perfective I'm

Widespread during the seventeenth century, the use of inflected forms of perfective *be* (*I'm been there* for 'I've been there') has been relegated to infrequent use in varieties in the American Southeast; most notably as an ethnic marker in Lumbee English in Robeson County, North Carolina (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998). Interviews with AnBahE speakers from Abaco Island reveal alternation between perfective *be* and standard *have* constructions, with older residents favoring the former.

This form does not appear to be a part of AfBahE. Constructions that typically take "I'm" in AnBahE such as *\_\_got* or *\_\_been* are realized occasionally with a full form (*have*), but more typically with a contracted form (*'ve*), or most often without an auxiliary as in *I \_\_been to the doctor in Marsh Harbour*. Perfective *you're* (*You're been there*) has been observed in AnBahE, though its use is infrequent and much less salient than perfective *I'm*.

### 3.1.4. Auxiliary done

Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998) note that completive *done* is found in both AAVE and in Southern American English (SAmE). Many creoles differ from the AmE pattern, lacking tense marking with this form, leading to utterances such as *She's done send the photographs*. Hackert (2004) attests extensive use of the creole *done*+bare root pattern for irregular verbs in urban AfBahE though only sparse use in AnBahE. Shilling (1980) also suggests that non-urban basilectal AfBahE tends to lack past tense marking, though she does not control for consonant cluster reduction, as in the example *I done ask forgiveness for that*. Our own observations of monoethnic enclaves on Abaco Island reveal that both AfBahE and AnBahE speakers use completive *done* frequently in interviews though they favor the non-creole form, *She done sent the photographs*. The fact that in the United States, completive *done* in Anglo varieties is restricted to the South may help

establish a historical connection between research communities on Abaco Island and the Southern United States, while the lack of completive *done* in other white Bahamian enclaves may help establish a historical connection with settlers from the Northern United States, again, calling to mind the sundry groups responsible for shaping the history of the Bahamas. The subtle differences between realizations of this feature again demonstrate the range of linguistic varieties spoken in the Bahamas.

### 3.1.5. *Irregular verbs and past tense*

The taxonomy of six distinctive alternate forms of irregular past tense, identified by Wolfram and Christian (1976) can be summarized as follows: (1) ambiguous verbs such as *come*, which may be either a past participle substituted for preterit, a perfect whose auxiliary has been deleted, or a bare root; (2) substitution of the preterit for the past participle; (3) past participle substituted for the preterit; (4) unambiguous bare root forms; (5) regularization; and (6) different strong forms. Not surprisingly, Hackert (2004) reports significant past tense zero in urban areas of the Bahamas. Mesolectal AfBahE from Abaco exhibits lower, but still robust rates of zero inflections; AnBahE informants seldom stray from StE forms of past tense. *Have* and *do*, whether main verb or auxiliary, are seldom unmarked. By comparison, rates of past tense unmarking are not as robust in the ex-slave Recordings (Bailey, Maynor, and Cukor-Avila 1991) or in Samaná, Dominica, and North Preston and Guysborough, Nova Scotia (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001). Additionally, AfBahE features a variety of periphrastic marking with *did* and *used to* (Hackert 2004). Other irregular forms of preterit and past participle, widespread in other areas (e.g. Appalachian English [AppE]) are weakly attested in all these studies.

Unmarked past tense is one of the clearer indicators of a creole residue in Af-BahE. Though standard preterits and past participles are plentiful among many speakers, and past tense variation fluctuates from individual to individual, Bahamian unmarking does not approach speakers of Trinidadian Creole (TrnC) or JamC whose speakers exhibit near-categorical past tense zero (Winford 1993; Patrick 1999). Hackert (2004) discusses the ramifications of AfBahE past tense variation for aspectual systems, but detailed discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of this chapter. The popular conception of BahE past tense marking, according to *More Talkin' Bahamian*, is “Very simple! Just get rid of all those superfluous ‘-ed’s’ from your verb endings and use the present tense form” (Glinton-Meicholas 1995: 10). This simplified version, which may be an epiphenomenon of consonant cluster reduction, leading to elevated levels of surface unmarking of weak verbs, seems to be most descriptive of basilectal speakers. Albury (1981: 21) provides a more detailed hierarchy known as the ‘flip-flop rule’:

Basilectal:	zero
Mid-mesolectal:	zero with variable overt past marking
Upper-mesolectal:	t/d/id with variable zero marking
Acrolectal:	t/d/id

### 3.1.6. Subject-verb concord

Subject-verb concord patterns in StE reflect redundant and non-productive reflexes of the Old English inflectional system such as verbal *-s* attachment following third singular subjects, as in, *the woman walks*. Often, Southern AmE, especially AppE, will attach *-s* to verbs following third person plural noun phrases, as in *people walks* (Wolfram and Christian 1976). With the exception of finite *be*, the pattern of attaching *-s* to verbs following collective nouns is not found in AnBahE, despite the potential for historical ties between Southern AmE and BahE. AnBahE seems to follow prescriptive norms, attaching an *-s* only when following third singular subjects. This is to be expected, as third singular *-s* absence is generally not a part of Anglo-American vernaculars in North America (Wolfram and Thomas 2002).

Mesolectal AfBahE exhibits more *-s* variation. The same AfBahE speaker produces an *-s* with a collective (*Some people lays down for nine months*), and with a singular pronoun subject, often first person (*I buys fireworks from over there* or *I goes in the water*), as well as utterances that follow prescriptive norms (*the men work hard*). It should be noted that *-s* attachment following first singular *I* is not limited to historical present in narratives, but can be found with some regularity in more general conversational styles. Third singular *-s* absence appears variably, and speakers tend to exhibit both *-s* absence and *-s* attachment with third singular subjects (*Our daughter live\_ in Brunswick, Georgia ... she works over there*). Whether the subject is a pronoun or a noun phrase seems to matter little, if at all. Instead, it appears as though the attachment or absence of verbal inflectional *-s* is an optional process in AfBahE. The variable presence of morphological *-s* in AfBahE distinguishes the variety from JamC and basilectal TrnC (Patrick 1999).

### 3.1.7. Questions

Shilling (1978: 50) notes that basilectal AfBahE speech lacks “inversion for questions” a prototypical creole feature. Holm’s (1980: 62) sole white informant from Inagua Island lacks subject-verb inversion, suggesting possible creole or African influence on AnBahE. Our own observations reveal a good deal of individual variation with respect to question formation. While some speakers categorically invert questions, and others have categorically non-inverted question formation, the vast majority of speakers alternate between constructions. This co-occurs with auxiliary deletion, occasionally making it difficult to determine the position in which the auxiliary would exist (e.g. *you going?* may be inverted *are you going?*)

on non-inverted *you are going?*). Alternation between standard and non-standard constructions can be found in speakers of all ages and in both communities, perhaps suggesting that there is limited accommodation of this feature by AnBahE, while simultaneously reaffirming that AfBahE speakers do have access to StE interrogative formation. Of course, the alternation between inverted and non-inverted forms is not necessarily atypical as, even in StE, a speaker can signal a question through rising intonation, thus, *Have you been there?* may be just as easily be asked as *You've been there?*, which lacks the subject-verb inversion but productively asks the same question.

One notable aspect of question formation in the AnBahE variety of Cherokee Sound is the use of perfective *be* in questions elicited during conversational speech, as in *How long I'm been in Cherokee?*

### 3.1.8. *Adverbs*

AnBahE has preserved some now (in mainstream English) archaic intensifiers. Most common is the use of *right* as an intensifier in expanded contexts such as *that's right nice of you*, a form found as early as Middle English but now restricted to temporal and locative contexts in StE.

## 3.2. Noun phrase structures

### 3.2.1. *Plurals*

Poplack, Tagliamonte and Eze (2000) provide a classification system of noun types and patterns of plurals in English-based creoles and AAVE. Many vernacular varieties do not require an *-s* following measure nouns premodified by a numeral, as in *I walked four mile\_yesterday*. Others exhibit regularization of irregular plurals (e.g. *two deers*, *four fishes*) and even, occasionally, double-marked plurals where StE vowel alternation is preserved (e.g. *three mens*). Creole languages, like JamC, often mark plurals by inserting *dem* either before or after a noun or through extensively leveled patterns of pluralization (Patrick 1999).

Although BahE pluralization has not been studied as rigorously as the varieties in Poplack, Tagliamonte and Eze (2000), various publications have commented that BahE plurals are extremely irregular. Ginton-Meicholas (1995: 10) sums up BahE plurals as follows: "You don't have to add a plural ending at all – 'I had four husband'. Or you can add the ending '-dem'; e.g. 'De boy-dem playin' hockey'; Or you can have yourself a ball and add 's' and '-dem'; e.g. 'De boys-dem playin' ball'." Ginton-Meicholas' observation that there are multiple manifestations of plurals in BahE seems consistent with other observations of BahE. Shilling's (1980) examples seem to suggest an ethnic division whereby AnBahE speakers tend to have standard plural *-s* attachment while AfBahE speakers tend to have



variable marking of plurals. However, the basilectal speakers do not have categorical unmarked plurals, but instead alternate between marked and unmarked forms. Even Shilling's basilectal speakers (1978: 56–57) tend to exhibit at least some standard plural *-s* attachment, including following count nouns, an environment that often does not take plural as in *I think he bout two months now*. Traditional creole *dem* is not attested in her data, and standard realizations of irregular plurals suggest that even basilectal AfBahE may not align closely with creole patterns of pluralization.

### 3.2.2. Possessives

Possessive *-s* inflection also reveals a strong ethnic division. Generally, in AnBahE, possessive pronouns are most common, favored over constructions that require morphological possessive *-s*. *Me* and *my* seem interchangeable in AnBahE but not in AfBahE, as in *me children and grandchildren. That's my grandson*. Cases in which possessive inflection would be required in StE typically have standard *-s* inflection, as in *I used to keep my truck ... down at a friend's [house]*. AfBahE speakers occasionally use *they* or *theys* in place of *their* or *theirs*, as in *They bring they own equipment, it's theys boat, or what's ours is ours and what theys is theys*. The StE possessive *-s* is almost categorically absent from even mesolectal AfBahE, where possession is marked either by a pronoun or by syntactic proximity, as in *My son\_ truck*.

### 3.2.3. Pronouns

Present-day English lacks a distinction between singular and plural *you*, while some varieties have innovated forms to distinguish between these subjects, including Southern AmE *y'all*, AppE *you'uns*, and Northern AmE *youse*. Holm (1983: 308), drawing on the work of the folklorist Elsie Clews Parsons, reports that the Gullah second plural pronoun *oonah* is restricted to the island of San Salvador, but that the related form *yonner* is found on Andros and that the most frequent form today is *yinna*. Holm notes that *yinnuh* and *yunnah* are both found in Gullah, and uses this as evidence of the relatedness of these varieties. Glinton-Meicholas (1995) reports that both *yinna* and *y'all* can be found in the Bahamas for second plural subjects. The data from Abaco fail to strengthen the Gullah connection, however, as standard *you* occurs in every utterance except one – which features *y'all* – in AnBahE and every instance in AfBahE.

One of the most salient features of AnBahE, and the feature that Shilling (1980: 137) claims offers “the clearest difference between [AnBahE] and [AfBahE]” is the use of existential *it* in sentences like *it's not many people around here* or *It was Indians that probably lived here*. While AnBahE uses *it* for existential *there* far more frequently (categorically for some speakers) than AfBahE, existential *it*

does occur in AfBahE. Shilling (1978) claims that this only occurs when an Afro-Bahamian community is near an all-white settlement, but it is found with some frequency in both the older and younger speakers from Sandy Point, a monoethnic community more than thirty miles from the nearest all-white (or even mixed) settlement. Mesolectal AfBahE speakers alternate between *it* and *there* for existential constructions, while Shilling's (1980: 138) basilectal speakers often lacked existential markers altogether as in *wasn't nothing to do then like today*.

Other pronouns in AnBahE also exhibit variation. *What* can be used as a relative pronoun for both human and non-humans, in utterances such as *The road what they got there* and *My auntie what's dead*. This can be found in AfBahE, but less frequently than in AnBahE or in Gullah (Mufwene 1986).

#### 3.2.4. *Negation*

Like many vernacular varieties of English, both AnBahE and AfBahE exhibit negative concord and frequent use of *ain't*. Negative concord seems to be the typical negation pattern, although still variable in BahE, as is *I didn't have no parents and he didn't have any parents*, which features both variants in the same utterance. Negative concord occurs most commonly in post-verbal position (*I don't have none here*) but occasionally in a preverbal position (*nobody don't have none here*), and is often inverted (*Didn't want to stay no longer than I had to*). Cross-clausal negative concord differs semantically in Bahamian speech from enclave varieties in the Southeast U.S. and AAVE (cf. Labov 1972a; Wolfram and Christian 1976). Instead, tokens that exhibit this pattern, such as *ain't much Bahamians can't do* would be interpreted not as 'there isn't much Bahamians can do', but rather that 'Bahamians are capable of doing most things'.

In BahE, *ain't* functions in much the same way as it does in most vernacular dialects. *Ain't* can be used instead of negative forms of *be* as in *ain't no tennis court around here*, as well as in place of negative forms of *have/has* (i.e., 'haven't,' 'hasn't') as in *I ain't never been there*, a domain that in BahE alternates with *don't* as in *she don't/ain't got no husband*. Mesolectal BahE does not use *ain't* in place of 'didn't' as AAVE does, although it does appear in the basilect.

#### 3.2.5. *Prepositions*

Among the more salient variants in prepositional phrases is static locative *to*. While AfBahE exhibits variable use of *to* and standard forms, AnBahE uses *to* nearly categorically in constructions such as *She's down to the long dock*. *To* can also be found in place of a number of other prepositions in BahE, including *on*, as in *Put them to your feet*; *in*, as in *He lives to Marsh Harbour*; *from*, as in *they do it to Marsh Harbour more than they do from here* ('they hunt more from Marsh Harbour'); and *over/during*, as in *my granddaughter been here to Christmas*. Oc-

asionally, *to*, or another preposition, will be absent in AfBahE speakers, such as *They go \_\_\_ Marsh Harbour*; this absence, also noted by Glinton-Meicholas (1995: 11), does not seem to be a part of AnBahE.

### 3.3. Lexical items

The Bahamian lexicon may be the most documented aspect of BahE. Collections of common Bahamian usages have been compiled in various places such as the *Dictionary of Bahamian English* (Holm with Shilling 1982) and *More Talkin' Bahamian* (Glinton-Meicholas 1995). Lexical evidence has been used to attempt to establish the provenience of Bahamian settlers. Holm (1980: 50) cites a number of lexical items that occur on out islands and in Gullah, but not other creoles such as “*hoe-cake* ‘cornmeal cake,’ *gutlin*,’ ‘greedy,’ *sperrit*, ‘ghost,’ *Hoppin' John* ‘beans and rice,’ and *ninny* ‘breast’”. Holm (1983) cites these and other lexical items shared by BahE and Gullah in an attempt to establish the relatedness of these varieties, though it should be noted that these terms are not known in all areas of the Bahamas. Further, some Bahamian lexical items, such as *obeah*, ‘witchcraft’, *gumbay*, ‘social gathering’, and *jumbey*, ‘spirit’, have African origins.

One lexical dimension worth noting is the taxonomy of ethnicity. While individuals from certain communities have specific labels such as *Crabs* (people from Hope Town) or *Cigillians* (people from Spanish Wells), more general labels are used to describe broad demographic groups in the Bahamas (Holm 1980). The term *white* is used to cover a broad spectrum that entails racially mixed locals and even some “light-skinned American blacks” (Holm 1980: 54). *Conchy Joe* or *Conky Joe* is the term locally used to describe what Americans would classify as “white”. The term can carry a derogatory connotation in the Bahamas, and locally, this group tends to describe themselves as *white* and the rest of the Bahamas as *black*, or *Negro*. Afro-Bahamians locally refer to themselves as *black* or simply as *Bahamians*.

Like other marine-based communities, the Bahamas have noteworthy lexical items describing aspects of the ocean and marine life, though few are unique to the islands. One of the principal sources for money in many non-tourist based Bahamian economies is *crawfishing* for what are more commonly called (Caribbean) spiny lobster or *Panulirus argus*. Additionally, eels are called *morays*: a semantic broadening of the term. Bahamians have also adapted topographical terms to describe the subtleties of the islands, including the British definition of *creek* to mean an inlet or recess of the sea and *spit* for a point of land extending into the sea. Many more nautical and geotopical terms vary from community to community, and may be referenced in the sources mentioned above. One slightly unusual usage that is not documented in these sources that is found on Abaco is the use of *quit* in place of *leave* or *left*. This form has only surfaced in the speech of elderly AfBahE speakers in examples such as, *some of the people quit during hurricanes*;

*they asked them to quit. They didn't quit, I mean the storm come. The storm kill everybody but one man and a dog there; and only was just a few colored people, we quit and come out here.*

#### 4. Conclusions

The various histories of individual islands and groups are reflected in the extensive linguistic variation of features between basilectal speech, acrolectal speech, and ethnically demarcated varieties. The various Englishes of the Bahamas do not align isomorphically with any U.S., British, or Caribbean creole variety. Bi-dialecticism and style-shifting may further complicate potential comparisons. Linguistic processes such as decreolization, accommodation, potential basilectalization, and social factors such as segregation, integration, and more recently, tourism and Haitian immigration further complicate questions regarding linguistic inputs to various islands.

Despite the complexities involved in describing a pan-Bahamian variety and the elusiveness of documenting the sociohistorical and linguistic explanations for current of linguistic features, there is a clear indication that there is bilateral accommodation between both AnBahE and AfBahE. Nonetheless, there exists a persistent qualitative and quantitative ethnolinguistic division. Further, the varieties currently spoken at both the basilectal and acrolectal extremes remain uniquely Bahamian with respect to lexical and grammatical features and pseudo-ethnolinguistic marking, as can be seen in the comparative Tables 1 through 3.

Linguistic preservation, innovation, decreolization, basilectalization, and accommodation, have created unique patternings of linguistic varieties in the Bahamas. Research on these varieties can help researchers better understand linguistic processes, as well as adding important information with respect to documenting and explaining the forces that have given birth to modern varieties of English in the Caribbean, the U.S., and around the world.

*Table 1.* Comparative dialect profile of the verb phrase

Grammatical Structure	Anglo-Bahamian	Mesolectal Afro-Bahamian	Basilectal Afro-Bahamian	Jamaican Creole	Gullah	AAVE
<b>Agreement</b>						
3 <sup>rd</sup> pl. -s marking e.g. <i>The dogs barks</i>	✓	(✓)				
3 <sup>rd</sup> sg. -s absence e.g. <i>The dog bark</i>		(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 1. (continued) Comparative dialect profile of the verb phrase

Grammatical Structure	Anglo-Bahamian	Mesolectal Afro-Bahamian	Basilectal Afro-Bahamian	Jamaican Creole	Gullah	AAVE
<b>Be</b>						
Finite <i>be</i> e.g. <i>It bes like that</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Perfective <i>be</i> e.g. <i>I'm been there</i>	✓					
<i>Is</i> leveling e.g. <i>They's home</i>	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓*	✓	(✓)
<i>was</i> leveling e.g. <i>We was there</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓
<b>Copula</b>						
<i>are</i> absence e.g. <i>You ugly</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓
<i>is</i> absence e.g. <i>He ugly</i>	(✓)	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓
<i>am</i> absence e.g. <i>I ugly</i>		✓	✓	✓*	(✓)	
Past tense copula absence e.g. <i>She [was] here</i>		(✓)	✓	✓	(✓)	
Alternate forms e.g. <i>da</i>			(✓)	✓	(✓)	
<b>Questions</b>						
Non-inverted questions e.g. <i>They are home?</i>	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	(✓)
<b>Other auxiliaries</b>						
Double modals e.g. <i>He might could come</i>				✓	✓	✓
Completive <i>done</i> e.g. <i>He done fix(ed) it</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stressed remote <i>bin</i> e.g. <i>He bin go</i>			✓	✓	✓	
<b>Irregular past tense</b>						
(1) ambiguous forms e.g. <i>He come over here</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(2) pret. for past part. e.g. <i>She had went</i>	✓	✓	(✓)		(✓)	✓
(3) past part. for pret. e.g. <i>I seen her</i>	✓	✓	(✓)		(✓)	✓
(4) bare root e.g. <i>He run yesterday</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(5) Regularization e.g. <i>He growed up tall</i>	✓	✓	(✓)		(✓)	✓
(6) different strong form e.g. <i>He retch up the roof</i>	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	✓

\* JamC uses few standard copula forms in the basilectal, and therefore there is not extensive *is*-leveling or *are* absence per se, but there is extensive leveling to and absence of other non-standard forms or where Standard English would have these copula forms.

Table 2. Comparative dialect profile of nominals

Grammatical structure	Anglo-Bahamian	Mesolectal Afro-Bahamian	Basilectal Afro-Bahamian	Jamaican Creole	Gullah	AAVE
-s-pl. absence e.g. <i>40 pound_</i>	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plural <i>dem</i> e.g. <i>The dem-boy playing</i>			✓	✓	✓	
Regularized plurals e.g. <i>Oxes, sheeps</i>		(✓)	✓		✓	✓
2 <sup>nd</sup> pl. <i>y'all</i> e.g. <i>Y'all are a crowd</i>		(✓)			(✓)	✓
2 <sup>nd</sup> pl. <i>Yinnah</i> or related form e.g. <i>Yinna are a crowd</i>			✓	✓	✓	
Existential <i>it</i> e.g. <i>It's no place to go</i>	✓	✓	✓		(✓)	✓
Embedded null subject pro e.g. <i>It's a woman come here</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pronominal <i>what</i> e.g. <i>The man what I talked to</i>	✓	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓
Possessive 's absence e.g. <i>My Son_ truck</i>		(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 3. Comparative dialect profile: negation, adverbs, prepositions

Grammatical structure	Anglo-Bahamian	Mesolectal Afro-Bahamian	Basilectal Afro-Bahamian	Jamaican Creole	Gullah	AAVE
<b>Negation</b>						
Postverbal concord e.g. <i>It wasn't nothing</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Preverbal concord e.g. <i>Nobody don't like it</i>	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓	✓
Inverted concord e.g. <i>Didn't want to stay no longer than I had to</i>	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Affirmative cross-clausal e.g. <i>Ain't nothing nobody had</i>				✓	✓	✓
<i>ain't</i> for <i>be+not, have+not</i> e.g. <i>She ain't there</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<i>ain't</i> for <i>did+not</i> e.g. <i>I ain't go</i>			✓		✓	✓

Table 3. (continued) Comparative dialect profile: negation, adverbs, prepositions

Grammatical structure	Anglo-Bahamian	Mesolectal Afro-Bahamian	Basilectal Afro-Bahamian	Jamaican Creole	Gullah	AAVE
<b>Adverbs</b>						
Intensifying <i>right</i> e.g. <i>He's right smart</i>		(✓)	(✓)		✓	✓
<b>Prepositions</b>						
Static locative <i>to</i> e.g. <i>She's to the dock</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>to</i> for other prepositions e.g. <i>Put them to your throat</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Deleted prepositions e.g. <i>They go __ Florida</i>		(✓)	✓	✓	✓	

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# Jamaican Creole: morphology and syntax

Peter L. Patrick

## 1. Introduction

Jamaican Creole (JamC, known to its speakers as Patwa) is a language of ethnic identification for roughly two and a half million people in the island of Jamaica, and overseas for many thousands of native speakers (and non-natives, see British Creole (BrC) chapters.) JamC is a canonical example of an Atlantic Creole. One of the first Caribbean English-lexicon Creoles to be described using modern linguistic methods (Loftman 1953; Cassidy 1961), it remains among the best-researched. The first generative grammar of a Creole was Bailey's *Jamaican Creole Syntax* (1966). The first comprehensive etymological dictionary of a Creole was Cassidy and Le Page's *Dictionary of Jamaican English* (1967, hereafter DJE).

### 1.1. History

JamC owes little or nothing to either the indigenous Arawaks or Spanish invaders, starting with Columbus in 1494, who settled the island in 1509, bringing the first African slaves. By 1601 only a handful of Arawaks remained alive alongside 1,000 Africans. When the British arrived in 1655 with 9,000 troops, they met 6,000 inhabitants, 1,500 of African descent and the rest mostly Spanish; after 1660, a few dozen Spanish remained, while 300 Maroons fought from the mountains. The Maroons today, custodians of African culture, still preserve a distinctive speech form, Maroon Spirit Language. Their ranks were supplemented by runaways under slavery, and they maintained their independence by treaty, defeating the British in 1739 and 1795.

However, the origins of JamC postdate 1660, in the interaction of British colonists and African slaves. The language did not yet exist in 1658, when the 7,000 settlers and soldiers in the island from Britain, Ireland and the Americas outnumbered Africans 5 to 1; but between 1677, when there were about 9,000 each of whites and blacks, and 1703, when the white population had slightly declined but the numbers of enslaved Africans had risen to 45,000, the roots of JamC were planted. Many key features were in place before 1750, though others can only be documented from the early and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Lalla and D'Costa 1990).

Jamaican language and its place in society reflects the brutal history of Jamaica as a British sugar colony until Independence in 1962. Creolization in the broadest sense led to emergence of new cultural and social institutions, including language,

but the subordination of JamC to English – the native tongue of a tiny minority – has persisted to the present day, with consequences for education, economy, and psychological independence. The collapse of the plantation economy between the two world wars brought on mass urbanization, making Kingston the largest “English-speaking” city in the Americas south of Miami (Patrick 1999). Yet only in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has the Jamaican government seriously begun to explore language planning and recognition of JamC as a national language.

Jamaican Creole’s dramatic genesis in British slavery, imperialism and the African diaspora to the Americas has focused creolist research on language contact, especially the influence of African languages (Akan and Kwa families, along with Bantu), and to a lesser extent British English dialects (West of England, Irish and Scots), as well as universals of language acquisition and creation. Over 90 percent of Jamaica’s population are of African origin. Other groups claim Indian, Chinese, Syrian and European heritage; of these, only Europeans were present before 1845 and contributed to the formation of JamC. For all these Jamaicans, JamC is a shared marker of ethnic and national identity which serves to distinguish them from other peoples, and to unite them in possession of a rich, diverse set of discursive resources.

## 1.2. The Creole continuum

Social stratification in Jamaica is crucial to understanding the extreme variability of contemporary Jamaican speech. The complex linguistic situation can be related to an equally intricate web of social relations, using the model of the creole continuum. This is opposed to discrete multi-lingual or multi-dialectal descriptions such as community bilingualism, standard-plus-dialects, and diglossia. The inapplicability of classic diglossia to Jamaica motivated DeCamp to invent the (post-)creole continuum model: “There is no sharp cleavage between Creole and standard (...) [but] a linguistic continuum, a continuous spectrum of speech varieties, ranging from (...) ‘broken language’ (...) to the educated standard” (DeCamp 1971: 350), i.e. from basilect to acrolect.

JamC is natively available to nearly all Jamaicans, but Standard Jamaican English (StJamE), the acrolect, is not – it is a home language for a small minority, and learned as a second language of school, literacy, mass media and work by others. This is the direct result of the colonial distribution of power in earlier centuries, which worked to create and maximize the norms that still devalue JamC and elevate StJamE. Many Jamaicans, and even many linguists (Creole-speaking and other), still maintain this contrast in prestige as a base component of their attitudes towards Jamaican language, and it surfaces in many linguistic descriptions.

In truth, both poles of the continuum are idealized abstractions, a collection of features most like standard Englishes (the acrolect) or most distant from them (basilect). Yet between these poles lies the continuum of everyday speech: a series

of minimally differentiated grammars with extensive variation – an apparently seamless web connecting two idealized varieties which arose in the same place and time-frame and share distinctive features, yet cannot be genetically related.

The descriptive problem is thus to reconcile genetic descent and non-genetic, contact-induced language change within a finely-graded continuum. While StJamE is recognized as an English dialect, descended by normal transmission from 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century British input dialects, creolists agree that the grammar of basilectal JamC differs radically from native English dialects, due to extensive language contact resulting in structural mixing. There is less agreement on whether this process took the form of abrupt creolization, whether a pidgin developed in the island first, or whether a prior pidgin existed – e.g. on the African coast – and was relexified (Cassidy 1971; Alleyne 1980; Lalla and D’Costa 1990). The prevailing opinion is that this sharp contrast makes it impossible to relate JamC genetically to English – or indeed to its African input languages, with which there is also a radical structural break (Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Thomason 2001) – though it bears obvious historical links to both.

### 1.3. The Jamaican mesolect

As linguists since Bailey have preferred to focus on these extremes, most research concentrated on basilectal JamC, until the recent emergence of studies on StJamE (e.g. Shields 1989). (Patrick 1999 is the only study of the mesolect.) Yet in purely social and demographic terms, the most important variety in Jamaica is the intermediate one known as the mesolect; its broad limits include the speech uttered by most Jamaicans, in most situations. Although empirical data for language description of JamC are nearly always drawn from points within the continuum (i.e. the mesolect), it remains under-theorized and under-described.

This may be because most linguistic treatments of JamC adopt a categorical perspective (Chambers 1995), seeking to explain away inherent linguistic variation by attributing it to the random mixing of so-called invariant grammars, viz., the basilect and acrolect. Thus, Bailey (1971: 342) tried to model mesolectal speech as “standard with incursions from the creole, or creole with incursions from the standard” through “borrowing and interference”, while Akers (1981: 4) believed it was due to a failure of acquisition by speakers who “incompletely control their code”. Both views portray Jamaicans as less than competent in their everyday language, and the mesolect as grammar-less.

Such an approach fails to reach descriptive adequacy: the mesolect cannot be reduced to interference between two discrete, polar systems, and no such detailed description has ever been attempted. The existence of language ideologies and attitudes (resembling those commonly found in bilingual communities) which do not explicitly grant the mesolect autonomy, should not mislead as to its systematic internal organization. Although highly variable, it comprises a grammar

describable via both qualitative linguistic generalizations and quantitative constraints, which has evolved over three centuries, arriving at a set of socially-evaluated patterns with their own historical and cultural ecology. Its post-creolization development is broadly similar to that of other, non-creole, speech communities, to which variationist theory and descriptive methods have been profitably applied (Chambers, Trudgill and Schilling-Estes 2002). Earlier speculations that the creole continuum might be so variable as not to constitute a speech community at all proved unfounded. In the most detailed account of the mesolect, Patrick (1999) concludes that it is characterized by the systematic presence and integration of English forms and rules in a partial and variable, but non-random, manner. On this view, mesolectal grammar does not result from improvised mixing or code-switching between two polar varieties, nor are its speakers fossilized learners. Rather, the mesolect is an organized, distinctive collection of elements with a long history and its own complex norms, structures and social patterning. Many choices and variants are possible within it, but many are not. Ways of speaking are not accidental but conventionalized; borrowing occurs, but is not the sole source of variation; grammatical rules exist and interlock; and it is transmitted through normal language acquisition. Though change occurs, the mesolect contrasts with newer and less stable varieties such as BrC.

Despite the defining presence of English elements, which mark it off clearly from the basilect, the mesolect shares with the latter many constraints, structures and organizing principles which are not generally characteristic of native dialects of English. Insofar as creoles are defined through such contrasts (Mühleisen 2002), the mesolect is thus Jamaican Creole, and not Jamaican English (i.e. it cannot be genetically related to English). Indeed, it probably appeared earlier than the basilect (Alleyne 1971). English-like surface forms (some exclusive to the mesolect, e.g. *did*, others shared with the acrolect, e.g. *neva*, or even the basilect, e.g. *ben* – all three tense-markers are discussed below) characteristically alternate with zero, governed by constraints shared with basilectal JamC but not with native Englishes. This pattern is found in both earlier Jamaican texts and contemporary speech.

The mesolect is naturally the primary object of description here, with frequent reference also to basilectal structures. Though there is a clear dividing line between these two grammars (Patrick 1999), there is none between mesolect and acrolect, since the partial presence of English forms and constraints merges indistinguishably into the possession of full competence in StJamE. While the many structures shared with the basilect provide a firm linguistic basis for treating the mesolect as JamC, there is no such structural warrant for restricting “English” only to the high acrolect – it is strictly the power of social convention which influences speakers, and therefore linguists, to do so.

In practice, this lack of a sharp upper boundary creates difficulties in analysing some speakers or texts. The search for a single point, a linguistic and social division, where StJamE starts and JamC ends, is the misguided product of colonial

language ideologies. Below, however, illustrative contrasts are drawn. This coincides with the symbolic value speakers attach to fine, or even illusory, distinctions between “proper English” and Patwa (a term broad enough to encompass, at times, everything but the high acrolect).

1.4. The data and orthography

Much data below is cited from written records. Cassidy’s phonemic orthography (1961) has served as a model for many other Creole writing systems, but is little-followed by Jamaican writers. Uncredited data are by the author (as are most translations) or by recorded informants, and generally follow Cassidy. While creolists generally prefer a diachronic perspective, and seek out “pure” basilectal forms as evidence of earlier stages of language development, the description below is synchronic and does not privilege the basilect. This may affect some analyses, e.g. whether to treat *se* ‘say’ under complementation or verb serialization.

2. Tense, mood and aspect marking

2.1. A Creole TMA system?

All descriptions of basilectal JamC agree that it combines invariant pre-verbal particles with unmarked verb stems to express these grammatical categories, where native Englishes typically use verbal auxiliaries, inflectional suffixes and agreement-marking. It is also generally argued that contrasting linguistic categories and semantic values underlie and constrain these formal differences.

The most influential account is given by Bickerton (1975, 1981) for creoles in general. Three main categories – anterior tense, irrealis mood, and non-punctual aspect – each have a principal pre-verbal marker, which must combine in the order T-M-A. In creoles, Bickerton argued, states, habitual situations and progressive events can all be described as having non-punctual aspect. Further, verb stativity is said to crucially affect the occurrence and interpretation of markers of past-reference: bare non-stative verbs receive a default past-reference reading, while statives are non-past unless preceded by a tense-marker. These claimed syntactic and semantic properties together describe a grammar that “clearly bears no relation to the system of English” (Bickerton 1975: 47). This gives the following paradigm:

	Stativity	Pre-V Marker	Meaning	Examples
(1)	+stative	none	present, habitual	<i>Mi Ø lov im</i>
(2)	-stative	none	past	<i>Mi Ø run</i>
(3)	+stative	<i>(b)en/did</i>	past	<i>Mi ben lov im</i>
(4)	-stative	<i>(b)en/did</i>	past-before-past	<i>Mi ben ron</i>

with the translations:

- (1) 'I love her' (now) / 'I love her' (habitually)
- (2) 'I ran'
- (3) 'I loved her'
- (4) 'I had run' (before some other past event or action)

Bickerton argued that creole basilects, including JamC, do not have an absolute past tense, but rather a relative anterior tense. Instead of taking the moment of speaking as an absolute reference point (with past tense required for events before it, and future for events after), this point is relative. For stative verbs it is the moment of speaking, but for verbs of action it is some relevant earlier moment. Thus when they are preceded by a past marker (*ben* in 5), they refer to a past-before-past action, sometimes called *remote past*.

- (5) *Father Manley fight and mek black pickney go a St Hilda's school, where no black pickney couldn't ben go first time.*

'Manley fought so that black children could go to St Hilda's school, where no black children had been able to go in the old days.'

(Sistren 1987: 105)

While Bickerton's description often matches JamC utterances at surface level, the analysis is flawed. It is widely conceded that this scheme fails to account for the full range of facts over many Creoles, and articulates poorly with general TMA and typological studies. However, it is rarely noted that, as a categorical analysis assuming private oppositions, it misconceives the nature of creole grammars, including JamC. That is, it predicts a strict form-meaning isomorphism which does not hold: e.g., in order to convey a past-before-past meaning, a nonstative verb must be marked with an anterior marker (basilectal *ben* and variants *wen*, *en*, *min*; mesolectal *did*); and when so marked, it must receive such a reading. In reality, exceptions occur in both directions. The prediction is worth refuting because many other linguists give such idealized accounts of Creole grammars.

## 2.2. Habitual, progressive and completive aspect

Progressive aspect is uniformly signalled by pre-verbal *a* (6–7), while habitual aspect is often unmarked (1), though at an earlier stage both were marked alike in a single imperfective category with (*d*)*a* (*da* and *de* persist in western Jamaica, Bailey 1966: 138). It is still possible to mark habitual with *a* + *Verb*, just like the progressive. Aspectual *a* is tense-neutral in JamC, and may be preceded by tense-markers (*ben* + *a*, *did* + *a*, *ben* + *de*, *was* + *a* etc.).

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(6)	-stative	<i>a, de</i>	progressive	<i>Mi a ron</i>
(7)	-stative	<i>ben/did + a/de</i>	past progressive	<i>Mi ben a ron</i>

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- (6) 'I'm running' / 'I was running' / 'I (used to) habitually run'  
 (7) 'I was running' / 'I used to habitually run'

Completive aspect is signalled by *don*, which unlike other TMA markers may occur not only pre-verbally but also after the verb phrase (8–9), or even both.

- (8) *Him lucky we never nyam him too, for we did done cook already.*  
 'It's lucky we didn't eat it too, for we had already cooked.' [*of a chicken*]  
 (Sistren 1987: 30)
- (9) *Dem deh-deh, till she cook and we nyam done.*  
 'They stayed there until she had cooked and we had finished eating.'  
 (Sistren 1987: 82)

### 2.3. Anterior tense

In both basilectal and mesolectal JamC, anterior markers occur more rarely than Bickerton's analysis predicts, and occur in environments where they are not predicted. Bare verb forms are very common, and do not have a single necessary interpretation. Instead of being precisely regulated by syntactic or semantic factors, the occurrence of anterior markers is inherently variable, correlated with such discourse features as provision of background information. JamC is thus governed by a principle of wider application:

Mark past-tense more often when temporal organization of the discourse is disrupted, and less often when it is predictable.

This principle also operates in other variable discourse contexts, such as the English historical present. JamC is much less often constrained by concord than English, but where both are variable, similar pragmatic constraints apply. Furthermore, the tense interpretation of bare verbs interacts with the specificity of the noun-phrase (section 10.3).

In urban mesolectal JamC today *ben* is infrequent (though recognized, in fact stereotyped as rural, by all). Pre-verbal *did* occurs instead (10). This *did* cannot be confused with the English emphatic auxiliary, which does not exist in JamC (past *did* cannot be stressed). Tense-marking *did*, popularly identified with urban speech and positively valued, appears most commonly among older speakers, and is receding among the young (Patrick 1999). Infrequently, non-concord *was* occurs to mark past-reference – typically in progressive *was + a + Verb*, more rarely with nominal or locative complements, and not at all with perfective meaning (i.e., ...\**was du* in 10).

- (10) *If yu luk pan we Ibla did du ina Jaamani*  
 'If you consider what Hitler did in Germany'

Linguists analyzing creole languages often create grammars for them which are neat, efficient and functional, claiming they do not formally mark information which is recoverable from context – thus contrasting with older natural languages in which redundancy is a design feature. Comrie (1985: 31) argues that JamC “omit[s] tense markers when an overt adverbial of time location is present”. Again, this constraint is not categorical but a tendency, often overruled: not only do unmarked past-reference forms occur in the absence of adverbials, but mutual co-occurrence is also common:

- (11) *Ten tauzin yiers ago dem did penichriet aal dem ting.*  
 ‘Ten thousand years ago they already understood all those things.’

The negative past form is *neva*. While in the acrolect and upper mesolect it is adverbial, like English, lower on the continuum it is a tense-marker. Thus for acrolectal speakers, presence of *neva* is not correlated with verb-inflection, time-reference is absolute, and *neva* may be used predictively. For lower mesolectal speakers, inflection is prohibited after *neva*, as after other pre-verbal particles (12), while time-reference is relative past; perfective meaning is the norm, as for many vernacular English dialects (Cheshire 1982), and predictive use does not occur. (Rarely, it redundantly combines with *did* in *neva did*, parallel to basilectal *no ben*.) *Neva* co-exists with tense-neutral pre-verbal negator *no*, which is more common in the basilect (13). *Neva*, like *did*, is preferred among older urban speakers.

- (12) *Dat manggo chrii dier, notn neva du it.*  
 ‘Nothing (has ever) happened to that mango tree.’
- (13) *Im no biznis huu it kyach.*  
 ‘He didn’t care who got shot.’

### 3. Verb forms

#### 3.1. Verb inflection

The common mesolectal occurrence of variable, English-like verb inflection with *-ed* is a striking contrast with the basilect. Variable inflection appears to be a general feature of Caribbean English Creole grammars, holding true as well in Barbados Creole (BbdC) and Bahamian Creole (BahC). Despite earlier linguists’ belief that it results from error or dialect mixing, regularization and hyper-correct insertion of *-ed* are extremely rare. Patrick (1999) found that fully one-third of past-reference verbs in urban speech were inflected for tense on the surface, with a wide range of individual variation (though speakers who used *did* or *neva* were least likely to inflect verbs). Bare, uninflected verbs occurred well over half of the time, and pre-



verbal past-markers made up only 10 percent; only a single possibly hyper-correct form was found in 15 hours of speech.

Strong verbs are the least-often inflected. In this, JamC resembles the creoles just mentioned, but differs from other varieties of English which variably mark the past, such as AAVE and African American Diaspora varieties in Samaná, Nova Scotia and Liberia (Fasold 1972; Poplack and Tagliamonte 2001): in these varieties, as well as for English second-language learners, irregular verbs are overwhelmingly marked more often than regular verbs. For a number of strong verbs in JamC, the stem corresponds to an English past form: *los* ‘lose’, *marid* ‘marry’, *gaan* ‘go away, leave’, *bruk* ‘break’, *lef* ‘leave’ – at least the last two being widely shared with Creoles from West Africa to the Carolinas to Guyana. Upper-mesolectal speakers do inflect irregular verbs, but this marks a very salient distinction between them and other JamC speakers.

Just as with *did* and *neva*, in the mesolect the variable use of English inflectional *-ed* is governed not by absolute past tense but by anteriority – understood as a general discourse principle – and/or stativity. However, the tendency for stativity to favor past-marking is not a general syntactic constraint as Bickerton originally proposed, but the effect of a handful of very common stative verbs such as *have*, combined with the tendency for statives to appear in background clauses, e.g. in narration (Patrick 1999; confirmed for BahC by Hackert 2004).

It is not clear how far the basilect can be described as morphologically invariant, but verb inflection in mesolectal JamC is common and significant, despite being discounted in traditional descriptions. Yet while inflection may resemble English, when it occurs it is governed by classic creole constraints. Only at the upper reaches of the continuum do English grammatical principles apply, for speakers who inflect the great majority of their past-reference verbs.

### 3.2. Person and number agreement

Person and number are not marked on finite verbs in all forms of JamC. That is, present-tense verbs with third-person singular subjects never show inflection with *-s*, and the verb paradigm is perfectly regular (14).

- (14) *Dis wan swiit im.*  
 ‘This one pleases her.’

This is linked to two other facts about JamC discussed below: (subject) pronouns are not distinguished for case, and auxiliary inversion does not occur (15). All three properties co-occur in some regional dialects of British English too, either for a subset of agreement-less finite verbs, or more generally. Many Jamaicans are aware of the existence of verbal *-s* in English, and may use it when “cutting English” or talking “speaky-spoky” (Russell in Lalla and D’Costa 1990: 189; Patrick 1997).

Radford analyzes this, in the terms of minimalist syntax, as an indication that “only interpretable head-features survive” in JamC (1997: 183), i.e. only elements which contribute to meaning. Following this line, rather than say that there is no verbal agreement in JamC, one might say that there are no uninterpretable agreement features – thus it automatically satisfies the Principle of Full Interpretation in this respect. This focus on the importance of meaning-bearing elements in the grammar might be one respect in which JamC could be characterized as “simpler” than StE, where earlier broad-brush efforts to say that creoles e.g. lack morphology or derivational depth have proven incorrect (though see section 9 below). The venerable project of finding simplicity in creole structures is however a questionable, ideologically-motivated mission.

### 3.3. (Modal) auxiliaries and past participles

JamC lacks the primary auxiliary verbs present in most English dialects: forms of *be*, *do*, *have* (though it possesses main-verb counterparts of *do* and *have*). The functions they normally perform are either absent (e.g. subject-inversion in questions, 15) or carried out by other elements (e.g. the invariant particles marking TMA). There is no distinction between simple past and present perfect verb forms in JamC (*iit* ‘eat, eaten’), and neither of them requires an auxiliary or pre-verbal marker; distinct participial forms do not occur, and thus cannot be generalized, nor substituted by preterite (e.g. AAVE *had went*). Ellipses like English *They do*, without a main verb, are not possible with JamC modals.

- (15) *Im no lov dem ting?*  
 ‘Doesn’t she like those things?’

However, JamC does have a full complement of modal auxiliaries. Bailey (1966) divides them syntagmatically into two groups:

- |      |        |                    |              |
|------|--------|--------------------|--------------|
| (16) | Mod-1: | <i>mos(-a, -i)</i> | ‘must’       |
|      |        | <i>kuda</i>        | ‘could’      |
|      |        | <i>wuda</i>        | ‘would’      |
|      |        | <i>shuda</i>       | ‘should’     |
|      |        | <i>mait(-a)</i>    | ‘might, may’ |
|      |        | <i>wi</i>          | ‘will’       |
| (17) | Mod-2: | <i>kyan</i>        | ‘can’        |
|      |        | <i>fi</i>          | ‘ought’      |
|      |        | <i>hafi</i>        | ‘must’       |
|      |        | <i>mos(-a, -i)</i> | ‘must’       |

As in English, modals show no agreement; as in regional British and American varieties, double modals occur in JamC. In fact, over a dozen combinations are

possible, and even triple modals may occur. (Mod-1) (Mod-2) are followed by a Tense marker (if any), an Aspect marker (if any), and a main verb. This gives the order M-T-A, as in *Im shuda-M en-T a-A ron* 'He should have been running.' Triple modals involve interpolation of *mos* between other forms. Thus, simplifying away the T and A components, one finds:

- (18) Mod-1 Verb: *Dem mosi nuo.*  
'They must (have) know(n)/They certainly knew.'
- (19) Mod-2 Verb: *Mi hafi gaan.*  
'I must leave.'
- (20) Mod-1 Mod-2 Verb: *Dem kuda kyan bai a bred.*  
'They would be able to buy a loaf of bread.'
- (21) Mod-1 *mos* Mod-2 Verb: *Wi wuda mos hafi riich soon!*  
'We really ought to arrive soon!'

A mesolectal past modal not mentioned by Bailey (1966), *had was*, occurs only with infinitival *to* (not the typical JamC *fi*), with the meaning 'had to' (22). This appears to be sometimes extended to purposive clauses with the verb *wanted* (23). Interestingly, *was* here is redundant in its tense-marking function. Alongside main-verb *sapuz* 'suppose', there is also semi-auxiliary *sapuzosi* with epistemic modal force, as in *sapuzosi kyan kom* 'ought to be able to come'.

- (22) *My stepfaada had was to tell him not to come back to our yard.*  
'My stepfather had to tell him not to come back to where we lived.'  
(Sistren 1987: 270)
- (23) *Him do it because him wanted was to control di people living in di Underworld.*  
'He did it because he wanted to control the people living in the Underworld.'  
(Sistren 1987: 263)

## 4. Negation

### 4.1. Sentential negation

The simplest and most common structure in JamC sees a single, invariant negator *no* (reducible to /na/) before the verb (13, 15); adverbs may intervene. It combines with the basilectal tense marker as *no ben*, which is functionally equivalent to *neva* (see above).

Most speakers also have tense-neutral *duont*. *Duont* is typically non-past or imperfective (24), but may occur with any time-reference or aspect, including perfect

(25), and with untensed clauses (26). It is not restricted to psychic state or habitual verbs (25), contra Bailey (1966: 54).

(24) *She don't fight woman; a pure man she fight.*  
 'She doesn't (didn't) fight women; she only fights (fought) men.'  
 (Sistren 1987: 271)

(25) *Up to now, Spangler don't come back in di area.*  
 'Until this day Spangler has not come back into the area.'  
 (Sistren 1987: 279)

(26) *Him may leave today to go out to all di countryside, far district, and don't come back tomorrow.*  
 'He may leave today to go out all over the countryside, and not come back tomorrow.'  
 (Sistren 1987: 25)

#### 4.2. Negative tags and negative imperatives

*No* and *duont* also occur as interrogative tags on either negative or affirmative declaratives (and *no*, but not *duont*, as imperative tag, on affirmative requests only). However, it is not always clear whether tags with *na* are related to negative *no*. *Duont* may also be preposed (28, 29). Negative imperatives may occur with either negator; the typical basilectal form requires an expletive verb *bada* (< *bother*, 29) while *duont*, being verbal, requires none. As a rhetorical question or interjection, *no mos* indicates that something is expected or obvious (30).

(27) *Shut unu ai, na!*  
 'Shut your (pl.) eyes, won't you?'  
 (Roberts 1973: 37)

(28) *A di bridj im a taak, duont? Duont a di bridj im a taak?*  
 'It's the bridge he's talking about, isn't it? Isn't it the bridge he's talking about?'  
 (Roberts 1973: 20)

(29) *No bada gwaan bad. / Duon gwaan bad, yaa?*  
 'Do not misbehave (you hear?).'

(30) *'Den yu a go kom tinait?' 'No mos!'*  
 'Then you're going to come tonight?' 'Of course!'

#### 4.3. Negative concord and other negative forms

Negative concord is the norm in JamC: as in many dialects of English, negative adverbials and nominals (e.g. *nontaal* 'not (at all)', *nombadi* 'nobody') may agree with a sentential negator, without contributing additional negative force. In contrast with some analyses of AAVE however, in JamC such sympathetic negation

need not apply on every possible occasion. Thus (31) might as well have concluded with negative *nomo* as positive *again*. Since auxiliary inversion does not occur, there is no negative inversion. The form *ain't* does not occur in JamC, nor does negative tag *innit* (though both do in BrC).

There is coalescence of *no* with progressive particle *a*, giving pre-verbal *naa*, which is used both for progressive and for periphrastic future (32). Most modals have negative forms (33), except *wi*. Negative *kyàan* is differentiated from positive *kyán* by the former's low tone and vowel length, and is much less likely to contain a palatal glide, especially in formal speech (34).

- (31) *Don't me done tell yuh seh me na go do nutten again?*  
 'Haven't I told you already that I'm not going to do anything further?'  
 (Sistren 1987: 70)
- (32) *Nabadii na a kom ina mai aus.*  
 'Nobody is going to come into my house.'  
 (Roberts 1973: 36)
- (33) Mod-1:           *kudn*                   Mod-2:   *no fi*  
                   *wudn*                               *naafi (< no hafi)*  
                   *shudn*                           *mosn*  
                   *maitn*
- (34) *If I kyán only get word to him ... Mama kyàan catch us because we run.*  
 'If I could only get word to him ... Mama couldn't catch us because we ran.'

Finally, copular forms of *be* from StJamE appear first in the mesolect in negated form, e.g. *wasn't*. Another mesolectal form, *nat*, alternates with *no* most often in structures corresponding to English *be + not + Complement* or *be + not + Verb-ing*, though frequently without an overt *be*-form.

## 5. Word order, focus and copular structures

### 5.1. Word order

JamC word order is head-initial: in verb phrases the order is thus [V-NP], while prepositions occur in [P-NP] order, determiners appear as [Det-N], and adjectives as [Adj-N]. It is uniformly Subject-Verb-Object, like most Atlantic English-lexicon Creoles. Lacking auxiliary inversion, as noted, it also lacks negative and question inversion. *Yes-no* questions differ from declaratives only in having a final-rise intonation contour. The main deviation from surface SVO order occurs in focus structures.

### 5.2. The copula: Functions and significance

JamC has no single copular verb matching English *be*, but employs a range of forms differentiated by function. These verbs are tense-neutral and uninflected, combining with pre-verbal TMA markers; some alternate with zero-forms, others are necessarily overt. Alternation with non-concord (but tense-specific) forms of *be* also occurs in the mesolect. However, full forms of *be* are the norm, while contracted forms are surprisingly uncommon compared to AmE and BrE.

There is sharp contrast with native English varieties in the distribution of forms and functions; possibilities of alternation and absence; and relative frequencies of copula presence by syntactic environment. The exceptions are African American Diaspora varieties of English, with which significant resemblances have been observed. The distribution of JamC copular forms has figured importantly in debates concerning historical linkage between AAVE and Caribbean English Creoles.

### 5.3. The copula in progressive forms

Progressive *a* + Verb is discussed above (6, 7); an alternating mesolectal form is  $\emptyset$  + Verb + *in*. Tense-specific variation of zero with *is/was* also occurs here, though *a* itself is incompatible with both *be*-forms and with the *-in* suffix. Contrary to notions of neat separation according to forms, the so-called basilectal *a* + Verb form is used at all levels of the mesolect, while predominantly basilectal speakers are familiar with the supposedly mesolectal  $\emptyset$  + Verb-*in* form. Several main verbs which are semantically continuative typically take *a* + Verb complements: *kimaan* ‘keep on’, *gwaan* ‘go on’, *depan* ‘be engaged in an action or activity; in a state of continuing or repeated action’ (lit. locative *de* + *pan* ‘upon, on, in, at’).

### 5.4. The copula in equative forms

In equative contexts, a subject and a nominal complement are joined by the verb *a*. In older JamC, the form was *da* (35). This varies mesolectally with non-concord *is/was*. Zero copula does occur, but Rickford’s (1996: 225) quantitative data show an overt copula more than 80 percent of the time.

(35) *Ebry day da fishing day, but ebry day no fe catch fish.*

‘Every day is a day for fishing, but you won’t catch fish every day.’

(DJE: 141, from 1873)

Bailey treats *niem* ‘name’ as a distinctive verb (1966: 33) in constructions such as *Mi niem Piita* ‘My name is Peter/I am named Peter’. They do not allow an overt copula in JamC; in her analysis, they are not equative but predicative.

5.5. Focus structures: Predicate clefting

The same form *a* serves to focus a wide range of fronted or clefted constituents, both predicative and non-predicative. The fronted item receives stress and emphatic or contrastive meaning. Only predicative elements are copied in the original sentence position when clefted; they include verbs (36, 38), adjectives (37) and, uniquely among modals, *mos* (38). Variation of *a* with *is* occurs, giving present or perfect meaning, but no other *be*-form appears in this structure.

- (36) *A swel it swel, luk da. A bigfut dem gi mi.*  
 ‘It certainly **swelled** up, look there. Someone gave me the bigfoot.’
- (37) *Luk hou a krievm im krievm.*  
 ‘See how **greedy** she is!’
- (38) *A mos im mosi gaan aredi.*                      or                      *A gaan im mosi gaan aredi.*  
 ‘He **must** have left already.’    ‘He **must** have **left** already.’

5.6. Focus structures: Other types of clefting

Non-predicative elements may be clefted similarly but are not copied. These include pronouns and nouns (28, 36, 39), locative phrases (40), temporal phrases (41), manner adverbials, and question-words (42). *Wh*-questions are normally clefted, and have a falling intonation contour; they may be introduced by *a*, *is*, or zero. Even Louise Bennett, the paragon of basilectal folk-poets, shows such variation as *A noh sintin ... Is sintin ...* ‘It’s not something that... It’s something that...’ (Bennett 1966: 126).

- (39) *She waan mi fi come back cause a she one deh-deh and she fraid.*  
 ‘She wanted me to return for **she alone** was there and she was afraid.’  
 (Sistren 1987:77)
- (40) *A wisaid unu a go go luk fi im? A wichpaat im de ya?*  
 ‘Where are you (pl.) going to look for him? Where is he?’
- (41) *Afta it kom oot a di fut, a chrii die schriet hit bon mi.*  
 ‘After it came out of my foot, it burned me for **three days straight**.’
- (42) *Lord God! A weh a go tell me madda seh?*  
 ‘Lord God! What am I going to tell my mother?’                      (Sistren 1987: 69)
- (43) *Yes, Brer Puss, all di weddin’ you was a come a yahso, you was a come come eat out di butta!*  
 ‘Yes Brother Puss, even the “weddings” you were coming to here, you were only coming to finish eating the butter!’                      (Dance 1985: 19)

Other focus constructions are common in JamC as well. Pseudo-clefts occur with initial *aal* ‘all’, which may have either quantitative force or intensive, or both (43). Non-restrictive relatives often use an identificational left-dislocation structure (72).

### 5.7. The copula with adjectives and locatives

Zero copula is normal before bare predicate adjectives in JamC (Rickford 1996 finds it to be near-categorical). Predicate adjectives in JamC may be negated by *no*, may follow pre-verbal TMA markers (44), and may be the complement of a modal. Progressive *a* conveys a processual interpretation (45) with semantically appropriate nonstative verbs (Winford 1996); this also happens with the comparative (*deh-deh a colder*), or with the simple adjective plus the process verb *get* (*deh-deh a get cold*). Bailey notes that the quantitative adjectives *likl* ‘little’, *nof* ‘much, many; abundant’ and *tumoch* ‘too many’ have predicative functions, and thus do not require an overt copula (1966: 43).

When adjectives modify a following noun complement (Adj-N is the order of modification in JamC), i.e. when they are attributive, the equative copula is required, as expected.

(44) *Mi ongl se im did shaat!*  
‘I only said he was short!’

(45) *Yuh wife cook yuh dinner and it deh-deh a cold.*  
‘Your wife cooked your dinner and it sits there getting cold.’  
(Sistren 1987: 72)

(46) *Dem musn kom ko nobadii no di de an tiicha no da ya.*  
‘They mustn’t come because nobody is there and Teacher is not here.’  
(Roberts 1973: 37)

(47) *Yu hav wan sinting \_\_ niem Ruolin Kyaaf.*  
‘There is something \_\_ called Rolling Calf.’

A distinct, tense-neutral verb *de* ‘be there’ occurs with locatives (45, 46), either taking a prepositional complement or question-finally; it is homophonous with *de* ‘there’. Studying a text “replete with basilectal or ‘deep creole’ elements”, Rickford finds verbal *de* “the most persistent of the creole copulas” (1996: 221, 227), occurring in about two-thirds of all locatives. However, even here he finds in nearly 20 percent of cases *iz/waz* are used; these *be*-forms occur before locatives throughout the mesolect as well.

Returning to the significance of comparisons made between creoles (JamC in particular) and AAVE, Baugh (1980) was the first to look for separate patterning of *be*-forms before adjectives and locatives in AAVE, theorizing that they might



confirm its creole ancestry. While the AAVE data on this point remain complex and equivocal (Rickford 1996), there is no doubt of the dramatic contrast between these structures within JamC: overt copula forms of any sort are rare before predicate adjectives, but zero copula is rare before locatives.

Existential meaning in JamC is expressed by the verb *hav*, often with an indefinite pronoun subject *yu* or *dem* (47; here and in other examples containing a relative clause the gap site is marked “\_\_”).

## 6. Complementation and subordination

JamC clause structure contrasts with English dialects in several ways. Non-finite complements use the verb stem only: there are no gerund forms with *-in(g)*. More radically, JamC like other Atlantic Creoles possesses serial verb constructions (SVCs, below), due to the substrate influence of West African languages.

### 6.1. Nonfinite clauses

JamC does not always require a particle (e.g. English *to*) to precede non-finite clauses (48); as in StE, some verbs optionally select bare infinitive clauses. The default infinitive marker is *fi* (not to be confused with modal *fi*), but *tu* alternates for upper mesolectal speakers. *Fi* often occurs with purposive clauses (49), and as the complement of the desiderative verb *waan* ‘want’. Impersonal subjects of adjectives also take *fi*-complements (50), as do animate subjects (51–52). Structures like *Mi glad for see you* are attested as early as 1774 (Lalla and D’Costa 1990: 89). Unlike StE, constructions like \**John is easy to cry* are acceptable (51). Imperatives can be formed with *Pliiz tu* + Verb (e.g. *Pliiz tu kom dis said* ‘Come over here’).

- (48) *Him start tell di cousins all sort a someting.*  
 ‘He started to tell the cousins all kinds of things.’ (Sistren 1987: 103)
- (49) *She only do half day work fi come fi follow him go a airport.*  
 ‘She only worked a half day in order to come here to follow him to the airport.’ (Sistren 1987: 103)
- (50) *I hard fi kraas di riba.* or *Di riba haad fi kraas.*  
 ‘It’s hard to cross the river.’ ‘The river is hard to cross.’
- (51) *Jan iizi fi krai.* or *I iizi fi Jan fi krai.*  
 ‘John cries easily.’ ‘It is easy for John to cry.’ (Bailey 1966: 125)
- (52) *Him fraid fi grab it, for him fraid me tear it.*  
 ‘He was afraid to grab it, for he was afraid I would tear it.’ (Sistren 1987: 103)

## 6.2. Finite clauses

JamC declarative complementizers include *se* ‘say’ and the all-purpose *dat* ‘that’; both take finite complements and alternate with zero, so that in general it is possible for no complementizer to appear before a subordinate clause. *Se* is restricted to following verbs of speech (53), thought (e.g. *biliib* ‘believe’, *nuo* ‘know’, *fain* ‘realize’), perception (*sii* ‘see’, *yier* ‘hear’) or emotion (*sari* ‘sorry’, *shiem* ‘shame’); it probably derived from a serial construction for speech alone. It may serve as complement to predicate adjectives, and can be stranded by clefting of *wh*-items (42). Complementizer *se* cannot follow main-verb *se* ‘say’, thus testifying to its incomplete grammaticalization. Some psychic-state verbs however typically take zero complementizers, such as *biznis* ‘care’. In (54), we might equally have found *Dat mean dat ...* or *Dat mean se ...* All these forms are very common; examples (48–49, 52–54) occur on a single page of dialogue, randomly chosen.

- (53) *Him all swear seh him was going to tell me.*  
 ‘He even swore that he was going to tell me.’ (Sistren 1987: 103)
- (54) *Dat mean him deh go tek set pon me.*  
 ‘That means (that) he is going to become malignly fixated upon me.’  
 (Sistren 1987: 103)

## 6.3. Subordinating conjunctions

JamC uses several subordinating conjunctions which are either absent, or now archaic, in StE. (The coordinating conjunctions *an*, *bot*, *ar*, *nar* function similarly to their StE counterparts *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*.) These include conditional forms such as *wais* ‘whilst, if, provided’ and *sieb* ‘except, unless’ (55, from *save*), causal *sieka* ‘because of’ and *tru* ‘because’ (from *for the sake of* and *through*; 56), temporal *wen(eva)taim* ‘when(ever)’ (57), concessive *no kya* ‘no matter’ (58, from *no care*) and manner *laka se* ‘as if’ (59, from *like say*).

- (55) *Yu kyaan kom iin-ya siev yu pie yu fier.*  
 ‘You can’t come in here unless you pay your fare.’ (DJE: 394)
- (56) *She just tell him dat tru him leggo di secret.*  
 ‘She just told him that because he let out her secret.’ (Sistren 1987: 184)
- (57) *Weneva taim dat im kom, im gwain plie a trik.*  
 ‘When she comes she is going to play a prank.’ (DJE: 469)
- (58) *No kya we yu go yu naa fain non.*  
 ‘No matter where you go, you won’t find any.’ (Bailey 1966: 58)
- (59) *Him ron laka se dem set daag ata im.*  
 ‘He ran as if they had set dogs after him.’ (DJE: 270)

## 7. Serial verb constructions

Serial verb constructions have been topics of extensive research by creolists (Alleyne 1980). Though they resemble both coordination and subordination structures, there are strong arguments against both analyses. It has been suggested that they are natural products of first- or second-language acquisition under certain conditions, but this seems unlikely. Not all creoles have SVCs; they appear to be a legacy of substrate languages, especially the Kwa family in the JamC case. Besides, Lalla and D'Costa (1990: 71) note "Serial verbs are not attested in the earliest texts"; appearing only in the later 19th century.

SVCs involve two or more verbs brought together without a complementizer, conjunction or infinitive marker, and with no pause. If TMA or negation are marked, the marking on all verbs agrees, and typically only occurs on the first. There is normally a single expressed subject, and one direct object (if any); these are often shared across the verbs, but there is cross-linguistic variation here. SVCs are commonly categorized as directional, instrumental, dative (62), benefactive, comitative, comparative etc. Creoles may be grouped according to how many of these functions occur. Most types occur in JamC, except possibly benefactive. Direction away normally employs *go*, and towards uses *come*; (60) recalls the indignant semi-auxiliary *come* of AAVE. Instrumental with *tek* 'take' (61) is a typologically important function, grouping JamC with deep creoles such as the Surinamese languages, Krio and Haitian. The comparative serial (63) is now infrequent in JamC. When three serial verbs occur together, one is always directional (64); here the third verb has a different subject.

- (60) *Dis naga man come come collar me de same like a say me da him sexis.*  
 'This black man comes and collars me just as if I were the same sex as he.'  
 (1877, quoted in *DJE*: 116)
- (61) *Im tek naif kot mi.*  
 'He cut me with a knife.', lit. 'He took knife cut me.'  
 (Alleyne 1980: 93)
- (62) *Kya di buk kom gi mi.*  
 'Bring the book for me.'  
 (Alleyne 1980: 94)
- (63) *Manggo de a yaad paas plenti.*  
 'A great many mangoes are in the yard.'  
 (Cassidy p.c.)
- (64) *Im waan mi fi go kya im kom.*  
 'He wants me to bring it', lit. 'He wants me to go carry it come.'  
 (Alleyne 1980: 91)

## 8. Relativization

The general structure of relative clauses in Atlantic Creoles follows their lexifier languages. JamC is no exception. Christie (1996) closely examines JamC relatives which are simultaneously the subject of emphatic focusing strategies (left-dislocation, pseudo-clefting); she finds this co-occurrence very common, and gives a developmental account.

JamC relative markers are *a*, *we*, *wa(t)*, *huufa*, *dat* and *huu*; in many cases a null relativizer is also possible. The non-pronominal relativizers originated in deictic elements (*a*, *dat* < *that*), while the relative pronouns originated in interrogative pronouns, e.g. *wa* < *what*. Christie assumes the most general basilectal pronoun, *we*, to have derived from *where* and expanded from an original locative use, but the DJE gives a NW England dialectal etymon *wha* for both *wa* and *we*, which are indistinguishable today except in locative relatives (*we* only). *Huu* is the acrolectal and mesolectal form, following English in its restriction to [+human]; so too does *huufa* (< *who* + *for* via possessive pronoun *fi-huu*), but its use is basilectal; it does not alternate with zero.

Three types of relativization can be distinguished, involving overt relativizers, null relativizers, and resumptive pronouns. The one closest to StE involves a relative marker introducing a clause in which there is a corresponding structural gap (65, where the gap is in subject position of the relative clause; 10, 66, in object position with *we*; 13 with *huu*; 71 with *huufa*; and 67, the object of a stranded preposition). The gap results from movement of the *wh*-item.

(65) *Yu miin him a \_\_ wena mek naiz mam?*

‘Do you mean the one that \_\_ was making noise, ma’am?’

(66) *We have a place weh we call \_\_ Atom Hole.*

‘There is a place that we call \_\_ Atom Hole.’ (Dance 1985: 94)

(67) *Mi rispek ar tu di dort we shi waak pan \_\_, Mada.*

‘I respect her to the ground that she walks on \_\_, Mother.’

Pied-piping is not possible in JamC (in 67, \* ... *pan we shi waak*). In general prepositions and other post-verbal particles are tightly bound to the verb. The only apparent exception to this is *fi*- in the interrogative pronoun *fi-huu*.

Null relativizers are the norm in existential sentences when the relativized noun-phrase is indefinite, and the subject of the clause (47 above, but not 66), and also occur in other sentence types (23, 68). Christie argues for “deletion of the coreferential NP within the relative clause” (1996: 54), rather than *wh*-fronting. She also includes some purposive *fi*-clauses here (69), though *fi* does not vary with zero and in other ways is not a typical relativizer.

- (68) *Him say me one one hog me have \_\_ me fi give you \_\_.*  
 ‘He said I should give you ( ) the only hog I have \_\_.’  
 (Dance 1985: 21)

- (69) *Mi bring kluoz fi di uman put aan \_\_.*  
 ‘I’ve brought clothes for the woman to put on \_\_.’ (Christie 1996: 55)

In the third type resumptive pronouns occur inside the relative clause. Christie suggests this “more usually occurs ... where the co-referential NP is possessive ... [and] an overt relativizer is necessary” (1996: 58), (70). Resumptive pronouns also occur outside the relative clause, most commonly in non-restrictive relatives (72). Both types occur in non-standard English dialects. Interestingly, resumptive pronouns are also common in acrolectal Jamaican English relatives.

- (70) *Di uman we dem tiif **ar** biebi gaan a stieshan.*  
 lit. ‘The woman that they stole **her** baby has gone to the station.’  
 (Christie 1996: 58)

- (71) *Di uman huufa biebi dem tiif \_\_ gaan a stieshan.*  
 ‘The woman whose baby they stole \_\_ has gone to the station.’  
 (Christie 1996: 56)

- (72) *Mi yu si ya, **mi** kyaan bada wid dem.*  
 ‘I (whom) you see here, **I** can’t bother with them.’ (Bailey 1966: 108)

## 9. Pronouns

The pronominal system of JamC makes few distinctions of case or gender, and is not characterized by agreement in these dimensions. It does however make systematic distinction of person and number, in fact more so than StE. Even at the most basilectal level JamC distinguishes case in the possessive pronoun *huufa* if nowhere else, though Christie suggests it is a late 19th-century innovation (1996: 56–57). Mesolectal speakers typically possess some gender- and case-specific forms, but are not consistent in their use. The system is therefore not simpler than StE, either in the sense of possessing fewer dimensions of contrast, or in being grammatically regular as English is (Mühlhäusler 1997: 234–236). Little work has been done to explore conditions for variation.

Setting aside *huufa*, Radford finds a case-less system of pronouns further evidence that JamC lacks “uninterpretable case-features; those which have been retained are interpretable person-, number- and gender-features” (1997: 182–183). Thus JamC would share common ground with native child acquisition of English, in which uninterpretable features are acquired later. Radford argues JamC distinguishes “between overt and covert forms ... the minimal case distinction we should expect to find in any language” (1997: 206–207).

## 9.1. Personal pronouns

The personal pronouns are given in (73). *Im* ‘he, she, him, her, it’ is the default gender- and case-less form (14), sometimes used for impersonal or non-human referents (8), but *i* ‘it’ is not used for human ones (50); animacy is a distinction native to JamC. English-like forms enter in 3rd person singular; though common in the mesolect, they are not fully integrated into the grammar of JamC. *Shi* is the first gender-marked form to appear; *ar* cannot be focused (*\*A ar mi lov*, ‘It’s her I love’), indicating that it is a marked form. Mesolectal speakers use gender- and case-marked 3sg pronouns (when they do use them) in appropriate ways (24, 67), without hyper-correction. Use of *ii* ‘he’ and *shi* ‘she’ for oblique cases does not occur in JamC.

(73)	Person	Singular	Plural
	1	<i>mi, a (ai)</i>	<i>wi</i>
	2	<i>yu</i>	<i>unu</i>
	3	<i>im, i (ii) (shi) (ar)</i>	<i>dem</i>

The 2nd pl. form *unu* (27, 40) is traced to Igbo (DJE; Allsopp 1996; Parkvall 2000), or to convergence among e.g. Wolof *yena*, Kongo *yeno*, Kimbundu *yenu*, and Common Bantu *\*nu* (Holm 2000). Lalla and D’Costa (1990: 78), however, find it “only in the middle and later 19th century”. *Unu* is also used as an indefinite pronoun, like AmE *you* or BrE *one* (74), while *yu* sometimes has non-singular reference.

*Ai* is a distinctive feature of Rastafarian speech, with productive compounding in *I-man*, *I-an-I*, *I-dren* (Pollard 1994). These metaphorically and ideologically motivated uses cannot be confused with everyday standard usage, where it is strictly acrolectal. As an element of Rasta Talk accessible to a general audience for a variety of discourse purposes, *ai* is a regular, if specialized, component of the JamC pronominal system. However, as creative use is a hallmark of this register, *ai* and its compounds cannot be exclusively assigned a single number, case or person (75).

(74) *Unu kudn bloodbat gi i man chrii onjrid dala.*  
 ‘Nobody could even give the man three hundred damn dollars.’

(75) *Ai an ai taakin tu di ai ier.*  
 ‘I have been talking to this man.’ (Pollard)

First- and second-person pronouns (and 3rd sg. *i*) have final short lax vowels, and even *ai* may be reduced to /a/ (42). As this is quite common in West African languages and other Atlantic Creoles, but not permitted by the phonotactics of most English varieties, it is clearly African-derived.

## 9.2. Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns are simply derived in JamC by prefixing *fi-* to the personal pronouns *mi*, *yu*, *im*, *ar*, *wi*, *unu* or *dem* (76). *Fi-huu* serves as possessive interrogative, and the probable source of *huufa*. Though it is not necessarily stressed, the *fi-* prefix may receive primary stress here (77); this is also true when it operates as a possessive adjective, i.e. modifies rather than replaces a noun (78). Lalla and D’Costa (1990: 75) note “the absence of *fe* + Noun as a possessive marker in the earliest texts”.

(76) *Black bud lef’fe ‘im ticks fe pick fe go pick cow own.*  
 ‘Black bird leaves his own ticks to go and pick **Cow’s**.’  
 (Watson 1991: 37)

(77) *Mi nuo di fuor touzin mi mek a fi-mi!*  
 ‘I know the four thousand I make is **mine!**’ [=dollars]

(78) *Den no fi-me work me put yuh inna?*  
 ‘Then wasn’t it **my** job I got for you?’  
 (Sistren 1987: 126)

The emphatic or contrastive possessive adjective *uon(a)* ‘own’ usually follows a possessor noun (76), but may appear with just a pronoun (79), or even the combination of *fi* + proper noun (80). When *uon(a)* does appear, the possessed noun may be present – e.g. (77) might as well have terminated (...) *a fi-mi uona ting!*, with stress on *uona* – but is more often absent, in which case the complex functions as possessive pronoun (i.e. *ar uon* = ‘hers’, *fi-wi uon* = ‘ours’). In these constructions stress generally falls on the preceding possessor (pro)noun, unlike English, where stress usually falls on *own*.

It is also possible to have only bare personal pronouns with possessive force (*unu* in 27, *yu* in 55, the first *me* in 68), i.e. possession by juxtaposition (possessor + possessed); this structure is not restricted to pronouns, but occurs also with full nouns, including proper nouns (e.g. *di uman biebi* ‘the woman’s baby’, *Rabat buk* ‘Robert’s book’). English-like forms alternate in the mesolect, especially in the first person (*mai*, *owa*), as in (81).

(79) *Me did a carry a pan a water from di next door yard for dem did lock off fi-we own again.*  
 ‘I used to carry a pan of water from the yard next door, for they had shut off ours again.’ [a standpipe]  
 (Sistren 1987: 187)

(80) *Jos bikaaz evribadi wena go luk pan fi-Patsi uon...*  
 ‘Just because everybody was looking at Patsy’s ...’ [=frock]

(81) *Mek wi go ina owa pakit an bai di lika oot a wi pakit!*  
 ‘Let’s reach in our pockets and buy the liquor out of our own pockets.’

## 9.3. Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns include the *wh*-items *we*, *wa*, *huu* and *huu-fa* (above). These function similarly to adjectives *wich* ‘which’, adverbs *wa mek* ‘why’, *hou* ‘how, why’, *wen* ‘when’, and *homoch* ‘how much/many’ in terms of a preference for *a*-clefting. In the mesolect *wai* ‘why’ occurs, but it cannot be clefted. Several interrogative pronouns are semantically transparent compounds, e.g. *huufa* and *homoch* above, but also *wen-taim* ‘when’ (57), *wich-paat* ‘where, wherever’ and *wi-said* ‘where’ (40), which may be relative pronouns too. This strategy also occurs in prepositions such as *batam-said* ‘below’ (82).

(82) *Mi waak kom dong a dis ais kriim plees, likl bit batamsaid di hoos.*  
 ‘I walked down to this ice-cream place, a little below the house.’

(83) *So wen she go long, she see so-so head in de road.*  
 ‘As she went along, she saw just a head in the road.’ [without a body]  
 (DJE: 417)

(84) *Dem miit op (dem) wan aneda pan di ruod.*  
 ‘They met each other on the road.’

## 9.4. Indefinite, reflexive and reciprocal pronouns

Indefinite pronouns are transparently derived from English, but may combine several functions, e.g. *somting* ‘something; thing’ (usually reduced to [soʔm]), *smadi* ‘somebody; person; human being; one’. They may also take determiners and be quantified or counted, e.g. *wan smadi* ‘someone, a person’, *chrii smadi* ‘three people’, *evri smadi* ‘everyone’.

While JamC does follow an English model for reflexive pronouns, suffixing number-neutral *-sef* ‘self’ to make *misef*, *yusef*, *imsef*, *arsef* – as well as *wisef*, *unusef* and *demsef* – other forms also serve similar functions, e.g. *so-so* ‘only, by itself’ (83). Reciprocals in any person may be formed on the model (*Pron-pl*) *wan aneda* ‘each other’, with an optional preceding personal pronoun (84).

## 9.5. Demonstratives

Demonstratives in Atlantic English Creoles generally derive from superstrate forms and syntax, given the normal word order of modification by demonstrative adjectives: European lexifier (Dem-N), but West African substrate (N-Dem). Indeed, superstrate demonstratives are also generally thought to be the source of the definite articles in many Creoles (below), given the prominence of deictic terms in language contact situations, plus their strong forms and likelihood of bearing stress, compared to articles.



JamC demonstrative pronouns are singular proximal *dis* ‘this’, singular distal *dat* ‘that’, and plural *dem* ‘these, those’. The demonstrative adjectives are the same, and always appear in pre-N position. They are supplemented by singular *da* ‘this, that’, which may only occur before nouns suffixed by the locative particles *-ya* ‘here’ or *-de* ‘there’. However, the main forms are not only compatible with this structure, but also with direct suffixing of the locatives, giving the paradigm in (85).

(85)	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Proximal</b> <i>dis-ya ting</i> <i>dis ting-ya</i> <i>da ting-ya</i> ‘this thing’	<b>Distal</b> <i>dat-de ting</i> <i>dat ting-de</i> <i>da ting-de</i> ‘that thing’
	<b>Plural</b>	<i>dem-ya ting</i> <i>dem ting-ya</i> ‘these things’	<i>dem-de ting</i> <i>dem ting-de</i> ‘those things’

JamC demonstratives are [+definite] and occupy the same syntactic slot as articles, thus may not co-occur with them. However, they may co-occur with all other available components of the noun-phrase (including plural suffix *-z*) except, apparently, post-nominal plural-marker *-dem*. In over 3,600 tokens of semantically plural noun phrases, I found only one case of demonstrative *dem* with plural *-dem*, i.e. *dem N-dem* (86).

- (86) *So, dem bwai-dem kom an dem fling tuu brik an tuu bakl.*  
‘So those guys came and threw a few bricks and a few bottles.’
- (87) *Hou dem spiik da wie de an wii spiik da wie ya?*  
‘How come they speak that way, and we (only) speak this way?’
- (88) *A dis yah kind a life yuh want? Look pon yuh!*  
‘Is this the kind of life you want? Look at you!’ (Sistren 1987: 123)
- (89) *If we did ever see yuh dat deh night, we wuda mek police beat yuh.*  
‘If we had seen you that night, we would have let the police beat you.’

## 10. Noun phrase structure

### 10.1. Possession

Several aspects of noun-phrase structure have been treated above. In particular, possessive structures are generally similar regardless of whether they are headed by a possessor pronoun or noun. In StE there are three types of possessive structures:

- i) [possessor pronoun – possessed noun], e.g. *my book*
- ii) [possessed noun + *of* + possessor noun], e.g. *books of Michelle*
- iii) [possessor noun + *-s* + possessed noun], e.g. *Michelle's books*

The structures equivalent to (i) were described above; (ii) is rare, and does not differ from StE except in the preposition, a 'of' (90). The third type, suffixing possessive *-s*, does not occur in JamC, and is a salient marker of StJamE. However, JamC has another common structure which does not occur in StE:

- iv) [possessor noun – possessed noun], e.g. *Jien pat* 'Jane's pot'

Complex possessive phrases also occur mixing patterns: (91) utilizes (i) and (iv). This order also occurs in non-possessive noun-noun compounding, e.g. kin-terms such as *biebi-madda* (92, 93); the pattern is well-established in StJamE, e.g. (93), which also uses the possessive *-s* suffix.

- (90) *Wel natchrali! Mi fiil di anz a dopi, man.*

'Well, naturally! I have felt the hands of ghosts, man.'

- (91) *Me aunty never like we to mix wid we faada family.*

'My aunt didn't like us to mingle with our father's family.'

(Sistren 1987: 164)

- (92) *She never like we fi go down to mi Granny, me faada-madda.*

'She didn't like us to go visit my Granny, my father's mother.'

(Sistren 1987: 164)

- (93) *Betty's baby-father came to the dress rehearsal.*

(Sistren 1987: 292)

## 10.2. Noun classification

Nouns are divided into the same classes traditional in English grammars, namely mass, count and proper nouns. Their properties are largely the same as StE. Mass nouns (e.g. *rais* 'rice'), being non-count, cannot take a plural marker or the singular indefinite article *wan* 'a, an', though they may be either semantically definite or indefinite. Proper nouns have similar restrictions, except that when they refer to humans, they may take the associative plural. Count nouns may receive any determiner or plural marker; only count nouns can properly be generic. Bailey (1966: 21–26) further identifies a class of abstract nouns (94), which may take the definite article (*di*, 'the') where StE does not allow it, or an indefinite quantifier (*no*, *aal*, *tumoch* 'too much', etc.). However, there are counter-examples to her claim that they may not take the demonstrative (95).

Noun class membership is not the same as in StE. In particular, some nouns that are mass in StE are count in JamC (96, 20).

- (94) *Di honggri ena wip me.*  
 ‘Hunger was whipping me.’ (Bailey 1966: 25)
- (95) *Dat lov, dat ziyl, wa wi did av fors taim, yu don hav it agen.*  
 ‘That love, that zeal, we had in the old days, you don’t find it anymore.’
- (96) *If me sista want a money, she would have to go and meet him.*  
 ‘If my sister wanted money, she would have to go and meet him.’  
 (Sistren 1987: 165)

### 10.3. Articles

JamC has a singular indefinite article *wan* ‘a(n)’, and a number-neutral definite article *di* ‘the’, which appear deceptively similar to StE in function. *Wan* is transparently derived from the numeral *one*. In JamC, specificity rather than definiteness directly motivates article use. A striking reflection of this is the influence of noun-phrase specificity on the tense interpretation of bare non-stative verbs (section 2.3).

		Spec	Def	Past	Non-past
(97) a.	<i>Di uman sel di manggo.</i>	+	+	+	
b.	<i>Di uman sel di manggo-dem.</i>	+	+	+	
c.	<i>Di uman sel manggo.</i>	–	–		+
d.	<i>Di uman sel mangoes.</i>	–	–		+
e.	<i>Di uman sel wan manggo.</i>	+	–	+	

The default interpretation for (97) a. and b., with object noun-phrases that are both definite and specific, is past-tense. In contrast, the default interpretation for (97) c. and d., with object noun-phrases that are neither definite nor specific, is non-past. For (97) e., however, the specific but indefinite noun phrase forces a past-tense reading, just like the other [+specific] cases. This interaction has been described for Haitian Creole, and interpreted as evidence that while stativity is useful in accounting for tense interpretation, other *aktionsart* properties (e.g. telicity) are also important.

Bickerton (1981) proposed for creoles in general the following pattern:

- The definite article is used for presupposed/specific NPs (98);
- the indefinite article is used for asserted/specific NPs (99); and
- no (zero) article for non-specific NPs (100).

This account describes much JamC data (98–100), though a number of non-Atlantic creoles do allow a definite interpretation of bare nouns (Holm 2000: 214; i.e., cases resembling 97 c. behave like 97 a.).

- (98) *Lef dem chiljren op a di hoos.*  
 ‘[I] left those kids up at the house.’

- (99) *Y'av a glas choch op de.*  
 'There's a glass[-fronted] church up there.'
- (100) *Bad man dem taim-de!*  
 '[There were] bad guys around in those days.'

Furthermore, generic noun phrases, which are utterly non-transparent in the StE article system, are systematically rendered with no article in JamC. The subjects of the StE sentences in (101–104) are all generic, but each exhibits a different determiner structure. In their JamC equivalents, each subject noun phrase would be rendered simply *Man* (except 104, *Wiel a mamal*, with the equative copula *a*).

- (101) *A man should have a dog.*
- (102) *Man is a mammal.*
- (103) *Men are mammals.*
- (104) *The whale is a mammal.*
- (105) *Police shoot Starman inna dance ... Dem rain down gunshot pon him.*  
 'The police shot Starman at a dance ... They rained down gunshots on him.'  
 (Sistren 1987: 192)

However, in JamC a bare noun may also receive an indefinite, specific reading (*gunshot* in 105), suggesting that at least some sentences like (97) c. behave like (97) e. Thus bare noun phrases, just like bare verb forms, do not have a single necessary interpretation. This is another piece of evidence that categorical analyses based on privative oppositions misrepresent creole grammars, including JamC: strict form-meaning isomorphy does not hold for bare, unmarked forms.

From a historical perspective, this is unsurprising: unstressed, non-transparent elements like the English articles might well have gone missing early in language contact, leaving bare forms subject to a range of interpretations and contextual constraints. Subsequent conventionalization over three centuries has not essentially altered this situation. Though the reconstituted article system of JamC operates along simpler, more regular lines than that of StE, it is not the sort of perfectly neat, idealized system which linguists prefer to construct for creole grammars (but which is alien to other natural languages).

#### 10.4. Number marking

In contexts where Standard English requires plural number to be categorically marked with allomorphs of {plural -s}, JamC attaches post-nominal affix *-dem*, historically derived from the third-person plural pronoun *dem* 'they'. Plural *-dem* only occurs on definite nouns, and there is a strong tendency for it to be preceded by *di* 'the', while it is very rarely found in the *dem* + Noun-*dem* construction (86

above). Plural *-dem* is only available for third-person referents, not first-person or direct address (\* *Aal yu bwai-dem!* ‘All you boys!’) – no doubt owing to its pronominal origin.

Yet the mesolect shows frequent use of *s*-marking, and JamC also allows zero-marking of plural nouns (*pieren* in 107), which occurred 45 percent of the time in a Kingston study. In fact, both *-s* and zero-marked forms, and variation between the two, are attested in 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century JamC – far earlier than *-dem*, which has only been found from the latter half of the 19th century (Lalla and D’Costa 1990). All are present in basilectal speech as well as mesolectal (106).

Though it is relatively rare, it is perfectly acceptable for *-dem* and *-s* to co-occur (107–109): *-s* is always more closely attached to the noun (i.e. *Noun-s-dem*), while *-dem* may attach to the right edge of the noun phrase (109).

- (106) *Tings noh bright, bickle noh nuff!*  
 ‘Things aren’t easy, there’s not much food!’ (Bennett 1966: 121)
- (107) *Afta a no iivn rimemba di nuots-dem agen.*  
 ‘I don’t even remember the [musical] notes any more.’
- (108) *Fi-dem pieren mait muor richa dan mai pieren, so dem mait av muor  
 – beta fasililitiz-dem.*  
 ‘Their parents might be richer than mine, so they might have more  
 – better facilities.’
- (109) *Frenz an a uol-dem, neva falo frenz an a uol.*  
 ‘Friends in general, never follow friends in general.’

Possessives, demonstratives and definite articles all mark a noun-phrase as definite; *-dem* cannot easily appear without them. While indefinite quantifiers freely occur with *-dem* in partitive phrases (110, 111), the very few instances of definite quantifiers (e.g. cardinal numerals) plus *Noun-dem* are often interpretable as indefinite (note the first use of *two* in 112). Furthermore, *di* + *Noun-dem* phrases are compatible with a definite but non-specific reading (113).

- (110) *Some a di woman dem is single woman.*  
 ‘Some of the women are single women.’ (Sistren 1987: 49)
- (111) *None a di member dem no do notten bout it.*  
 ‘None of the members did anything about it.’ (Sistren 1987: 87)
- (112) *Me pack up me two sinting dem inna two big barrel.*  
 ‘I packed up my few possessions into two big barrels.’  
 (Sistren 1987: 192)
- (113) *Di man dem in my district is not easy.*  
 ‘The men of my district can be truculent.’ (Sistren 1987: 89)

*-Dem* is only allowed to occur in definite NPs. In StE, of course, this requirement does not apply to *-s* at all, but in JamC, these environments also favor *-s*. Determiners that mark number (quantifiers, numerals and demonstratives) disfavor *-s*, while *-dem* practically does not occur with them at all. This can be characterized as a functional pattern, where markers tend to appear in cases that would otherwise not bear surface signs of their plural meaning.

Both markers are favored by the presence of a [+human] head noun. Similar constraints apply in Liberian and Nigerian English Creole varieties, possibly related to *-dem*'s history of grammaticalization from a pronoun with primarily human reference.

Number marking in JamC grammar is thus characterized by intricate, coexisting constraints on competing forms from English (*-s*) and Creole (*-dem*).

### 10.5. Associative plurals and other phenomena

In JamC, as in a number of Atlantic Creoles and African substrate languages, an associative plural using *-dem* may attach to a person's proper name with the meaning 'X and her customary associates' (e.g. friends, family members, co-workers, etc.). While this construction resembles coordinate structures in vernacular Englishes (e.g. *John an' dem* in AAVE, see Wolfram, this volume), there is no conjunction in the JamC cases (114).

- (114) *Miss Waaka dem laaf afta im.*  
 'Miss Walker and the others laughed at him.' (Roberts 1973: 18)

- (115) *Mi faati-plenti aredi!*  
 'I am well over forty already!'

JamC possesses several indefinite quantifiers which contrast with StE, and typically co-occur with *-dem*, other than those given by Bailey (1966: 30). A near-obsolete one is *pempeny* 'plentiful' (DJE: 345, < *Twi mpempem* 'thousands'); common today is *uol-iip* 'many, a lot' (< *whole heap*). *Wan-wan* may either mean 'occasional(ly), sporadic' or 'one at a time'. The word *-plenti* may be suffixed to a numeral (115), but this normally only happens with a bi-syllabic stem. Finally, measure words of weight, distance, currency etc. occur in JamC much as in StE but unlike other many British dialects which have *three mile*, *four pound*, they show no tendency to disfavor plural marking with *-s* – in fact, there is a small tendency to the contrary.

## 11. Conclusion

Compared to many creoles, and indeed many vernacular dialects of English, a great deal is known about JamC morphology and syntax – but this basic description of morphology and syntax suggests further exploration is needed. I have barely mentioned sociolinguistic and applied linguistic research. I conclude by calling for research into poorly-explored areas, encouraging the empirical use of language corpora to shed light on JamC by looking at new and little-studied sources. Linguists often rely too much on their own, or other people's, intuitions, or on a handful of well-known texts or sources of data (e.g. Emmanuel Rowe's stories, transcribed by DeCamp in Le Page 1960; Beryl Bailey's native intuitions in Bailey 1966). JamC is a vital language, continually producing new data, both innovative and traditional, for linguists to attend to. Recent useful examinations include the study of ordinary vernacular writing, mass media, style and register, vernacular orthography, translation to and from JamC, academic writing, and institutionally-defined speech and literacy. There can be little doubt that a great deal more remains to be discovered.

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# **Eastern Caribbean English-derived language varieties: morphology and syntax**

Michael Aceto

## **1. Introduction**

The syntax of the Anglophone Eastern Caribbean is only marginally better documented than the phonology of this region. Consult the chapter on the phonology of the Eastern Caribbean by Aceto (other volume) for a discussion of this region's frequent absence from research programs in creolistics and for a map of the region; see Aceto (2002a) who designates specific islands of the Eastern Caribbean (among other areas of the Americas as well) as neglected sites for future research. Aceto and Williams (2003) fills in some of the research gaps noted in Aceto (2002a).

Syntax has often been considered at the heart of Creole studies as it is within the discipline of linguistics in general. Many theoretical issues in creole studies (e.g. the locus of creole emergence, whether creole languages offer unique insights into internal language or cognitive constructs, the nature of variation in creole-speaking communities, etc.) rely largely on syntactic data in order to support their claims. This chapter is largely based on Holm (1988–1989), Winford (1993), Aceto and Williams (2003), various specific articles referenced below, and the author's own notes from fieldwork whose results have not yet appeared in published articles.

## **2. Some general syntactic features of Eastern Caribbean English-derived languages**

### **2.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I discuss some syntactic features found in the general Eastern Caribbean (while making reference to features believed to be representative of the Western Caribbean as well), and then discuss specific islands and their English-derived varieties. It should be acknowledged that we do not have much research on many of these varieties, at least when compared to the impressive amount of research carried out on, say, Jamaica and the Surinamese Creole languages (and thus they are largely ignored in this discussion). See the chapter on the phonology of the Eastern Caribbean by Aceto (other volume) for a discussion of English varieties heard by Africans in the Western Hemisphere and for the linguistic motivations for separating Caribbean restructured Englishes into broad Western and Eastern varieties.

## 2.2. Preverbal markers

## 2.2.1. Past

There are several overt preverbal past tense markers in the Caribbean in general, and nearly all of them have been documented in the Eastern Caribbean, though there is a preference for reflexes of *mi(n)* in many locations (e.g. Antigua, Barbuda, Dominica). It is important to remember that dynamic or [-stative] verbs (and sometimes even [+stative] verbs as well) often have a default “past” interpretation even if there is no overt past tense marker stated. (The terms *past* and *future* with regard to tense, instead of *anterior* and *irrealis*, are used along the lines suggested in Winford 1993.)

- (1) a. [luk mɪŋ go a skul] ‘Luke went/has gone to school.’  
(Barbuda; Aceto 2002b)
- b. [tri a hi frɛn wʌz de] ‘Three of his friends were there.’  
(St. Thomas; Hancock 1987: 283)
- c. [trii a hi frɛn bɪn de de] ‘Three of his friends were there.’  
(St. Vincent; Hancock 1987: 283)
- d. [mi waak kras de yɛside] ‘I walked along there yesterday.’  
(St. Kitts/Nevis; Hancock 1987: 292)
- e. [onli wan boi kʌm] ‘Only one boy came.’  
(St. Eustatius; Aceto *fc.* a)

The past tense marker *bin* is commonly heard in Jamaica and even in the Eastern Caribbean as is the marker *di(d)*, which is often considered an intermediate or so-called mesolectal form and is probably the most widely distributed form throughout the Caribbean. Forms related to *mi(n)* are found in both Western and Eastern Caribbean Englishes but seem to have emerged more strongly in the Eastern Caribbean. In several fieldwork locations (e.g. Barbuda, Dominica) I have extensively documented *mi(n)* but not a single instance of *bin*, though Hancock (1987) reveals several instances of preverbal *bin* in Eastern Caribbean locations such as St. Vincent and St. Kitts/Nevis. Preverbal *woz* is heard in the Western Caribbean, specifically within creole-speaking areas of Panama (Aceto 1996), but has not been documented, to my knowledge, for any area of the Eastern Caribbean. The US Virgin Islands reveal preverbal past tense *di(d)* or *had*; Whitehead (1932) reveals the use of *bin* as a past tense marker.

No researcher, to my knowledge, has yet explored why [mɪn] and its related forms emerged so strongly as past tense markers in the Eastern Caribbean as opposed to some form of [bɪn] as is more common in Jamaica and Suriname. Clearly, the word-initial onset [m-] in [mɪn] may be transparently viewed as a nasalization of the word-initial [b] in [bɪn], or, from a diachronic point of view, as a weakening of the word-initial [b-] segment as it assumes the feature of nasality. Is this feature

due somehow to the native languages spoken by African slaves? Is it a local innovation? If so, from where did it emerge and spread? Furthermore, the reflexes [mɪŋ] and [mi] have no correspondences (e.g. [bɪŋ] or [bi]) in areas that display high usage of past tense [bɪn]. What factors are responsible for the emergence and persistent use of [mɪn] and its reflexes in specific areas of the Caribbean? These questions are beyond the scope of the present chapter but I will try to provide answers in the future.

Several islands in the Anglophone Eastern Caribbean such as Saba and St. Eustatius have no overt past tense markers. The past is indicated by default, several strong verb forms (e.g. *gaan* ‘gone/went’), suppletive forms (e.g. *wɔz* ‘was’) or by context (e.g. *yesterday*, *last week*, etc.).

### 2.2.2. Future

The general future tense marker in the Eastern Caribbean is *go* and sometimes *goin*, but these are not exclusive to the region.

- (2)
- a. [mo go du am tumara] ‘I’m going to do it tomorrow.’
  - b. [ʃi a go siŋ] ‘She is going to sing.’  
(Barbuda; Aceto 2002b: 234)
  - c. [ʃiz gooɛn tu sɛiŋ] ‘She is going to sing.’  
(Saba; Hancock 1987: 301)
  - d. [ʃi go siŋ] ‘She is going to sing.’  
(Carriacou; Hancock 1987: 301)
  - e. [a go dʌn fiks it pɔn dɛ bai tomaro] ‘I will have fixed it on there before tomorrow.’  
(Grenada; Hancock 1987: 304)

The future tense marker *gwain*, which is so prevalent in the Western Caribbean, seems not to have emerged with anywhere near the same distribution in the Eastern Caribbean. In many fieldwork locations (e.g. Barbuda, St. Eustatius, Dominica among Kokoy speakers) *gwain* was rejected as a local form, and I did not record it either. The marker *a go* is also heard in the Eastern Caribbean. Winford (1993: 58–60) states that the semantic difference between *go* and *a go* is generally that the former indicates volition and the latter intention. However, I was unable to elicit these purportedly different meanings explicitly through interviews with informants in Barbuda who use both forms, though the meanings Winford ascribes may still be productive in other locations. Guyanese Creole English reveals the form *sa* as a future tense marker (as well as *go*). This form is most likely derived from Dutch *zal* ‘shall, will’. Dutch-derived varieties were spoken in the general area of Guyana and Suriname historically; *sa* is also documented for Sranan, Saramaccan, Negerhollands, and Berbice and Skepi Dutch.

2.2.3. *Progressive aspect*

There is a preference for preverbal *a* or sometimes *da* in the Eastern Caribbean, though in the same location preverbal *de* may occur to some degree as does the common verbal suffix *-in* as well (*da* is documented in some western varieties such as Jamaican as well), which sometimes can co-occur with preverbal *a*.

- (3) a. [wi a taak] ‘we are talking’  
 b. [so waa mi a train fu se] ‘So what am I trying to say?’  
 (Barbuda; Aceto 2002b: 232)  
 c. [nɔtn nʌ de apm] ‘Nothing’s happening.’  
 (Antigua; Hancock 1987: 287)  
 d. [hi mama a kaal ɔm] ‘His mother is calling him.’  
 (St. Vincent; Hancock 1987: 290)  
 e. [a tram tu sii] ‘I’m trying to see.’  
 (St. Eustatius; Aceto fc. a)

Often *a* is associated with the Eastern Caribbean and *de* with the western group of English-derived languages, but *de* is documented for Barbuda and Antigua as well as among Kokoy speakers in Dominica (more below) who exclusively use *e* as a progressive marker (e.g. *mi e nyam* ‘I’m eating’). In the US Virgin Islands, Whitehead (1932) reveals the use of (*d*)*a* as progressive markers.

2.2.4. *Completive aspect*

As in many Anglophone Caribbean communities (as well as in North American varieties of English), preverbal *done* [dʌn] is the completive marker (e.g. *she done eat* ‘she’s finished eating/she’s already eaten’). See Hancock (1987: 296–297) for a list of English-derived varieties that exhibit reflexes of this broad pattern. Post-verbal or clause-final [dʌn] is often considered to be the older pattern but nevertheless it appears to be highly restricted (if occurring at all) in the Eastern Caribbean. Completive aspect can be signaled by an adverbial such as [aredi] ‘already’ as well, e.g. *she eat already*.

2.2.5. *Habitual aspect*

Often preverbal *doz* is considered a habitual marker that characterizes Eastern Caribbean varieties. However, it is restrictively heard in the Western Caribbean as well, though its occurrence there may be related to intra-Caribbean migration in the last century. Many Eastern Caribbean varieties also use the preverbal progressive aspectual marker *a* (and sometimes *de*) as a habitual marker.

- (4) a. [wi doz train fi get di haus finiʃ nau] ‘We have been trying to finish the house (for some time).’

- b. [ʃi du om aal taim ~ ʃi doz aalweiz a du om] ‘She does that all the time/she’s always doing that.’
- c. [bout a kam in bai nait] ‘Boats arrive by night.’  
(Barbuda; Aceto 2002b: 236)
- d. [i de si i brɛda] ‘she sees her brother (on weekends).’  
(Antigua; Hancock 1987: 288)
- e. [ʃi dʌz si ʃi brɛda] ‘she see her brother (on weekends).’  
(St. Kitts/Nevis/Carriacou; Hancock 1987: 288)

Western Caribbean varieties often leave the verb phrase unmarked (e.g. *she go by im haus* ‘she stops by his house [regularly]’), which is reminiscent of similar habitual strategies in lexifier dialects. However, some areas of the Anglophone Eastern Caribbean such as Saba and St. Eustatius exhibit the same grammatical pattern.

In some areas of the Eastern Caribbean, V(erb)+*-in* can express either habitual or progressive action, whereas it typically only expresses progressive action in the Western group. However, V+*-in* as a marker of habituality seems limited to the Windward Islands that reveal a joint Francophone/Anglophone history (e.g. St. Lucia, Dominica, Grenada).

- (5) [de gooin in toun evri sonde] ‘They go to town every Sunday.’  
(Garrett 2003: 167)

This strategy seems related to the similar grammatical marker *ka* in the earlier French creole that also has both functions.

In the Bahamas (which is often considered part of the North American group of Englishes but geographically proximate to the Eastern Caribbean as well), habitual *be* is used with verb forms, e.g. *they just be playing* or *they be walk right up*, in a manner similar to that found in African American Vernacular English (AAVE). However, *doz* indicates habitual action in the Bahamas as well, as is noted for much of the Eastern Caribbean in general.

For habitual actions exclusively in the past, *yustu* (< *used to*) appears in a range of Englishes in the Caribbean and North America, though other markers described above can also be interpreted in past contexts.

### 2.3. Copula

Copula forms and their distribution are not usually features that typologically define Eastern English-derived varieties vis-à-vis Western varieties. In general, the nominal or equative copula is often [a] but [ɪz] and [bi] are also found in most consultants’ repertoires as well. The attributive form is often [de] or zero, as is also common in general English-derived Atlantic creoles. The locative copula is often [de] or [ɪz]. In addition, in Barbuda, *tap* (historically < *stop*) functions as a kind of copula (e.g. [wai ya tap so] ‘Why are you like that?’). The form *tan*

(historically < *stand*) as in [dɛm no tan so] ‘they’re not like that’ is reported for Antigua (Hancock 1987: 287). (Bastimentos Creole English in Panama displays the use of [stie] in a manner similar to [tap] and [tan].)

- (6) a. [di waadɪn a di man dat kontrol di ailan] ‘The warden is the man who controls the island.’  
 b. [hi a ma paatna/hi a mi bʌdi] ‘He’s my partner/friend/buddy.’  
 c. [we i de] ‘Where is he/she?’  
 d. [ʃi/i aarait] ‘She’s doing fine.’  
 e. [natn a hapɪn] ‘Nothing’s happening.’

(Barbuda; Aceto 2002b: 239)

According to Hancock (1987: 284), the following islands of the Eastern Caribbean exhibit reflexes of *is* [ɪz] in nominal copula forms: St. Thomas, St. Eustatius (confirmed by Aceto forthcoming a), Saba, Carriacou, and Grenada. St. Kitts/Nevis exhibit a zero form in the nominal construction, e.g. [hi mi paadna] ‘he’s my partner’, which is similar to constructions found in AAVE.

#### 2.4. Plurality

The post-nominal plural marker [an dɛm] is generally diagnostic of the Anglophone Eastern Caribbean, though simple post-nominal [dɛm], the form generally associated with Western Caribbean varieties, is heard as well. Hancock (1987: 305) lists pluralizing [an dɛm] forms for Antigua, St. Vincent, and Carriacou; and simple post-nominal [dɛm] forms for St. Thomas and St. Eustatius (confirmed by Aceto forthcoming a) as well as bound inflectional morphology for Saba and Grenada. The unique post-nominal plural form [an de] is heard in Barbuda as well. There is as yet no research examining why the post-nominal form [an dɛm] (or [an de] in Barbuda), as opposed to simple [dɛm], emerged so strongly in the Eastern Caribbean.

- (7) a. [di ʃiip an dɛm] ‘the sheep’  
 b. [luk pan maavin an de a troubl di ʃiip] ‘Look at Marvin and his friends bothering the sheep.’  
 c. [di artoritiz an dɛm gat rait doŋ tu di elbo in de] ‘The authorities are up to their elbows in there (the drug trade).’  
 d. [de hed fo amerika bika dɛm plenti gat kruz ʃip an de] ‘They head for America because they have a lot of cruise ships.’  
 e. [stap tʃesɪn di ʃip dɛm] ‘Stop chasing the sheep!’

(Barbuda; Aceto 2002b: 238)

A further plural strategy is also found in many Caribbean varieties, including many English-derived dialects in several locations: prenominal [dɛm] (i.e. [dɛm

diplomatik paasport] ‘their diplomatic passports’) indicates not only possession but plurality as well. Hancock (1987: 305) also records this strategy for St. Kitts/Nevis. In instances of this nature, a redundant post-nominal plural marker is rarely if ever heard.

- (8) [an den de kieri in dem sut bika dem gat dem diplomatik paasport]  
 ‘And then they carry (drugs) in their suits because they have diplomatic passports’

(Barbuda; Aceto 2002b: 238)

The co-occurrence of these forms in the Eastern Caribbean may be due to intra-Caribbean migration in the last 150 years, or they may indicate a long standing point of variation since English-derived restructured varieties began to emerge in the Caribbean during the period of slavery. It is difficult to be certain, even if creolists in general feel more comfortable with the highly questionable assumption that earlier varieties of creole languages were monolithic and contemporary synchronic variation is a more recent (i.e. post-emancipation) phenomenon.

## 2.5. Pronouns

It is in the pronominal systems that we can see what may be the most transparent and robust split between Eastern and Western Caribbean English-derived varieties. The following pronominal forms are heard in the Eastern Caribbean. All forms should be considered to have multiple functions as subject, object and possessive pronouns unless otherwise indicated.

*Table 1.* Pronouns in Anglophone Eastern Caribbean varieties

	<b>Singular</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> person	a (subject), mi
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	yu
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	(h)i ‘he/she/it’ (subject/possessive) fi ‘she’ (subject/possessive) om, am, im ‘he/she/it’ (object)
	<b>Plural</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> person	aawi
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	aayu/unu
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	de (subject), dem

Many Eastern Caribbean varieties, as reported in Hancock (1987: 298), lack the second person plural form [unu] or any of its reflexes that are so common in Western Caribbean English-derived varieties (however, Barbados reveals [wuna]). Instead, Eastern varieties reveal the common regional form [aayu] or [alyu] or some reflex of those forms. Reisman (1964: 64) states that forms for the second person plural pronoun [hunu ~ unu] are reported by some Antiguans to be more closely associated with Barbuda and largely absent from Antigua. Though the form is occasionally heard in Barbuda (I recorded [unu] specifically), it is far less common than [aayu], etymologically ‘all of you’. The former form is more associated with exasperation or anger with a group of persons, often children who are misbehaving.

Diagnostically, *unu* is often considered more Western Caribbean and *a(l)yu*, which is rarely heard in western varieties, more Eastern Caribbean. The common English-derived dialect form [y(u)aal] is heard to some degree as well. Other pronouns that seem to be typologically diagnostic of this eastern-western split are *(h)im* (as both subject and object pronouns) in Western varieties, which are nearly always *(h)i* (as a subject pronoun) and *om* (as a third person singular object pronoun ‘he/she/it’) in Eastern Caribbean varieties; see Williams (2001) who argues that the source of this pronoun is restructured varieties of Dutch. Finally, *wi* is often the first person plural pronoun (as both subject and object pronouns) in Western varieties, and the corresponding form is *aawi* in the Eastern Caribbean; some of the Leeward Islands (Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, Anguilla, Barbuda) reveal [aabi] (Holm 1988-1989: 451).

### 3. Some features of specific Eastern Caribbean Islands

#### 3.1. The Turks and Caicos Islands

The Turks and Caicos Islands are often considered part of North American varieties of English. However, they are included in Aceto and Williams (2003) due to the fact that these islands are geographically proximate as well as under-researched. Cutler (2003) examines the English spoken on Grand Turk Island among the Turks and Caicos chain of islands. She concludes that Turks Island English (TIE) has more in common with AAVE (as well as Gullah and Bermudian) than with other varieties of English spoken in the Caribbean. For example, in TIE plurality is variably marked by the suffix *-s*, its allomorph *-z*, or  $\emptyset$ . The post-nominal plural marker [dem], found in many Atlantic Creoles (e.g. [di boi dem] *the boys*) did not occur in Cutler’s corpus. Also, possession is variably expressed by a suffix *-s* or  $\emptyset$ . TIE speakers exclusively use the first person singular nominative pronoun *I* [ai] unlike many English varieties in the West Indies that display [mi] or [a]. Lastly, all the speakers in her corpus used the third person singular verbal suffix *-s* variably. Future tense is marked by *gon* [gən] and *will* [βil] in TIE as are common strategies in AAVE (e.g. *he gon build my house* ‘he’s going to build my house’ (Cutler



2003: 68). Furthermore, there is no overt pre-verbal past tense marker; the past is indicated by verbal forms (both regular and irregular) found in lexifier varieties. Lastly, no examples of completive forms such as *done* appear in her corpus. Cutler believes that studying the language of the Caicos Islanders, most of whom are descended from American-born slaves, may provide some insight into earlier forms of AAVE spoken in the USA.

### 3.2. Virgin Islands

Sabino, Diamond and Cockcroft (2003) examine plural marking in several of the Virgin Islands, both American and British. Their consultants reveal intrasystemic variation in that they all display the Standard English strategy of using *-s* (or one of its variants), the creole strategy of post-nominal *dem*, and a noun that is unmarked for number. They provide a valuable longitudinal perspective of 51 years from 1933 to 1984 and represent speakers from four of the Virgin Islands: St. Thomas, St. John, Anegada, and Tortola. They conclude that audience is a crucial factor in predicting which forms their consultants select and that “in over four decades there has been no appreciable shift towards Standard English” (Sabino, Diamond and Cockcroft 2003: 92).

### 3.3. Anguilla

Williams (2003) examines the Webster dialect of Anguillian English, a variety spoken among the island’s population of European descent in Island Harbour. See the discussion of Anglophone Eastern Caribbean phonology by Aceto (other volume) for a discussion of Williams’ research and the importance of understanding Euro-Caribbean varieties for creole and dialect studies.

Many of the features of the Webster dialect are common throughout the Caribbean. For example, all varieties of Anguillian English follow the general Anglophone Caribbean pattern of not inverting subjects and auxiliary verbs in question forms (e.g. *you did go?*). The determiners are similar to those found in other varieties of English in the Eastern Caribbean. The indefinite article alternates between the more vernacular form *one* [wan ~ an] and the more formal form *a* [e ~ ə]. Possession is indicated by simple juxtaposition of two nominals in the order possessor-possessed (e.g. *my mother father ... my daddy father were brothers*), as is common in the Caribbean and in AAVE, but suffixation is used as well (e.g. *in my father’s time*). Negation is often indicated by *ain* /*tain* /*tisn* /*t*, and doubly marked forms are typical of the Webster dialect of Island Harbour as they are in many English-derived varieties in the Americas.

Pronouns heard in the Webster dialect are: *I* [ai ~ ə] for first person singular, and *he/she* [hi]/[ʃi] for third person singular human males and females respectively. Speakers also use [awi] ‘all we’ as the first person plural pronoun.

Several features of the Webster dialect are different than common forms heard in the general Anglophone Eastern Caribbean and in other English-derived varieties spoken on Anguilla. For example, the second person plural form [ɔyʉ] ‘all you’ is not part of the grammar of Island Harbour. Furthermore, the Webster dialect does not reveal any use of the postposed plural marker [dɛm] that is so common in many Anglophone Caribbean creoles, and this form is not part of the grammar of Anguillian English Creole in other villages on the island as well.

Habitual aspect is often indicated by the third person present verbal suffix *-s* (e.g. *I goes there every Sunday*). This strategy is often used in the Webster dialect and is heard across the island beyond Island Harbour. This feature is common in many of the English dialects of the British Isles (see, for example, Anderwald, this volume). Preverbal *do* [də] or the use of the third-person singular present tense form (verbal *-s*) to indicate habituality are documented as features of the English varieties historically spoken in the southwestern counties of England. Other strategies for marking habituality are: [də] (e.g. *Those rooms [də] come hot*), [də bi] (e.g. *From noon ‘til three o’clock, it [də bi] hot*), and [dʌz] (e.g. *I [dʌz] send it always*). Past habitual forms are typically marked with [yʉustu] ‘used to’.

Some forms in Island Harbor seem similar to AAVE forms, but Williams does not suggest language contact as the explanatory factor. For example, using past perfect forms associated with standard varieties to indicate simple past is a feature that has been widely associated with AAVE and its assumed influence. In Anguillian Englishes, the form is common both in black and white varieties on the island (e.g. *my friend, Eddie, he had call*). The presence of this strategy in the Webster dialect provides preliminary evidence that the form most likely does not derive from a North American source, and instead, likely has a source, or sources, in English dialects brought to the Caribbean by settlers and colonists. Similarly, the future is marked with the preverbal marker /gɔn/ in Webster dialect (e.g. *Someday I [gɔn] call you too, you know*). Similar forms are found in other varieties of Anguillian English throughout the island.

Progressive aspect in the Webster dialect is marked via three strategies: 1) *a* [ə] + V+*-in* (e.g. *the new ones did now start [ə-] comin in*), 2) V+*-in* (e.g. *she is goin college in Maryland*), and 3) *do be* + V+*-in* (e.g. *February, March corn do be comin*). The first and third strategies appear to be archaic in that they are heard among the oldest Websters, and are often considered to be examples of the way that the older Websters spoke, especially in the times when there was no formal education. Completive aspect is indicated by the common preverbal form *done*, e.g. *I done gone*, though it is limited in the Webster dialect to older folks who are thought not to have had much education.

### 3.4. Barbuda

Aceto (2002b) describes some of the general grammatical features associated with Barbudan Creole English (BCE). BCE reveals no fewer than four different present progressive aspectual constructions: *a* + V (e.g. [wi a taak] ‘we are talking’), *de* + V (e.g. [yu mada de kaal yu] ‘your mother is calling you’), *V-in* (e.g. [yu mami kaalin yu] ‘your mother is calling you’), and *a* + *V-in* (e.g. [so waa mi a traiin fu se] ‘So what am I trying to say?’). This last strategy is reported for Anguilla (Williams 2003), the Bahamas (McPhee 2003), and the Appalachian area of the USA (Wolfram and Christian 1976).

The simple past tense marker [min] (e.g. [de min a Inglisʃman (a Inglisʃman dem bi)] ‘they were Englishmen’) is also realized as [mɪŋ] (with a velarized nasal) (e.g. [luk (mɪŋ) go a skul] ‘Luke went/has gone to school’) or as the reduced form [mi] (e.g. [an de mi hab plenti gol] ‘and they had a lot of gold’). The widespread Caribbean form [di(d)] is heard as well (e.g. [a Inglisʃman di bi tʃif a polis] ‘an Englishman was the chief of police’).

Habitual aspect is indicated by preverbal *doz* (e.g. [wi doz traiin fi get di haus finiʃ nau] ‘We have been trying to finish the house for some time’) and an unmarked verbal form used with an adverbial (e.g. [ʃi du om aal taim] ‘She does it all the time’). Progressive forms may also be interpreted as habituals as well (e.g. [buot a kam in bai nait] ‘Boats often arrive at night’). In BCE, the future can be marked by either *go* (e.g. [yu ʃut wan dir an de go briŋ yu in] ‘you shoot a deer and they’re going to bring you in’) or *a go* (e.g. [ma sisa a go antiga tumara] ‘My sister is going to Antigua tomorrow’). In several instances, *gan* arose, as did *wil*, but not *gwain*.

BCE reveals a seemingly unique post-nominal pluralizing marker: [an de] (e.g. [luk pan maavin an de a troubl di ʃiip] ‘Look at Marvin and his friends bothering the sheep’). This plural marker is considered more “Barbudan” by many of my consultants than the typical Antiguan or general Eastern Caribbean form [an dem] or simple post-nominal [dem], which is occasionally heard.

Reisman (1964: 114) reveals [an dem], [dem], and [ɛm] for geographically proximate Antiguan Creole English, which is just two dozen miles to the south of Barbuda; Farquhar (1974: 43) only mentions “-andem” for Antiguan. None of these sources reveals post-nominal [an de] as is heard in Barbudan Creole English.

### 3.5. Carriacou

Kephart (2000) sketches many of the basic grammatical features of Carriacou Creole English (CCE). Several CCE features have been rarely documented in the literature. For example, the general grammatical function of *an* within the verbal complex in both future and past verbal constructions (e.g. [a gouin an pik mango]

'I'll pick mangoes [perhaps tomorrow]' [2000: 94] and [wi bin an pik mangou] 'we picked mangoes' [2000: 93]) has not been explored, to my knowledge, in any research (see Aceto 1998 for a similar occurrence in Panamanian Creole English).

The morpheme classes exhibited by CCE and other English-derived varieties in the Caribbean (2000: 64–65) (e.g. [fas(t) + -a] 'faster', [wikid + -nis] 'wickedness') raise the issue of when diachronically this aspect of morphology emerged in the creole's grammar. The issue of whether Creoles manifest bound inflectional or derivational morphology is a subject of some current debate in creole studies (see McWhorter 1998; Plag 2001). Also, the preference of CCE in using [finiʃ] as a completive marker (e.g. [a finiʃ it] 'I'm done eating'; [dʌn] seems to be rarely heard in this creole) is one of several interesting and/or unique features of this English-derived language (2000: 90–91), and it seems to point towards the hypothesis that CCE may be significantly influenced by the chronologically earlier French Creole.

Some other general features found in CCE are as follows. As with several creoles in the Eastern Caribbean (e.g. Barbudan, Antiguan), the post-nominal plural marker is *an dem* in CCE (e.g. [wi ting an dem] 'our things') not simple *dem* as is common in the Western Caribbean. Progressive aspect is signaled by V+*in* (e.g. [rein komin] 'rain is coming') or preverbal (*d)a* (e.g. [we yu a go] 'where are you going?'). The past tense marker is *di(d)* (e.g. [shi di dei in skul] 'she was at school') and the future marker is *gou* (e.g. [yu gou reivn] 'you will be greedy'). The stressed form *bín* only appears as the past of *be* (e.g. [we yu bín] 'where have you been/where were you?') or in limited past tense constructions (e.g. [wi bín gouin houn] 'we were going home'; [a bín an pik mangou] 'I was picking mangoes'). Negation is indicated by placing *no*, *dou*, or *en* before the predicate (e.g. [a en go dans wit yu] 'I won't dance with you'; [de no spikin patwa gi yu] 'they won't speak Patois for you').

### 3.6. St. Lucia

Garrett (2003) is the most comprehensive examination of St. Lucian Vernacular English (SLVE) to date. Garrett argues that SLVE is *not* a creole but instead a vernacular variety that has emerged relatively recently (in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) due to contact in educational institutions between English-speaking teachers and students who were/are native speakers of Kwéyòl, a French-lexified creole that dates back to the island's French colonial period (1642–1803). Thus, SLVE's greatest influence (phonologically, semantically, and, above all, syntactically) has not been English-derived creoles spoken in the Caribbean but St. Lucia's Kwéyòl instead. Some of the features that SLVE does not share with other creoles of the Eastern Caribbean are the following: anterior/past *mi(n)* (or *bin*); continuative/progressive (*d)a*; habitual (*d)a*; anterior/past *did*; completive *don*; the use of *en*, *na*, and *no* as negative preverbal markers; and pluralizing/deictic *dem*.

SLVE has several unique features usually not found in most English-derived language varieties in the Caribbean. For example, past tense is indicated by preverbal *had* (e.g. [hii had iit do bred biifoh hii goo tuu skuul] ‘he ate the bread before he went to school’), habitual aspect is indicated by V+*-in* (e.g. [dee gooing in toun evrii sondee] ‘they go to town every Sunday’), and the negative imperative is formed by preposing *naat tu* preverbally (e.g. [naat tuu toch dat] ‘Do not touch that!’; [naat] and [doo] are the usual negative markers). The adverb *again* [ogen] has been broadened to include the meanings ‘still’, ‘anymore’, and ‘else’, probably on the model of Kwéyòl *ankò* (< French *encore*, e.g. [yuu hav moh klooz tuu waash ogen] ‘[do] you still have more clothes to wash?’). Prepositions have different meanings in this language than in other English-derived varieties (e.g. [muuv **in** do reen] ‘get out **of** the rain’; [hii sending stoon **biihain** piipl] ‘he is throwing stones **at/after** people’). In other instances, no overt prepositions are used in SLVE where they would typically appear in other English-derived varieties (e.g. [hii lafing mii] ‘he is laughing at me’). The completive marker is *already* [oredii] and not *done* in SLVE (e.g. [yoh modo riich oredii] ‘your mother has arrived’).

#### 4. Conclusion

Aceto (2002a) pointed out that many research locations in the Eastern Caribbean have not yet been the focus of any piece of published research: St. John, St. Thomas, Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Anegada, St. Eustatius, the Grenadine Islands of St. Vincent (Bequia, Mustique, Canouan, Union Island, and Mayreau). Furthermore, the following research locations have been the subject of only a single publication in linguistics or creole studies: Grenada, Montserrat, St. Croix, Nevis, St. Martin, and St. Vincent. More work by more fieldworkers would greatly improve our understanding of specific linguistic and sociohistorical features which one lexically-related Creole or English variety may or may not share with another. See Aceto (other volume) on the phonology of the Anglophone Eastern Caribbean for more concluding remarks.

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# The creoles of Trinidad and Tobago: morphology and syntax

Winford James and Valerie Youssef

## 1. Introduction

In the words of Allsopp (1996: 1, emphasis original), “[t]he vocabulary of Caribbean English comprises the whole active *core vocabulary of World English* as may be found in any piece of modern English literature, together with all *Caribbean regionalisms produced by the ecology, history and culture of the area*”. In keeping with the character of that vocabulary as well as of the vocabulary of Creole languages generally, the vocabulary of the Creoles spoken in Trinidad and Tobago is shaped by a partially autonomous phonology, as described in our companion chapter in this handbook, with considerable differences, particularly in the vowel system, from the phonologies of metropolitan (i.e. non-creole) English varieties. It is supported, in varying degrees, by a variety of morphological and semantic processes as summarily reported on by Ian Hancock (1980) and Richard Allsopp (1980), and is characterised by far more derivational than inflectional morphology.

Various aspects of the syntax and morphology have been described earlier. The following works, and others (see the full bibliography on the accompanying CD), describe aspects of Tobagonian morphosyntax, both basilectal and mesolectal: James and Youssef (2002); Winer (1993); Winford (1993). And the following describe aspects of Trinidadian morphosyntax, both basilectal and mesolectal: Solomon (1993); Winford (1993); Winer (fc., 1993); James and Youssef (2002). In presenting the description of Tobagonian and Trinidadian morphosyntax, we draw on insights in (some of) them.

Because of their low affixation, the Creole languages rely mainly on syntactic relationships between non-affixal grammatical and lexical morphemes in various subsystems of the grammar. In normal speech in Trinidad and Tobago, the grammars in contact are related to one another in the grammars of individuals which display different levels of varilingual competence (James and Youssef 2002). That is to say, people mix basilectal, mesolectal, and acrolectal grammars in the stream of speech in accordance with their degree of control of the individual grammars, and in accordance with the sociolinguistic demands of each situation in which they find themselves.

But, as the varietal labels suggest, the different grammars can be isolated. The syntax of basilectal Tobagonian speech as well as of mesolectal Trinidadian and



Tobagonian speech can therefore be separated out of the speech to a fair extent, although, as detailed in Youssef (1996), there has been a level of merger through close contact which renders exclusive assignation of certain lexical and grammatical items to particular lects problematic. By and large, the mesolectal varieties are shared. However, the very fact that there are two contact systems in Trinidad (mesolect and a local variety of Standard English) and three in Tobago (basilect, mesolect, and a local Standard English) (cf. James and Youssef 2002) means that the norms for usage of the forms in contact vary from one island to the next, mesolectal features being more prestigious in the Tobagonian speech community, where they represent a mid-level variety as opposed to representing a lower-level variety in the Trinidadian speech community where no English Creole basilect has been described. As discussed elsewhere in relation to pre-verbal *don* in African-American and in Guyanese (Edwards 1995, 2000), different levels of contact between varieties make for a different range of semantic usage in one variety as distinct from another, and this applies equally to Trinidadian and Tobagonian. In addition, factors such as socio-economic background and level of education will determine the relative usage of semantically related markers, for example, StE Present Perfect *have + -en* versus Creole  $\emptyset$  and *done* (cf. Winford 1994).

All in all, Tobago and Trinidad are separate speech communities in some senses, while sharing understandings to a large extent; these issues have been discussed further in our companion chapter.

In this chapter, we will do the following. First, we will illustrate most of the lexico-morphological processes identified above. Secondly, we will illustrate typical sentence structures. Thirdly, we will describe the most common affixal morphemes as well as a variety of non-affixal grammatical morphemes, and illustrate their use in sentences. Finally, we will describe the major systems in the syntax, i.e., the pronoun, verb (including negation), and noun systems. In the process of making these presentations, we will be distinguishing between those forms and structures that are typically (basilectal) Tobagonian and those that are common to the mesolectal varieties of both Tobagonian and Trinidadian (as a convenient shorthand, we thus speak of *mesolectal Trinbagonian* in the following sections)

In the illustrations, a phonemic spelling system is used in which each letter symbolises a particular sound or phoneme. The system is straightforward except for two letters –  $\bar{e}$  and  $\bar{o}$ . The first is meant to represent a tense monophthongal pronunciation of the vowel in words like *face*, which would be [feis] in RP, but [fes] in our Creoles. The second is meant to represent the tense monophthongal sound in words like *nō*, which would be [nəʊ] in RP, but [no] in our Creoles.

## 2. Lexical expansion/progression

Hancock (1980) identifies twelve processes of lexical progression, dividing them up equally as morphological and semantic. The six morphological ones are: coining (including onomatopoeia and ideophony), incoining or blending (including portmanteaux words), back-formation (including abbreviation), tautology or redundant extension, reduplication, and calquing; and the six semantic ones are: (eight kinds of) extension, shift, convergence (including folk etymology), divergence, tonalising (including tone and intonation), and adoption. Allsopp (1980) discusses Hancock's categories and provides clarifications that are more in keeping with the Trinidadian and Tobagonian realities. He also adds the following six processes, separately categorising some that Hancock subsumes in more general categories, and without making Hancock's morphology-semantics distinction: misascription, functional shift, folk etymology or phonological shift in transmission, code overlap, attraction, and free compounding.

Table 1 below displays Trinidadian and Tobagonian examples of the products of some of the processes identified by Hancock and Allsopp. For a fuller listing of examples, see Allsopp (1996) and Winer (fc.).

Table 1. Illustration of lexical expansion processes

WORDS & GLOSSES	PROCESS	DEFINITION OF PROCESS
<i>Bubulups</i> (n) 'fat lady'; <i>badam</i> 'sound of a blow or fall'	Coining	Spontaneous creation in display action
<i>Komesiv</i> (adj.) 'meddlesome and interfering'; <i>bodarēshon</i> (n) 'trouble or calamity'	Incoining/ blending	Combination of established lexemes/morphemes to make new words
<i>ai-woota</i> (n) 'tears'; <i>ōnwē</i> (adj.) 'wayward'; <i>dō-mowt</i> 'threshold'	Calquing or relexification	Literal translation of substrate words by English words
<i>Kyā</i> (modal) 'can'; <i>kyā</i> (neg. modal) 'cannot'; <i>TĒ.la</i> (n) (HL) 'tailor' / <i>tē.la</i> (surname) (LH) 'Taylor'	Semantic pitch differentiation	Use of epimorphic pitch/tone (without necessarily changing the stress) to differentiate the meaning of homophones
<i>Basi-basi</i> (n) 'confusion'; <i>krai-krai</i> (v) 'cry constantly'	Reduplication	Repetition of a base word for intensity
<i>Puuja</i> 'prayer meeting'; <i>seke-seke</i> (adj./adv.) 'random and arbitrary' / 'at random and arbitrarily'	Retention	Survival, more or less intact, of substrate words
<i>Ōva</i> (prep. & v) 'be finished/dissmissed'; <i>fiftiin</i> (v) 'turn fifteen'	Functional shift	Increasing the number of word-classes of a word

Table 1. (continued) Illustration of lexical expansion processes

WORDS & GLOSSES	PROCESS	DEFINITION OF PROCESS
<i>Gloori siida</i> ‘gliricidia’; <i>fōr-an-a-haaf</i> ‘fore-and-aft’; <i>tek iin</i> ‘take ill, be taken ill’; <i>bati manswell</i> ‘bati mamzel’ (French Creole), ‘dragon fly’ (English)	Phonological shift in trans- mission	Pronouncing a word that is not well heard on the pattern of already-known others that are close in sound
<i>Sik-owt</i> (n) ‘sick-out’ (on the pattern of ‘sit-in’ and ‘lock-out’)	Attraction	Formation of phrases by false analogy with a slot in English phrase
<i>Kyaa-du-dis-kyaa-du-dat</i> (n); <i>neva-si-kom-si</i> (n)	Free-compound- ing	‘Spontaneous nominalising (also adjectivalising) of any short phrasal item that has a strong descriptive or allusive thrust’
<i>Long</i> (L)- <i>ai</i> (H) ‘covetousness’; <i>dog</i> (L)- <i>mowt</i> (H) ‘dog’s mouth’; <i>jroma</i> (LL)- <i>man</i> (H)	Compounding	Formation of compound words out of two words by placing a high tone (H) on the last syllable of the last word, but a low tone (L) on the syllable(s) of the preceding word
<i>Vup</i> , <i>bodōw</i> , <i>budup</i> , <i>blaw</i>	Ideophony	Creation of words to match sound of event, action, etc.

### 3. Typical sentence structure

The typical structure of a declarative Creole sentence is SUBJ + PRED, where:

SUBJ	→	{DP, NP, QP, AP, PP, LOCP}
PRED	→	{VP, PP, ADVP}
DP	→	D NP
D	→	{demonstrative specifiers, non-demonstrative specifiers, singulariser}
NP	→	(N) N
QP	→	Q N
AP	→	A N
PP	→	P NP
LOCP	→	(P) LOCADV (locative adverb)
VP	→	{V (SUF/PCL) (COMP), (PCL) V (PCL) (COMP)}
V	→	{adjectival verb (e.g., <i>sik</i> , <i>gud</i> ), main verb, copula (e.g., <i>a</i> , <i>de</i> )}
ADVP	→	ADV {A, V}
COMP	=	SUBJ

In the notations above, SUF, PCL, and COMP are respectively short forms for suffix, particle, and complement. In particular, COMP is used here to include the notions of complement and object. N, V, and A are lexical categories, while D, Q, P, LOCADV, SUF, and PCL are grammatical categories. The following sentences illustrate the most typical arrangements of syntactic categories:

- (1) *Di man iit (di fuud).*  
D N V (D N)  
'The man ate the food.'
- (2) *Lochri tikit koos chrii dolaz.*  
N N V Q N  
'A lottery ticket costs three dollars.'
- (3) *Red mango don.*  
A N V  
'The red mangos are finished' / 'No more red mangos.'
- (4) *Onda da chrii de gud tu shēd.*  
P DN SUF V I V  
'That tree there is good to shade under.'
- (5) *Ōva-so hav plenty bush.*  
P LOCADV V Q N  
'There's plenty bush over there.'
- (6) *Di bēbi sik.*  
D N V  
'The baby is sick.'
- (7) *Hi a dakta.*  
D V N  
'He's a doctor.'
- (8) *Hi a sliip.*  
D PCL V  
'He's sleeping.'
- (9) *Hi sliipin.*  
D V-SUF  
'He's sleeping.'
- (10) *Hi bai lochri tikit.*  
D V N N  
'He has bought {a lottery ticket / lottery tickets}.'
- (11) *Shi laik red mango.*  
D V A N  
'She likes red-mango.'

- (12) *Shi swiip op onda di tēbu.*  
 D V PCL P D N  
 ‘She swept [that part of the floor] under the table.’
- (13) *Hi kliin ōva-de.*  
 D V P LOCADV  
 ‘He cleaned [that part] over there.’
- (14) *Hi ōva faas.*  
 D ADV A  
 ‘He is too meddlesome.’
- (15) *Hi maasta oparēt di kompyuuta.*  
 D ADV V D N  
 ‘He is versed in the operation of the computer.’

Apart from the declarative relational structure of SUBJ PRED, there are also the following two structures: a) PRED (only), where there is no subject and the constituents are COP(ula) *a* (basilectal Tobagonian) and COP *iz* (mesolectal Trinbagonian) followed by COMP; this PRED can be structurally independent; and b) PRED SUBJ PRED, where the first PRED may also be composed of *a/iz* and COMP, in which case it is structurally independent, or may be composed of *a/iz* and unsuffixed V, in which case it cannot stand apart from the typical structure SUBJ PRED; in both cases, however, it highlights particular constituents from SUBJ PRED which have moved into it as full phonetic forms or as copies of (parts of) such forms. The following sentences illustrate:

- (16) *A/Iz di tiicha.*  
 COP D N  
 ‘It’s the teacher.’
- (17) *A/Iz ōva-de/dyee.*  
 COP P LOCADV  
 ‘It’s [that place] over there.’
- (18) *A di tiicha<sub>1</sub> hi a taak tu t<sub>1</sub>.*  
 COP D N D PCL V P DP  
 ‘It’s the teacher he’s talking to.’
- (19) *Iz di tiicha<sub>1</sub> hi took-in tu t<sub>1</sub>.*  
 COP D N D V SUF P DP  
 ‘It’s the teacher he’s talking to.’
- (20) *A ōva-de<sub>1</sub> hi gaan t<sub>1</sub>.*  
 COP P LOCADV D V LOCP  
 ‘It’s over there he’s gone.’

- (21) *Iz ōva-dyee<sub>1</sub> hi goon t<sub>1</sub>.*  
 COP P LOCADV D V LOCP  
 ‘It’s over there he’s gone.’
- (22) *A kom hi a kom.*  
 COP V D PCL V  
 ‘He’s COMING.’
- (23) *Iz kom hi kom-in.*  
 COP V D V SUF  
 ‘He’s COMING.’

Sentences (16-17) feature independent PRED. In (18-21), the DP and LOCP are analysed as moving in full phonetic form from one COMP position to another, leaving bound traces in the process. In (22), a copy of V, rather than the original form itself, moves from COMP to COMP. And in (23), a copy of V, but not of SUF, moves to pre-subject position. The reason why only a copy of V (and not the whole original constituent itself) moves is that the imperfective PCL *a* is strictly pre-verbal, that is, it must come before a phoneticised verb.

In brief, then, our Creoles are ‘SVO’ (or, more accurately, SVC(OMP)) languages, with special sentences without subjects and with highlighted constituents that have moved in full phonetic form or as copies.

In both interrogative and exclamative sentences, the declarative order is maintained, only that the intonation differs. The declarative sentence is produced with a relatively falling or low tone on the final constituent of PRED, the interrogative with a relatively rising or high tone, and the exclamative with a tone just lower than the interrogative tone.

The fact that the interrogative order is the same as the declarative means that there is no subject-verb/auxiliary inversion. More specifically, to the extent that AUX is a movable category, there is no AUX in the Creoles, and, consequently, no *do*-support. What the Creoles have instead are immovable pre-verbal particles:

- (24) a. *Hi doz tiich yu?*  
 b. *\*Doz hi tiich yu?*  
 ‘Does he teach you?’
- (25) a. *Hi a kom?*  
 b. *\*A hi kom?*  
 ‘Is he coming?’
- (26) a. *Yu laik it?*  
 b. *\*Duu yu laik it?*  
 ‘Do you like it?’

Indeed, by comparison with Standard English, there is little movement of constituents in these languages.

The unavailability of inversion is directly responsible for non-inverted acrolectal speech like the following sentences, which users generally do not realise is not Standard English:

(27) *Evriwon kud sii?*  
‘Can everyone see?’

(28) *Yuu-ool h3d dhat?*  
‘Did you all hear that?’

#### 4. Derivational morphology

Some of the most common derivational affixes on metropolitan English nouns, verbs, and adjectives (but not adverbs) have been retained and are productive. There is no productive adverb affix, not even *-li*, essentially because no morphological distinction is made between descriptive, gradable words that are used adjectivally and adverbially (e.g., *priti*, *swiit*). Tables 2-4 display examples of productive affixes.

Table 2. Productive noun affixes

Noun Affix	Words
<i>-nis</i>	<i>chupidnis, hongrinis</i>
<i>-sh{o~a}n</i>	<i>salv3shan, badar3shan</i>
<i>-yan</i>	<i>Chrinidaadyan, Tub3g3nyan</i>
<i>-ment</i>	<i>betament, govament,</i>
<i>-{o, a}-(man/wuman)</i>	<i>tiicha(wuman), honta(man)</i>
<i>-iiz</i>	<i>chainiiz, japaniiz</i>
<i>-ful</i>	<i>beliful, spuunful</i>

Table 3. Productive verb affixes

Verb Affix	Words
<i>ri-</i>	<i>rip3nt, ribil</i>
<i>ova-</i>	<i>3vadu, 3vaiit, 3vakuk</i>
<i>dis-</i>	<i>dislaik, disapoint</i>
<i>mis-</i>	<i>misondastan, mist3k, misbih3v</i>
<i>on-</i>	<i>ontai, onrap</i>

Table 4. Productive adjective affixes

Adjective Affix	Words
-abl	<i>ējabl, nolijabl, riidabl</i>
-iv	<i>aktiv, comesiv</i>
-ish	<i>redish, likrish, swiitish</i>

## 5. Inflectional morphology

The languages have very few inflectional morphemes, which may be divided into two groups: 1) those that are only bound forms, and 2) those that function in both bound and free-standing capacities. The first group comprises the imperfective suffix (IMPERFV SUF) *-in* (which subcategorises as progressive suffix (PROG SUF) and habitual suffix (HAB SUF)); the attributive suffix (ATTRIB SUF) *-i* (usually on adjectives or nouns denoting colour, fruit, and size); and the adverbial suffix (ADV SUF) *-iin*. The second group comprises the morphemes *se(l)f*, *ya/hyee*, *de/dyee*, *so/sō*, *ōn*. Table 5 characterises the inflectional suffixes by syntactic category and phrasal syntax.

Table 5. Inflectional suffixes by syntactic category and phrasal syntax

Inflectional Morpheme		Syntactic Category	Phrasal Syntax
BASILECT	MESOLECT		
	<i>-in</i>	IMPERFV SUF (PROG SUF, HAB SUF)	VP
<i>-i</i>		ATTRIB SUF	DP, AP
<i>-iin</i>		ADV SUF	VP
<i>so</i>	<i>sō</i>	ASSOC SUF	ADVP, DP
<i>sef</i>	<i>self</i>	RECI(PROCAL) SUF	DP, ADVP
<i>ōn</i>	<i>ōn</i>	POSS SUF	DP
<i>ya, de</i>	<i>hyee, dyee</i>	LOC SUF	DP, PP

The following sentences, phrases, or words illustrate the morphemes.

- (29) *Shi tiich -in di klaas now.*  
 V PROG SUF
- (30) *Shi kool -in mi evri nait.*  
 V HAB SUF



- (31) *A griin -i /a staach -i /a big -i.*  
 A    SUF /    N    ATTRIB SUF/ A    ATTRIB SUF
- (32) *Shi luk sik -i                    sik -i.*  
 A    ATTRIB SUF A    ATTRIB SUF
- (33) *Mami gaan -iin                    /            Mami gaan \*iin di ruum.*  
 V    ADV SUF
- (34) *A den -sef                    mi ge maad.*  
 ADV RECI SUF
- (35) *Hii -se(l)f                    tel mi.*  
 DP    RECI SUF
- (36) *Iz di dokta                    -self                    tel mi.*  
 DP                    RECI SUF
- (37) *A Kandia -se(l)f                    tel mi.*  
 DP    RECI SUF
- (38) *Dis -ya                    /Dat -de*  
 DP    LOC SUF    /DP    LOC SUF
- (39) *Dem -ya                    /            Dem -de*  
 DP    LOC SUF    /    D    LOC SUF
- (40) *Dem bwai -ya                    /Dem bwai -de*  
 DP                    LOC SUF    /DP                    LOC SUF
- (41) *Ōva -so*  
 P    ASSOC SUF
- (42) *Ten laik                    hii                    -so                    kyãã priich tu mii.*  
                   DP                    ASSOC SUF
- (43) *Iz mai -ōn.*  
 DP    POSS SUF

## 6. Non-affixal grammatical morphemes

### 6.1. Preverbal markers

Verbs (including adjectival ones such as *swiit* and *sik*) are preceded by grammatical markers which variously carry aspect, tense, mood, and emphasis meanings, and which may be stressed (or high-toned) or unstressed (or low-toned). Tables 6 and 7 display these markers and their meanings. (The grave accent represents low stress/tone; the acute accent represents high stress/tone.)

Table 6. Unstressed or low-tone pre-verbal markers in Tobagonian and Trinidadian

Grammatical Category	Basilectal Tobagonian	Mesolectal Trinbagonian
Imperfective (aspect)	<i>a</i>	
Future Habitual Modal (tense-aspect-mood)	<i>(g)o, àgò</i>	<i>(g)o; gō</i> (Trinidadian only)
Present Habitual (tense-aspect)		<i>doz</i> (and variants <i>do, oz, s</i> )
Remote Past (Tense)	<i>bin</i> (and variants <i>in, bi, bī, ī, min</i> )	<i>di(d)</i>
Past Imperfective (tense-aspect)	<i>bìnà</i> (and variants <i>ina, mìnà</i> )	<i>woz...in</i>
Contrafactual	<i>bìnà</i> (and variants <i>inà, mìnà</i> ), <i>bin(à)gò</i> (and variants <i>in(à)gò, mìn(à)gò</i> )	<i>di(d)...in, wòzgò, wùdà</i>
Modal of Intention	<i>fù, bìn-/minfù</i>	<i>tu, wòzgò, wòztù</i>

Table 7. Stressed or high-tone pre-verbal markers in Tobagonian and Trinidadian

Grammatical Category	Basilectal Tobagonian	Mesolectal Trinbagonian
Past Completeive/Perfect (tense-aspect)	<i>don</i>	<i>don</i>
Emphatic	<i>duu</i>	<i>duu</i>
Past Imperfective (tense-aspect)		<i>yuuz(z)tu</i>
Modal of obligation	<i>(h)áfù, bóngtù</i>	<i>(h)ávù, bóngtù</i>

It is worth noting that these tables of pre-verbal markers are not complete overviews of the system because of the major role which the zero marker plays in the mix. The role of zero in Creole verb systems has been much debated and the full oppositional subset is discussed further under the section 7 below.

## 6.2. (Pre)nominal markers

Nouns are modified by markers which participate in a semantic opposition of specificity vs. non-specificity. In that opposition, only demonstratives are stressed (with H tone). Tables 8 and 9 display the markers.

Table 8. Non-specific pre-nominal markers

Grammatical category	Basilectal Tobagonian	Mesolectal (Trinbagonian)
The unmodified bare (count) noun	<i>kyat (i.e., ø)</i>	Same
Quantifier	<i>Som-faiv kyat</i>	Same
Adjective	<i>Priti kyat</i>	Same
Noun	<i>Pusi kyat</i>	Same

Table 9. Specific pronominal markers

Grammatical category	Basilectal Tobagonian	Mesolectal (Trinbagonian)
Non-demonstrative specifiers	<i>(e.g., di, mi)</i>	Same
Demonstrative specifiers	<i>Da...ya, da...de, dem, dem...ya, dem...de</i>	<i>Dis...hyee, da(t)...dyee, dem, dem...hyee, dem...dyee</i>
Singulariser	<i>wãã</i>	Indefinite <i>a</i>
Name	<i>Anjela</i>	Same

### 6.3. Pronouns

In both varieties, the pronouns generally both are opaque for case and participate in an unstressed-stressed opposition. Tables 10 and 11 categorise and list them. Unstressed pronouns can't stand alone in discourse, that is, by themselves outside a normal sentence (e.g., \**Mi!* \**Shi!* \**De!*), but their stressed lengthened counterparts (*Mii!* *Shii!* *Dem!*) can.

Table 10. The basilectal Tobagonian pronoun paradigm

Category	Unstressed		Stressed		
	Subject	Object	Subject	Object	Disjunctive
1 <sup>st</sup> per. sg.	<i>mi</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>mii(so)</i>	<i>mii(so)</i>	<i>mii(so)</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> per. sg.	<i>yu/o</i>	<i>yu/o</i>	<i>yuu(so)</i>	<i>yuu(so)</i>	<i>yuu(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. m sg.	<i>(h)i</i>	<i>am, om</i>	<i>(h)ii(so)</i>	<i>(h)ii(so)</i>	<i>(h)ii(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. f sg.	<i>shi</i>	<i>am, om</i>	<i>shii(so)</i>	<i>shii(so)</i>	<i>shii(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. n sg.	<i>i</i>	<i>om, am</i>			

Table 10. (continued) The basilectal Tobagonian pronoun paradigm

Category	Unstressed		Stressed		
	Subject	Object	Subject	Object	Disjunctive
1 <sup>st</sup> per. pl.	<i>wi</i>	<i>wi</i>	<i>wii(so), aawi(so)</i>	<i>wii(so), aawi(so)</i>	<i>wii(so), aawi(so)</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> per. pl.			<i>aayu(so)</i>	<i>aayu/o(so)</i>	<i>aayu/o(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. pl.	<i>de, dèm</i>	<i>dèm</i>	<i>dèm(so)</i>	<i>dèm(so) dèm(so)</i>	<i>dèm(so)</i>

*per.* = person; *m* = masculine; *f* = feminine; *sg.* = singular; *n* = neuter; *pl.* = plural; *the grave accent* = low tone; *the acute accent* = high tone.

As can be seen in the basilectal paradigm, all the categories except the third person singular ones are opaque for case and participate in an unstressed-unstressed opposition; also the third person singular *dèm* (but not *de*) is ambivalent for case. In respect of the third person singular ones, there are the forms *am/om* which are used only as generalised objects (that is, they refer to masculine, feminine, and neuter referents). In addition, the unstressed neuter pronouns have no stressed counterparts. It is only the stressed pronouns that are used disjunctively.

Table 11. The mesolectal Trinbagonian pronoun paradigm

Category	Unstressed		Stressed		
	Subject	Object	Subject	Object	Disjunctive
1 <sup>st</sup> per. sg.	<i>a</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ai</i>	<i>mii(so)</i>	<i>mii(so)</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> per. sg.	<i>yu/o</i>	<i>yu/o</i>	<i>yuu(so)</i>	<i>yuu(so)</i>	<i>yuu(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. m sg.	<i>hi</i>	<i>im</i>	<i>hii(so)</i>	<i>hii(so)</i>	<i>hii(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. f sg.	<i>shi</i>	<i>shi,</i>	<i>shii(so)</i>	<i>shii(so)</i>	<i>shii(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. n sg.	<i>i</i>	<i>it</i>			
1 <sup>st</sup> per. pl.	<i>wi</i>	<i>wi</i>	<i>wii(so)</i>	<i>wii(so)</i>	<i>wii(so)</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> per. pl.			<i>oolyu/o(so)</i>	<i>oolyu/o(so)</i>	<i>oolyu/o(so)</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> per. pl.	<i>de</i>	<i>dèm</i>	<i>dèm(so)</i>	<i>dèm(so) dèm(so)</i>	<i>dèm(so)</i>

In the mesolectal system, there are two specifications absent from the basilectal system. First, there is no general third person object; rather, each of the three genders has its own object. But of the three, only the third person feminine is opaque for case since the exponent, *shi*, also functions as subject. Secondly, in the third person plural category the subject is distinguished from the object in not having

the coda *m*; that is, *dèm* is not a mesolectal subject. And, again, it is only the stressed pronouns that are used disjunctively.

Although we have treated these forms as if they are only pronouns, it must be pointed out that they also function as possessive adjectives.

#### 6.4. Prepositions

Both varieties make use of the English inventory of prepositions, but there are at least six prepositions – five basilectal and one mesolectal – that deserve to be highlighted as they are strictly Creole in phonology or syntax or semantics. They are given in Table 12.

Table 12. Basilectal and mesolectal prepositions

Basilect	Mesolect	English
<i>a</i>		in, on, at, to, into, from
<i>iina</i>		in, inside
<i>ton</i> (plus DP)		according to
<i>pan</i>		on
<i>pantap</i>		on (top of)
<i>laka</i>		like
	<i>in</i>	to

Basilectal *pan*, *pantap*, and *laka* are used exactly like their English counterparts, but not *a*, *iina*, or *ton*. The (unstressed) preposition *a* is the most semantically economical of the lot, encompassing the spatial meanings of location, source, and goal of various English prepositions, as in (44) below:

- (44) a. *Hi kom owt [a Delafōd]* (source).  
 ‘He’s come from Delaford.’  
 b. *Hi hit mi [a mi jabōn]* (location).  
 ‘He hit me on the jaw.’  
 c. *Aa, Kiini bwai, yu kom [a wool]* (location).  
 ‘Ah, Kini boy, you’ve come into the world.’  
 d. *Hi de [a Shaalotvil] a mek schraif* (location).  
 ‘He is in/at Charlotteville stirring up trouble.’  
 e. *Mi a go [a shap]* (goal).  
 ‘I am going to the shop.’

*Iina*, a combination of *iin* and *a*, is a stressable version of *a* (with H tone on *iin*) and covers only the spatial notion of location. It appears in sentences such as (45) where it allows the translations ‘in’, ‘into’, and ‘in(side)’:

- (45) a. *Mi no hav no pat<sub>i</sub> fu put am iina<sub>—i</sub>.*  
 ‘I don’t have any pot to put it in.’  
 b. *Hi daiv iina di riva.*  
 ‘He dove into the river.’  
 c. *I de iina di jakit pakit.*  
 ‘It’s in(side) the jacket pocket.’

In (45a) in particular, it licenses gapping, and is able to do so because its *iin* component is stressed in final position, unlike *a* which is always unstressed, and which cannot occur sentence-finally as a free-standing morpheme (*Mi no hav no pat<sub>i</sub> fu put am \*a<sub>—i</sub>*).

*Ton* (< *turn*) is a perspectival preposition that is followed typically by speech-capable DPs, as in (46):

- (46) **Ton** *Ava, dat an God fēs hi no go si.*  
 ‘According to Ava, that and God’s face he will not see.’

Mesolectal *in* functions as a goal preposition, as in:

- (47) a. *A gō-in in tong.*  
 b. *Shi gō-in in big skuul now.*

However, to express movement to a goal, it is typical to leave out the prepositions *a*, *in*, and *tu*, as in:

- (48) *A gō-in {tong, San Fanandō, Amerika}.*

### 6.5. Interrogative/relative words

There are certain words which deserve comment. Tables 13 and 14 distribute them between basilect and mesolect, with Table 13 displaying the interrogative list and Table 14 the relative list.

Table 13. Selected Trinbagonian interrogative words

Basilect	Mesolect	English
<i>wa</i>	<i>wo</i>	what
<i>huu</i> (-person N) (singular)	<i>huu</i> (-person N) (singular)	who
<i>huu-an-huu</i> (plural)	<i>huu</i>	who
<i>wich-wan</i> (singular)	<i>wich-won</i> (singular)	which
<i>wich-paat</i>	<i>wich-paat, we</i>	where
( <i>{wa-, we-}</i> )mek)	<i>wo + mēk as V</i>	why

Table 14. Selected Trinbagonian relative words

Basilect	Mesolect	English
<i>we</i>	<i>we</i>	that, who, which, where
<i>wich-paat</i>	<i>wich-paat</i>	where
( <i>{wa-, we-}mek</i> )	<i>why</i>	why

The tables reveal some interesting facts by comparison with analogous concepts in English. There are more interrogative than relative words. The basilect has a plural form (*huu-an-huu*) for the person interrogative. Both basilect and mesolect have a bi-morphemic word for the singular non-person interrogative: they combine *wich* with *wan/won*. The basilect has a bi-morphemic word for the location and reason notions (*wich-paat*, *wa/we mek*), while the mesolect has one only for the location notion (*wich-paat*) but two separate words for the reason notion (*wo* plus the verb *mēk* heading a clause). In both basilect and mesolect, there is only one form (*we*) for relating to person, non-person, and place subjects.

The listed words are illustrated below:

- (49) *{Wa, Wo} yo woont?*  
‘What do you want?’
- (50) *Huu-man yo tookin bowt?*  
‘What man are you talking about?’
- (51) *Huu-an-huu woz in di kaa?*  
‘Who are the persons that were in the car?’
- (52) *Wich-wan yo want?*  
‘Which do you want?’
- (53) *Wich-paat yu put di buk?*  
‘Where did/have you put the book?’
- (54) *(We-)mek yu tel am dat?*  
‘Why did you tell him/her that?’
- (55) *Wo mēk yo tel im dat?*  
‘Why did you tell him/her that?’
- (56) *Da iz di man we fain mi wolet.*  
‘That is the man who found my wallet.’
- (57) *Shi put shi bag on di ting we doz spin rong.*  
‘She put her bag on the thing that spins around.’

- (58) *Da iz di skuul **we** mi chail doz gō tu.*  
 ‘That is the school that my child goes to.’
- (59) *Da iz di plēs **wich-paat** de kerī shi.*  
 ‘That is the place where they took her.’
- (60) *Da iz di riizn **mek** mi tel yu.*  
 ‘That is the reason why I told you.’

#### 6.6. Post-subject adverbs

Both varieties have a number of adverbs that fill a syntactic slot just after the subject of a sentence, or just before the main negators *no/ē*, much like the slot that an IP adverb like *certainly* fills in a language like English. Because of the inflectional poverty of the varieties, we will use the label *post-subject adverbs* in preference to IP adverbs. Common examples of these adverbs are bolded in the illustrations below:

- (61) *A **taiyad** tel im not tu kiip baad kompani.*  
 ‘I am fed up telling him not to keep bad company.’
- (62) *Hi **mosi** no a kom agēn.*  
 ‘He probably is no longer coming.’
- (63) *Hi **maad** kom tel mii dat?*  
 ‘He isn’t crazy enough to come and tell me that!’
- (64) *A **don** ē di laik shi.*  
 ‘I already don’t like her.’
- (65) *Hi **maasta** plē gēmz on di kompyuuta.*  
 ‘He’s fond of playing games on the computer.’
- (66) *Shi **wel** kos op shi hozban.*  
 ‘She roundly cursed her husband.’
- (67) *Yo **gud** iit mi fuud laas wiik.*  
 ‘You ate a lot of my food last week.’
- (68) *Da gyal de **huu** feel shi nice!*  
 ‘That girl thinks she is really beautiful!’

(Incidentally, of the adverbs highlighted *huu* (68) is the only one peculiar to Tobagonian speech.)



### 6.7. Reportive particles

By *reportive particle*, we mean a word that introduces reported information in clauses. There are three such particles – basilectal *se* and mesolectal *dat* and *dat-how*. *Se* is used optionally with a translation like ‘that’ after reporting and belief-expressing verbs like *tel* and *biliiv*, as in (69) and (70):

(69) [Hi tel mi] (*se*) [hi naa kom agēn].  
 ‘He told me that he wasn’t coming any longer.’

(70) [Mii no beliiv] (*se*) [hi ago marrid shi].  
 ‘I don’t believe he’s going to marry her.’

In these sentences, it is substitutable by *dat* and *dat-how*. After other kinds of verb, however, it is obligatory:

(71) [Hi de a hi ruum] *se* [hi a stodi].  
 ‘He is in his room ostensibly studying.’

(72) [Hi gaan hōm] *se* [hi a go du hi hōmwok].  
 ‘He’s gone home ostensibly to do his homework.’

### 6.8. The particles *fu*, *fo*, *fa*

*Fu*, *fo* and *fa* are grammatical items that divide up infinitive, possessive, and interrogative functions amongst themselves. *Fu* and *fa* are basilectal, with *fu* functioning as an infinitive and possessive marker, and *fa* only as an interrogative marker. *Fo* has infinitive and interrogative functions and is mesolectal Tobagonian in respect of both, but mesolectal Trinidadian in respect of the interrogative function only, the Trinidadian infinitive marker typically being *tu*. As a possessive marker, *fu-* is an emphatic prefix; as a possessive marker, *-fa* is a suffix; and as interrogative markers, *-fa* and *-fo* are discontinuous suffixes. Table 15 captures these facts.

Table 15. Varietal distribution of the particles *fu*, *fo*, and *fa*

Basilect	Mesolect	Function
<i>fu</i>	<i>fo</i> , <i>tu</i>	infinitive
<i>fu</i>		possessive
<i>-fa</i>	<i>-fo</i>	interrogative

The following sentences illustrate how the particles are used:

(73) *Mi waant {fu, fo, \*fa} sliip*.  
 ‘I want to sleep.’

- (74) *Hi kaal mi {fu, fo, \*fa} tel mi no bada].*  
‘He called me to tell me not to bother...’
- (75) *{Fu-mii, \*Fo-mii, \*Fa-mii} pērans an dem] no bina biit.*  
‘MY parents did not beat (us).’
- (76) *{Fu-huu, \*Fo-huu, \*Fa-huu} pikni dat?*  
‘WHOSE child is that?’
- (77) *We yu du dat {-fa, -fo, \*-fu}?*  
‘Why did you do that?’
- (78) *We yu a bada mi {-fa, fo, \*fu}?*  
‘Why are you bothering me?’
- (79) *{Huu-fa, \*Huu-fo, \*Huu-fu} dat?*  
‘Whose is that?’

### 6.9. Existentials

The existentials in the two varieties are displayed in Table 16.

Table 16. Basilectal and mesolectal existentials

Semantic Category	Basilect	Mesolect	English
Location	<i>it ge(t)</i>	<i>it ha(v)</i>	there is/are (even stress on both kinds of words)
Possession	<i>fu ge(t)</i>	<i>tu hav</i>	to have
Existence	<i>Luk...!</i>	<i>Luk...!</i>	Here is/are..., There is/are...! (stress on ‘there’)
Existence	<i>Luku...!</i>	<i>Luk at...!</i>	Expression introducing abundance
Location	<i>fu de</i>	Absence of copula	to be

The following sentences illustrate their use:

- (80) *{It ge(t), It hav} chrii kow iina di yaad.*  
‘There are three cows in the yard.’
- (81) *Ōva hyee {get, hav} tumoch bush.*  
‘There’s too much bush over here.’
- (82) *Ōva hyee {get, hav}.*  
‘There is some over here.’

- (83) **Luk shi kom-in.**  
 ‘Look! She’s coming.’
- (84) **{Luku, Luk at} piipu!**  
 ‘What a large crowd of people!’
- (85) **Luku wuman!**  
 ‘What a large number of women!’
- (86) **Luku flowa!**  
 ‘What an abundance of flour!’

Location *it get/hav* and possession *fu get/hav* may or may not be followed by a DP complement; location *fu de* must be followed by a locative word or phrase (e.g., \**Hi de*); and existence *luk*, *luku*, and *luk at* must be followed by a DP (e.g., \**Luku!*; \**Luk at!*). *Luku* and *luk at*, in particular, must be followed by mass nouns or plural count nouns (e.g., *Luku wãã jombi!*). *Luk* is the item that must precede singular count nouns (e.g., *Luk a jombi!*). *Luku* therefore seems to have a generic suffix in its final *-u*.

#### 6.10. Preclausal warning particles

In both basilect and mesolect, there are at least two forms, *main* and *tikē*, that are used before clauses, which must be positive, to alert the hearer to danger. Obviously phonological restructurings of English *mind* and *take care*, they are used as in (87-90), where the clause is bracketed:

- (87) **Main** [*yu brēk di glaas*].  
 ‘Be careful not to break the glass.’
- (88) **Main** \*[*yu no/ē brēk di glaas*].
- (89) **Tikē** [*yu brēk di glaas*].  
 ‘Be careful not to break the glass.’
- (90) **Tikē** \*[*yu no/ē brēk di glaas*].

### 7. The verb system

In the verb system, there are three main types of structure: main verb structure (e.g., *Shi kuk di fuud*), copula structure (e.g., *Shi de a tong*), and copula-less structures (e.g., *Shi sik*). As suggested in our treatment of sentence structure above, the system is one in which main verbs (e.g., *kuk*), adjectival verbs (e.g., *sik*), and copulas (e.g., *de*) are modified by pre-verbal tense, aspect, and mood (TAM) markers (and, in one case, the aspect suffix *-ing*), with the aspect ones having the greatest

frequency of usage. These markers are distributed in discourse in relation to their denotation of background time, focus time, and different kinds of mood. Tables 17 and 18 display the basilectal and mesolectal TAM distribution respectively.

Table 17. The basilectal TAM distribution in discourse

Background time		Focus time				Mood			
T	T-A	A	A-T	T	Confac	Past	Focus		
Rem Past	Past Impfv	Past Compl/ Perf	Pfv	Impfv	Hab	Impfv	Fut		
<i>bìn</i>	<i>bìnà</i>	<i>dón</i>	∅ <i>dúú</i>	<i>à</i>	<i>gò</i>	<i>àgò</i>	<i>gò</i>	<i>bìnà</i> <i>bìnàgò</i> <i>bìngò</i>	<i>bìnfù</i> <i>bóngtù</i> <i>gò</i> <i>kyǎ, kù</i> <i>fū</i>

(Rem = Remote; Impfv = Imperfective; Compl = Completive; Perf = Perfect; Pfv = Perfective; Hab = Habitual; Fut = Future; Confac = Contrafactual)

Table 18. The mesolectal TAM distribution in discourse

Background time		Focus time				Mood			
T	T-A	A	A-T	T	Confac	Past	Focus		
Rem Past	Past Impfv	Past Hab	Past Compl/ Perf	Pfv	Impfv	Pres Hab	Fut		
<i>dìd</i> <i>wòz</i>	<i>dìd...ìn</i> <i>wòz...ìn</i>	<i>yúúztù</i>	<i>dón</i>	∅ <i>dúú</i>	<i>-ìn</i>	<i>dòz</i> <i>gò</i>	<i>gò</i>	<i>wòzgò</i> <i>wùdà</i>	<i>wòztù</i> <i>gò</i> <i>k(y)ǎ, kù</i> <i>tù</i>

The markers occur in different sequences in the different types of verb structure. In main-verb and copula-less structures, typical maximal sequences are *bìnàgò*, *dón bìnà*, *dón dìd...ìn*, *dón wòz...ìn*, *bìn háfù*, *dìd bóngtù*, *yúúztù*, *wòzgò*, *wòztù*, *wùdà*, *bìnfù*, *dòz k(y)ǎǎ*, and *gò k(y)ǎǎ*. There are markers that do not co-occur with any others; they are perfective emphasiser *dúú*, habituals *dòz* and *yúúztù*, and modals *k(y)ǎ* and *kù*.

In copula structures, the copulas select pre-verbal particles depending on their (own) semantics. There are three copulas – equative *a*, locative *de*, and naming *nēm*. Equative *a* is basilectal and it maximally selects the sequence *dón bìn*. Locative *dè* is also basilectal and it selects *dón bìnà*, *dón bìn*, *bìn háfù*, *bìn bóngtù*, *bìngò*, *bìnàgò* and *bìnfù*. *Nēm* is both basilectal and mesolectal. Basilectally, it

selects *dón binà*, *dón bin*, *binàgò*, *bìngò*, and *binfù*. Mesolectally, it selects *dón di(d)*, *wòzgò*, *wòztù*, *did (h)ávtù*, *did bóngtù*, and *wudà*.

In a recent analysis of Caribbean Creole markers as they have been variously ascribed different labels, Youssef (2002) synthesizes past analyses (e.g., Solomon 1993; Winford 1993) of the oppositional systems of labelling. The paper ascribes a comprehensive perfective label to the zero marker as a key marker in the perfective-imperfective opposition, which label holds across the board in the tense-aspect system and stands against imperfective marking in *bin*, *bina* and *a* (basilectal) and in *did*, *woz* + *-in* and *-in* in the mesolect. The following sentences, reproduced from mesolectal Tobagonian data in Youssef and James (1999: 609), support this analysis:

- (91) *Hi hyee wel kot. It luk gud.*  
 ‘His hair is well cut. It looks good.’ (Reference time present; focus immediate; state seen as a whole)
- (92) *Hi skoo a gōl.*  
 ‘He scored a goal.’ (Reference time past; focus immediate; event seen as a whole)
- (93) *Yestadē hi tek a 2-liita batl an hi kari it to skuul.*  
 ‘Yesterday he takes a 2-litre bottle and he carries it to school.’ (Reference time past; focus immediate; events seen as wholes)

Whatever the most precise tense-aspect label for events/states, perfective marking links them all and covers their different reference times, in addition to the immediate focus of the speaker – that which, from a discourse perspective, defines the foreground role in narrative. This usage of  $\emptyset$  may be ranged in opposition to that represented by, for example, preverbal *bin*, a marker which affirms both the anteriority of an event to another reference-time event and the background status of that event, as in:

- (94) *Ting bin chiip. Di moni bin smaal rēli, bot yu kuda mek am dō. An den mi kom an mi get marid.*  
 ‘Things were cheap. The money was small, really, but you could have made it though. And then I got married.’

The example discourse above provides the opportunity to consider an interesting narrative structure – *kom an* + *verb*. *Kom an* seems to have the function of introducing an important event (such as a marriage) in a narrative.

## 8. Negation

Basilectally, there is one negator – free-standing *no*; mesolectally, there are four – free-standing  $\tilde{e}$ ,  $d\tilde{o}$ , *din*, and the clitic *-n*. *No* occurs before main verbs, the copulas *de* and *nēm* (but not the copula *a*), and all the basilectal pre-verbal markers except *don*.  $\tilde{E}$  occurs before main verbs, the copula *nēm* (but not the copula *iz*), and only the markers (*g*)*o* and *tu*.  $D\tilde{o}$  occurs only before main verbs. *Din* occurs only before *yuuztu*. And *-n* attaches only to the mesolectal forms *doz*, *di(d)*, *wu(d)*, and *ku(d)*. Table 19 displays their association with the relevant markers.

Table 19. The association of negators with basilectal and mesolect preverbal markers

Grammatical Category	Basilect		Mesolect	
	Marker	Negator	Marker	Negator
Imperfective (aspect)	<i>a</i>	<i>no</i> (before)	<i>-in</i>	<i>NA</i>
Past Completeive/ Perfect (tense-aspect)	<i>don</i>	<i>no</i> (after)	<i>don</i>	$\tilde{e}$ , $d\tilde{o}$ , <i>din</i> (after)
Future Habitual Modal (tense-aspect-mood)	( <i>g</i> ) <i>o</i> , <i>ago</i>	<i>no</i> (before)	( <i>g</i> ) <i>o</i>	$\tilde{e}$ (before)
Present Habitual (tense-aspect)			<i>doz</i> (and variants <i>do</i> , <i>oz</i> , but not <i>z</i> )	<i>-n</i>
Emphatic	<i>duu</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>duu</i>	<i>NA</i>
Remote Past (tense)	<i>bin</i> (and variants <i>in</i> , <i>bi</i> , <i>bī</i> , <i>ī</i> , <i>min</i> )	<i>no</i> (before)	<i>di(d)</i> , <i>woz</i>	<i>-n</i>
Past Imperfective (tense-aspect)	<i>bina</i> (and variants <i>ina</i> , <i>mina</i> )	<i>no</i> (before)	<i>yuuztu</i>	<i>din</i> (before)
Contrafactual	<i>bina</i> (and variants <i>ina</i> , <i>mina</i> ), <i>bin(a)go</i> (and variants <i>in(a)go</i> , <i>min(a)go</i> )	<i>no</i> (before)	<i>wozgo</i> , <i>wuda</i>	<i>-n</i> (after <i>woz</i> ) <i>-n</i> (after <i>wu(d)</i> )
Modal of Intention	<i>fu</i> , <i>bin-/minfu</i>	<i>no</i> (before)	<i>tu</i> <i>woztu</i>	$\tilde{e}$ (before) <i>-n</i> (after <i>woz</i> )
Modal of Possibility / Ability	$k(y)\grave{a}$	<i>no</i> (before)	<i>ku(d)</i>	<i>ku(d)-n</i> (past meaning)

In the syntax of negation, the markers *don*, *doz*, *go* and  $k(y)\grave{a}/k(y)\acute{a}\acute{a}$  and the absence of negators before the copulas *a* and *iz* require special comment. *Don* is the only marker that is not preceded by a free-standing negator; indeed, all such negators can occur immediately after it. *Doz* and *go* are the only markers that are negated by a modal, namely post-posed  $k(y)\acute{a}\acute{a}$ , apart from the clitic *-n* (in the case of *doz*) and the pre-occurring negators *no* and  $\tilde{e}$  (in the case of *go*). So that we have

*doz k(y)ǎǎ* (which translates as ‘cannot’ but combines the meanings habituality and negative possibility / ability); and we have *go k(y)ǎǎ* (which translates as ‘cannot’ but combines the meanings future and negative possibility/ability). The pair *kyà/kyǎǎ* are differentiated by contrastive vowel tone and vowel length, with low tone and shortness denoting possibility / ability and high tone and length denoting negative possibility / ability. Finally, the absence of negators before the copulas *a* and *iz* is more accurately expressed as the phonetic disappearance of the copulas in negative sentences, as in {*Hi a dakta; Hi iz dokta*} versus {*Hi no dakta; Hi ẽ dokta*}. The copulas seem to be incorporated in whatever negators apply; intuitively, the latter seem to be *no* and *ẽ*.

Double negation occurs in both basilect and mesolect (e.g., *mi no nō notn; a ẽ nō notn* ‘I don’t know anything’), as indeed in many varieties of English. But there is an emphatic type of double negation that has hardly been described in the literature, as is illustrated in mesolectal sentences below:

- (95) *Shi ẽ nō priti.*  
 ‘She is NOT pretty.’
- (96) *Shi ẽ nō dokta.*  
 ‘She is NOT a doctor.’
- (97) *Shi ẽ nō laik im; shi jos doz took tu im, da iz ool.*  
 ‘She DOESN’T love him; she only talks to him, that’s all.’

As sentences (95-97) show, the normal mesolectal clause negator *ẽ* (basilectal *no* functions in the same way too) comes immediately before another negative word (*nō*) before an adjective (95), a noun (96), and a verb phrase (97). The critical observation is that *nō* emphasises the proposition in the normal negative phrase (e.g., not being pretty in *shi ẽ priti*), and it does so by having the long tense vowel *ō* and interposing itself between the normal negator and the content part of the phrase.

## 9. The noun system

The noun system is one in which the bare (i.e., unanalysed) noun is modified by a number of (mostly) grammatical words. The typical linear surface representation is as follows:

[determiners] [numerals] [adjectives, nouns] bare noun [plural suffix]  
 [pluraliser] [phrases]

A phrase which illustrates this representation is:

- (98) [*Di*] [*faiv*] [*priti*] *kyat[s]* [(*an*) *dem*] [*we de iina di kowch*]

Some typical phrases are:

- (99) Unmodified bare noun (N) (e.g., *kyat*)  
 (100) NP (e.g., *moda kyat*)  
 (101) AP (e.g., *hongri daag*)  
 (102) NUM(eral)P (e.g. *faiv kyat*)  
 (103) DP (e.g., *di kyat*; *wãã kyat*, *dem kyat*)  
 (104) PL(ural)P (e.g., *di kyat (an) dem*)

The grammatical (or non-lexical) categories of modifier are illustrated in Table 20.

Table 20. Basilectal and mesolectal grammatical noun modifiers

Modifier	Basilect	Mesolect
<i>Determiner</i>		
Specifying articles	<i>di, mi, shi, aayu</i>	<i>di, mi, shi, ool-yu</i>
Non-specifying articles	<i>som</i>	<i>som</i>
Name	<i>Kandia, Akini</i>	<i>Kandia, Akini</i>
Singulariser	<i>wãã</i>	<i>a</i>
Demonstratives	<i>da...ya / (de), dem...ya / de, dem</i>	<i>dis...(hyee), da...(dyee), dem...hyee / dyee, dem</i>
Numeral	<i>tuu, faiv</i>	<i>tuu, faiv</i>
Pluraliser	<i>-dem, -de</i>	<i>-(an) dem, de</i>

A word on the unmodified bare noun, determiner phrase, and plural phrase. Just as the main verb (V) is bare or unanalysed, so is the noun. Unmodified, it allows the inference of non-specific reference where both count and mass nouns are concerned. But the count noun in particular encodes non-individuated non-specific reference; it refers to a class of referents, not to specific members of the class. In the determiner phrase, the singulariser and demonstratives deserve further comment. The singulariser, *wãã*, lacks the generic value of Standard English *a(n)*; it is wholly specific in its denotation, meaning only ‘one member of the class of referents’. Where the demonstratives are concerned, basilectally, discontinuous *da...ya/(de)* is singular while discontinuous *dem...(de/ya)* is plural. The mesolectal counterparts are typically *dis...(hyee)*, *da(t) (dyee)*, and *dem...(hyee/dyee)*. The plural phrase is specially interesting because the pluraliser *(an) dem* is discontinuously tied to pre-nominal specifying articles; no pluralized noun can stand apart from a specifying article or a (specifying) name (e.g., *di kyat (an) dem* vs *\*kyat (an) dem*; *Kandia (an) dem*). The pluraliser comes in an emphatic-non-emphatic



pair, with *(an) dem* being the emphatic item and *de* being the non-emphatic one. The former occurs in both subject and object position while the latter is limited to subject position, as in:

- (105) a. **Kandia dè / (an) dém** gaan a maakit.  
 b. *M'aa go bai Ava \*dè / (an) dém.*  
 c. *Hi stap taak to Ava \*dè / (an) dém.*

The noun system is underlain by a basic semantic opposition between the features *specificity* and *non-specificity*, as illustrated in Table 21 below. In this, it may be distinguished from the opposition of *definite* versus *non-definite* established for the Standard.

Table 21. The semantics of the Tobagonian noun phrase

SPECIFICITY	NON-SPECIFICITY
<i>di (faiv) (priti) kyat(s) an dem</i> (a specific group of cats; <i>an dem</i> pluralises <i>kyat</i> ; <i>s</i> confirms that it is referents of the same class)	<i>(priti) kyat</i> (reference unspecified)
<i>dem (priti) kyat(s) (an dem)</i> (plural; a specific group of cats; <i>an dem</i> is a reflex retention and provides emphasis)	<i>faiv (priti) kyat</i> (five unspecified cats, i.e., any five cats)
<i>shi (priti) kyat</i> (a specific cat)	<i>som (priti) kyat</i> (unspecified number of cats)
<i>wã (priti) kyat</i> (a specific cat)	<i>Kandia an dem</i> (a specific Candia with unspecified associates)
<i>da (priti) kyat (ya)</i> (a specific cat)	
<i>da (priti) kyat (de)</i> (a specific cat)	
<i>dem (priti) kyat (ya)</i> (specific cats)	
<i>dem (priti) kyat (de)</i> (specific cats)	
<i>Kandia</i> (a specific person)	
<i>di Kandia</i> (a specific person)	
<i>di Kandia an dem</i> (specific persons each named Candia)	

## 10. Conclusion

In an overview chapter of this nature, it is impossible to either describe all the lexical and morphosyntactic patterns and processes in the varieties being reported on or show the social patterning of lexical and grammatical items. What we have done is to present the essential parts of the lexical and morphosyntactic system,

identifying in the process signature forms, uses, and processes. We have presented the basilectal system, which sets the Tobagonian community apart from the Trinidadian community, as well as the mesolectal system, which is substantially shared by both communities. The Trinidadian and Tobagonian speech community has its own Standard variety, but the main burden of everyday public interaction is carried by the mesolect, with private interaction conducted typically also in the mesolect in Trinidad but typically in the basilect in Tobago.

It is important to note that particular forms in the mesolect are distributed differently both between Tobago and Trinidad and between particular groups of speakers in both islands, depending on factors such as socio-economic background and level of education. But unfortunately, there is very little sociolinguistic work on Tobago and Trinidad, and such work has focused on distributional differences in respect of the verb system. Youssef (2001) is an example of such work, and it found, for instance, that there was a significantly lower usage of *does* by older rather than younger speakers and, further, that the form *does be + -in*, which, like basilectal *a*, links both habitual and continuous functions, was used specifically by younger people who argued, in interview, for a strong Creole identity.

Future research needs to focus on the distributional difference of the full range of morphosyntactic forms between Tobago and Trinidad, as well as between different social groups in both islands as the varieties continue to evolve in time. It would improve our understanding of the social development of the peoples who speak them, in particular, and about language development and change, in general.

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# Surinamese creoles: morphology and syntax\*

Donald Winford and Bettina Migge

## 1. Introduction

The creoles of Suriname diverge to a considerable extent from English, their primary lexifier language, and are therefore often referred to as “radical” creoles. They include Sranan, Aluku or Boni, Kwinti, Matawai, Ndjuka or Okanisi, Pamaka, and Saamaka. Sociohistorical and linguistic evidence suggest that they all have their origins in the early creole varieties that emerged on the plantations of Suriname in the late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Modern Sranan is a direct continuation of this early contact language while the other creoles, also referred to as maroon creoles, split off from it as a result of their founders’ flight from the Surinamese plantations. Sranan is spoken both as a first language and as a lingua franca for inter-group communication throughout the country and in western French Guiana. The other languages used to be spoken only in the interior of the rain forest in socio-politically semi-autonomous communities founded by escaped slaves in the early to mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Aluku, Ndjuka and Pamaka reside in the eastern part of Suriname and western French Guiana along the Marowijne river (Aluku, Ndjuka, Pamaka) and its tributaries, the Tapanahoni river (Ndjuka) and the Lawa river (Aluku). Their community languages are entirely mutually intelligible but differ somewhat in phonology and lexicon. They are best viewed as dialects of a common language that we refer to as the Eastern Maroon Creole (EMarC). Saamaka and Matawai are also highly mutually intelligible. They are spoken in communities with the same name, which are located in the western part of Suriname along the Suriname river (Saamaka) and the Saramaka river (Matawai). The Kwinti reside on the Coppename river. Their language is linguistically intermediate between the two main clusters. With the increase in migration towards the coast, due to socioeconomic considerations, these varieties are today also well represented in the coastal urban centers of Suriname (Paramaribo, Albina, Mongo) and, with the exception of Matawai and Kwinti, in the urban centers of French Guiana (St. Laurent, Kourou, Cayenne, Mana) (see also Smith, other volume). The Saamaka and Ndjuka each number about 50,000 people while the Aluku, Matawai and Pamaka each number roughly 6,000. The Kwinti are the smallest group, they count roughly 500 members. Unless otherwise indicated, the sample sentences come from recordings of natural conversations and formal elicitations carried out by the authors.

## 2. Tense, mood and aspect

Categories of tense, mood and aspect, as well as negation (see section 3.4.), are expressed by invariant preverbal forms. The Surinamese creoles share a common set of TMA categories, though some of the forms that express them vary across the creoles.

### 2.1. Tense

Categories of tense include a (relative) Past, expressed by *ben* (Sranan), *be* (EMarC), *bi* (Saamaka), and a Future, expressed by *o* (< *go*) (see also Veenstra 1996: 12–14):

(1) EMarC            *Alen*                    *be*            *kai*.  
                         Rain                    PAST        fall  
                         ‘It rained.’

(2) Saamaka        *Mi*                    *o*            *sikiifi*    *wan*        *biifi*.  
                         I                          FUT        write    a            letter  
                         ‘I’ll write a letter.’

### 2.2. Aspect

Categories of aspect include Imperfective, expressed by (*d*)*e* in Sranan and the EMarC, and by *ta* (< *tan* ‘stay’) in Saamaka. They mark situations as habitual, progressive or continuous. Completive (Perfect) aspect is expressed by VP-final *kaba* (< Port. *acabar* ‘finish’). It indicates that a situation is completed or it marks the result of a process. The unmarked verb conveys perfective aspect, and can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the context.

(3) Saamaka    a. *Mi*    *tá*                    *wáka*.  
       EmarC    b. *Mi*    *e*                      *waka*.  
                         I        IMPFV        walk  
                         ‘I’m walking.’ or ‘I usually walk.’

(4) EMarC        *A*    *nyan*    *kaba*.  
                         she eat        COMPL  
                         ‘She’s already eaten.’

(5) Sranan        *A*                    *kownu*    *dede*.  
                         DET (sg) king    die  
                         ‘The king has died.’



Sranan never uses *sa* to express any kind of negative ability, choosing *kan* or *mag* for permission, and *kan* or *man* for the other types.

All of the creoles use *sa* to express epistemic senses of possibility, that is, the sense of ‘maybe’ or ‘perhaps’ (though *sa* seems to be more restricted in this function in Sranan). Other strategies include the use of adverbials like *kande* ‘perhaps’, or expressions such as *A kan de (taki)* ‘it can be (the case) that’.

(12) Sranan      *Jan sa de na oso nownow.*  
 John MOD be LOC house now  
 ‘John may be at home now.’

(13) Pamaka      *Kande den pikin e siibi nounou.*  
 perhaps DET (pl) child IMPFV sleep now  
 ‘The children may be asleep now.’

### 2.3.2. Necessity

Meanings associated with necessity are expressed by *musu (fu)* or by the reduced form *mu (< musu)*, which express weaker or stronger obligation.

(14) Sranan      *Wan pikin musu arki en bigi sma alaten.*  
 a child must listen its big people always  
 ‘A child must always obey its parents.’

(15) Pamaka      *I mu kiibi a moni fi i.*  
 you must keep DET (sg) money for you  
 ‘You should save your money.’

The same forms are used to express epistemic necessity, that is the sense of ‘It must be the case that’, based on the speaker’s inference. Alternatively, the expression *A musu de (taki)* ‘It must be the case that’ can be used.

### 2.3.3. Need and desire

Finally, the senses of need and desire are conveyed by the expression (*abi fanoudu (fu)* ‘have need of’ and the main verb *wani* ‘want’ respectively.

(16) Sranan      *A pikin abi furu lobi fanoudu.*  
 DET (sg) child have full love need  
 ‘The child needs a lot of love.’

## 2.4. Auxiliary ordering

The usual ordering of auxiliaries is as follows:

TENSE > MODALITY > ASPECT

This is illustrated in the following example from Sranan:

- (17) Sranan *Jan ben sa e sribi.*  
 John PAST MOD IMPFV sleep  
 'John would have been sleeping.'

However, the canonical ordering shown above is by no means the only one found. In Sranan, for example, the Imperfective marker can precede the modality marker.

- (18) Sranan *A ben e musu e taki nanga unu.*  
 he PAST IMPFV must IMPFV talk with us  
 'He usually had to be talking with us.'

### 3. Basic clause structure

Like all languages, the Surinamese creoles have three basic sentence types, declaratives, yes/no interrogatives and imperatives. All of these have SVO ordering, with interrogatives employing rising intonation as distinct from the other two types, which have falling intonation.

#### 3.1. Declarative sentences

Verbs may be intransitive or transitive, the latter being divided into various subclasses depending on the number of arguments they can take.

Intransitive verbs include general movement verbs such as *go* 'go', *ko(n)* 'come', *kai* 'fall', *lon* 'run', *waka* 'walk', etc. The subclasses of transitive verbs include those that take a compulsory object, those whose object is optional, and those that require both a direct and an indirect object.

- (19) EMarC *L. puu a kumalu.*  
 L. pull DET (sg) type of fish  
 'L. removed the fish.'
- (20) EMarC *Mi e wasi.*  
 I IMPFV wash  
 'I am washing (myself).'

In sentences with di-transitive verbs the direct object precedes the indirect one.

- (21) EMarC *Den mu gi mi wan pisi doti.*  
 they MOD give me one piece land  
 'They have to give me a piece of land.'



Prepositional phrases and adverbs generally follow the verb or its object. Note that the maroon creoles have a special class of adverbs, so-called ideophones, which specify more closely the meanings of verbs.

(22) EMarC *A go na a sabana.*  
 he go LOC DET savannah  
 ‘He went to the savannah.’

(23) Saamaka *A bi djombo viiin te a wata djuubu.*  
 He PAST jump QUICKLY till LOC water SPLASH  
 ‘He jumped quickly, splash! in the water.’

(Bakker, Smith and Veenstra 1995: 174)

Other semantic roles are introduced by so-called serial verbs (see section 6.2.).

Many verbs are ambi-transitive, that is, they can be used both transitively and intransitively.

(24) Sranan a. *A batra broko.*  
 DET (sg) bottle break  
 ‘The bottle broke.’ (Winford 1997: 265)

b. *A pikin broko a batra*  
 DET (sg) child break DET (sg) bottle  
 ‘The child broke the bottle.’

### 3.2. Yes/no questions

The Surinamese creoles also have certain variations of yes–no questions, such as alternative (either–or) questions, and tag questions.

(25) Sranan *Oh, you e meki bestelling, o you e*  
 Oh you IMPFV make orders or you IMPFV  
*meki gewoon fu yu oso?*  
 make only for your house?  
 ‘Oh, do you take orders or do you make [cakes] only for yourself?’ (Winford 2000a: 426)

(26) EMarC *Da a te a bilo u komoto?*  
 Then FOC till LOC down-river you (pl) leave  
 ‘So you come (all the way) from the coastal area?’

In tag questions, Sranan and modern varieties of maroon varieties use the Dutch particle *tog*, while EMarC uses *no*.

(27) Sranan a. *Oh, ma dan a ben kan kon taki now, tog?*  
 Oh, but then he PAST can come talk now, right?  
 ‘Oh, but then he can come and chat now, right?’

EMarC b. *Ma a gi i a moni, no?*  
 But he give you DET (sg) money right  
 ‘But he gave you the money, right?’

### 3.3. Imperative sentences

Imperatives are the only sentences that do not require an overt singular subject, but when addressed to several people, they require the plural pronoun *u* or *unu*.

- (28) EMarC a. *Tapu mofu!*  
 close mouth  
 ‘Shut up!’  
 b. *U kon njan nou!*  
 you (pl) come eat now  
 ‘Come eat!’

Hortatives are introduced by *meki* ‘make’, or *kon* ‘come’.

- (29) Sranan *Meki/kon unu libi a tori dati yere.*  
 make/come we leave DET (sg) story DEM hear  
 ‘Let’s forget that story, okay?’

### 3.4. Clause negation

Negative sentences in the creoles are mere variants of the basic sentence types sketched earlier. Each of these may be negated in the same way, by placing the negator, *no* in Sranan and *ná/á(n)* (31) in the EMarC/Saamaka, immediately before the first element of the VP, no matter how many TMA particles appear before the verb.

- (30) Sranan *Yu no ben man taki leki fa den yungu sma now.*  
 You NEG PAST MOD talk like how DET young person now  
 (pl)  
 ‘You couldn’t talk [to an adult] the way young people [do] now.’

The creoles also employ sentence level negators. In the EMarC, these include the items *ééé*, *nono* ‘no’, *noiti* ‘never’ and *kwetikweti* ‘not at all’. They either precede or follow a sentence or they occur in isolation as responses to contributions of another speaker.

- (31) Pamaka a. T: *U ná a wan sani fu taki.*  
 We NEG have a thing for say  
 ‘We do not have anything to say.’  
 P: *Kwetikweti*  
 ‘not at all’

- b. *A taki "ééé disi án bun gaaman"*  
 He say no this NEG good king  
 'He said "no king, this isn't good".'

Finally, negative structures are characterized by negative concord (multiple negation).

- (32) Sranan *Noyti mi no sii en dya a Coronie.*  
 Never I NEG see him here LOC Coronie  
 'I've never seen him here at Coronie.'

There are various other strategies of negation in these creoles, involving inherently negative quantifiers (*ná/no wan sani* 'nothing', *ná/no wan sama/sma* 'nobody' etc.), adverbs (*ná/no wan peesi/presi* 'nowhere') and other polarity items, which are beyond the scope of this summary.

### 3.5. Copular-type sentences

The Surinamese creoles, like other New World Creoles, have a distinctive set of copular-type constructions (so called because they require a copula in the lexifiers). They employ the copula *na/da* for present time nominal predication, and *de* for locative/existential constructions, adverbial expressions and for nominal predication under other TMA specifications. They use no copula at all in attributive (adjectival) predicate constructions, in which the predicative property items behave like intransitive verbs, being directly preceded by TMA markers.

- (33) Sranan a. *Sranan liba na wan bun bradi liba.*  
 Suriname river COP a good broad river  
 'The Suriname river is a really broad river.'
- b. *A watra ben faya.*  
 DET (sg) water PAST hot  
 'The water was hot.'
- c. *Den pikin musu de ini a oso.*  
 DET (sg) child must COP in the house  
 'The children must be in the house'
- d. *Gado de.*  
 'God exists.'

#### 3.5.1. Equative copular predication

The syntactic behavior of equative copula *na* suggests that it is not (fully) verbal. Unlike verbs, it precedes the negator and past tense marker.

- (34) EMarC *En na be basi.*  
 she COP PAST boss  
 'She was the boss.'

(*N*)*a* is replaced by *de* after any TMA marker and optionally also in constructions with past time reference or negative polarity.

- (35) Sranan *Mi prakseri a boi disi nanga a*  
 I think DET (sg) boy DEM with DET (sg)  
*man dati musu de brada.*  
 man DEM must COP brother  
 ‘I think this boy and that man must be brothers.’

Saamaka makes a distinction between identificational and attributive (class inclusive) equative structures, employing *da* and *de* respectively.

- (36) Saamaka a. *Me da/\*de Gadu.*  
 I COP God  
 ‘I am God.’  
 b. *Me de wã kabitě*  
 I COP DET captain  
 ‘I’m a captain.’

(*N*)*a* cannot appear in final position. In cases of movement such as *wh*-questions and predicate clefting the copula *de* is used. In sentences with future time reference it may also be replaced by a verb meaning ‘turn’ or ‘(be)come’.

- (37) Sranan *Na leriman a man de.*  
 FOC teacher DET(sg) man COP  
 ‘A teacher is what the man is.’  
 (38) EMarC *A sa/o toon fetiman.*  
 He MOD/FUT become fighter  
 ‘He may/will become a troublemaker.’

Equative constructions probably arose from topic-comment structures in which *da/na* functioned as a resumptive pronoun. The latter differ from regular equative constructions in having a pause or comma intonation after the topic NP.

- (39) Sranan *Hertoch, na koniman.*  
 Hertoch, PRE intelligent-man  
 ‘Hertoch is an intelligent man.’

### 3.5.2. Locative/existential copular constructions

The copula *de* may be freely preceded by TMA markers and the negator.

- (40) Sranan *Den pikin ben/sa/o de na skoro.*  
 DET (pl) child PAST/MOD/FUT COP LOC school.  
 ‘The children were/may/will be at school.’

It is generally agreed that the source of copula *de* is adverbial *de* < *there*, as used in earlier existential and locative constructions.

- (41) Sranan    *Masra,        soopie        de.*  
                  Master,        drink        there  
                  ‘Master, here is your drink.’  
                  (Van Dyk 1765, in Arends and Perl 1995: 170)

### 3.5.3. Attributive (adjectival-like) predication

There has been a great deal of debate as to whether the property items (corresponding to English adjectives) that appear in creole copular-like structures are adjectives.

- (42) Sranan    *A                liba        bradi*  
                  DET (sg)    river        broad  
                  ‘The river is wide.’

The property items in question also function as modifiers of nouns, and their adjectival status in this function is not under dispute. In their use as predicators, however, there is good evidence that such items are in fact verbal in the Surinamese creoles (Alleyne 1987; Winford 1997; Migge 2000).

First, we find the following parallels between the syntactic behavior of such predicates and that of intransitive verbs:

- They are immediately preceded by TMA markers.
- They undergo predicate cleft, leaving a copy *in situ*.
- Adverbial modifiers typically follow them.
- They appear in comparative serial verb constructions.

The following Sranan examples from Winford (1997: 257-259) illustrate:

- (43) Sranan    a. *A                pikin        e                bigi.*  
                  DET (sg)    child        IMPFV    big  
                  ‘The child is getting big.’  
                  b. *Na                langa        a                pikin        langa.*  
                  FOC        long        DET(sg)    child        long  
                  ‘The child is really tall.’  
                  c. *A                watra        faya        tumsi.*  
                  DET (sg)    water        hot        too-much  
                  ‘The water is too hot.’  
                  d. *A                pikin        bigi        pasa        yu.*  
                  DET (sg)    child        big        pass        you  
                  ‘The child is bigger than you’.

Most property items also function as transitive verbs in the Surinamese creoles, similarly to ambi-transitive verbs like *broko/booko* ‘break’ and *priiti/piiti* ‘split’.

- (44) Sranan *Sidon tumsi e fatu y.*  
 sit too-much IMPFV fat you  
 ‘Sitting too much fattens you.’

#### 4. Variations on basic clause structure

##### 4.1. Passive constructions

Passive constructions do not display characteristics associated with the analytic passives found in English. In particular, they lack a “be” auxiliary, morphological marking on the verb, and an agentive prepositional phrase.

- (45) Sranan *Kande den suma disi ben kweki tra fasi*  
 Perhaps DET (pl) person DEM PAST raise other fashion  
 ‘Perhaps these people were raised differently.’

(Winford 2000b: 95)

- (46) EmarC *Sopi ná e diingi a ini boto!*  
 Rum NEG IMPFV drink LOC in boat  
 ‘Rum is not consumed in the boat!’

There are greater restrictions on the class of verbs that can undergo passivization, by comparison with English. For instance, stative verbs such as *love*, *know*, *believe* etc., and perception verbs like *see*, *hear*, etc., generally resist passivization in these creoles, except in certain discourse contexts. In general, activity verbs tend to passivize more readily. Passives involving verbs with animate subjects (e.g. *eat*) tend to be avoided in favor of impersonal constructions, in order to avoid ambiguity (see Winford 1988 for further discussion).

##### 4.2. Left-dislocation, topicalization and focus

In addition to passives, there are two other types of construction in which constituents are moved to sentence-initial position. The first type includes cases of left-dislocation and topicalization, both of which involve the fronting of an NP followed by some comment on it. The distinction between the two lies in the fact that a resumptive pronoun (or sometimes a copy of the moved NP) appears in left-dislocations but not in topicalizations. The second type includes cleft constructions.

4.2.1. *Left-dislocation and topicalization*

The following Sranan example illustrates left-dislocation.

- (47) Sranan *Den siki di de now a fosten*  
 DET (pl) sick REL COP now DET (sg) former-time  
*den no ben de.*  
 they NEG PAST COP  
 ‘The diseases that there are nowadays weren’t around long ago.’  
 (Winford 2000b: 72, 93)

Topicalization is illustrated in the following:

- (48) Sranan *Oh, wan kronto srefti oom N. no man kapu.*  
 oh, one cocnut self uncle N. NEG can chop  
 ‘Oh, even a coconut Uncle N. can’t cut?’

In the EMarC, topics are frequently introduced/marked by *dati*.

- (49) EmarC *Mi dati án de a ini.*  
 I TOP NEG COP LOC inside  
 ‘As for me, I am not part of it.’

4.2.2. *Focus in cleft constructions*

Cleft constructions are very similar to topicalizations, except that the former introduce the focused element with a focus marker. The latter is identical in shape to the equative copula in all the Surinamese creoles except Samaaka, which employs the postposed focus marker *wé* retained from Fongbe.

Two distinct types of focus are involved in these constructions – presentational or information focus and identificational or contrastive focus. Presentational focus constructions usually present some new topic, and usually involve the fronting of an NP.

- (50) Sranan *A wan piki pikin boi e moksi smenti drape.*  
 FOC ART little little boy IMPFV mix cement there  
 ‘It’s a little boy that mixes cement there.’

In identificational or information focus, the fronted element may be any major constituent of the sentence, including NPs, PPs, and adverbs. The function of such constructions is to identify some participant, entity, etc. that is presumed to be unknown to the hearer, as the actual one involved in the situation described.

- (51) EMarC *Na nounou den e njan fu mamanten oo.*  
 FOC now they IMPFV eat for morning EM  
 ‘It’s NOW that they eat for morning, i.e. breakfast.’

- (52) Saamaka *Di mujee we mi bi bel, naa di womi.*  
 DET (sg) woman FOC I PAST phone NEG the man  
 ‘It was the WOMAN I phoned, not the man.’  
 (Smith 1996: 118)

#### 4.2.3. Predicate clefting

Closely related to the contrastive focus constructions is so-called predicate clefting, in which verbs and predicative property items can undergo fronting. In such cases, however, a copy of the fronted element remains *in situ*.

- (53) EMarC *Na booko a booko a wagi fu mi.*  
 FOC break he break DET (sg) car for me  
 ‘He BROKE my car.’

When NP predicates are fronted, a copula appears in the place of the fronted NP.

- (54) Sranan a. *Na leriman Jan de.*  
 FOC teacher Jan COP  
 ‘John’s a TEACHER.’  
 b. *\*Na leriman Jan leriman.*

#### 4.3. Wh-questions

Information (*wh*-) questions do not allow auxiliary inversion. Moreover, they employ a range of *wh*-expressions that are quite different from those in English, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Wh*-forms in the Surinamese creoles

Gloss	Sranan	EMarC	Saamaka	Early Sranan
‘who’	<i>suma</i>	<i>sama</i>	<i>ambe</i>	<i>o suma</i> (< somebody)
‘what’	<i>san</i>	<i>san</i>	<i>andi</i>	<i>o sani</i> (< something)
‘where’	<i>pe</i>	<i>pe</i>	<i>unse</i>	<i>o pe</i> (< place)
‘how’	<i>fa</i>	<i>(on)fa</i>	<i>(um)fa</i>	<i>o fasi</i> (< fashion)
‘why’	<i>(fu) san ede</i>	<i>(fu) saide</i>	<i>(fu) andi mbei</i> (‘for what make’)	<i>fu san ede</i> (‘for what head=reason’)

Except for Saamaka *ambe* ‘who’ and *andi* ‘what’, which derive from Gbe, all other *wh*-forms appear to derive from earlier compounds indicated in the last column in Table 1.



- (55) Saamaka      *Andi*                *de*        *fěni*        *límbo?*  
 What                they        find        clean  
 ‘What did they find clean?’ (Veenstra 1996: 69)
- (56) Sranan        *San*                *yu*        *bo*                *taki?*  
 What                you        PAST + FUT    talk?  
 ‘What were you going to say?’

## 5. Complex constructions

This section briefly surveys a number of multi-clause constructions, including cases of coordination, verb serialization, and subordination.

### 5.1. Coordination

Coordinate structures may be divided into three main types: simple coordination with *and*; adversative coordination with *but*; and disjunctive coordination with *or*.

Sranan uses *nanga*, EMarC *anga* (< English *along*) and Saamaka *ku* (< Gengbe) all meaning ‘with’ for simple coordination of noun phrases. To conjoin clauses, they employ a different conjunction, *dan* ‘then’ or *en* ‘and’ in Sranan, *da* or *neen* in the EMarC and *hen* or *noo* in Saamaka.

- (57) Sranan a. *Tyari a karaaf nanga wan kan gi mi.*  
 carry DET (sg) pitcher with one can give me  
 ‘Fetch the pitcher and a can for me.’
- Sranan b. *yu e go na a mma dan yu o taki.*  
 You IMPFV go LOC the mother then you FUT speak  
 ‘You’d go to the mother and then you’d speak.’
- EMarC *Eside, den wasi osu neen den kaabu(den) ganda.*  
 Yesterday 3pl wash house then 3pl weed(the-pl) outside  
 ‘Yesterday, they cleaned the house, then cleaned/weeded the outside.’

For adversative coordination, all the creoles employ *ma* (< Dutch *maar* ‘but’).

- (58) Saamaka *Mi bi musu yasa wan kuku tide ma mé bi a*  
 I PAST must bake a cake today but I-NEG PAST have  
*tin fu yasa en moo.*  
 time for bake it more  
 ‘I should have baked a cake today, but I did not have time.’

For disjunctive coordination at both phrasal and sentential levels, Sranan employs the form *of* ‘or’ (< Dutch); the EMarC uses *efu*. Saamaka, on the other hand, employs the form *na so* (which is also found in more conservative Sranan).

- (59) Sranan a. *Den e taki wan dipi sortu fasi of den*  
 They IMPFV take one deep sort fashion or they  
*e gi ala sortu agersi fasi.*  
 IMPFV give all sort parable fashion  
 ‘They’d talk in a deep way or use all kinds of parables.’

- Saamaka c. *Di womi ta wooko na so hen mujee ta*  
 The man IMPFV work not so 3-poss wife IMPFV  
*wooko.*  
 work  
 ‘Either the man is working or his wife is.’

(Park, Glock and Rountree 1981: 77)

## 5.2. Serial verb constructions

Like other New World Creoles, the Surinamese creoles employ a variety of sentence structures that contain two or more verb phrases linked together with no overt markers of coordination. These serial verb constructions (SVCs) can be divided into several types, depending on the function performed by the serial verb, which is usually, but not always, the second verb (V2). The main types include directional, dative/benefactive, and comparative serials, though there are others more difficult to classify.

### 5.2.1. Directional serial verb constructions

In directional SVCs, the serial verb (V2) indicates the direction of the motion expressed by the main verb (V1). For example, *go* as V2 indicates direction away from the point of reference, while *kon* ‘come’ indicates motion towards it. They are highly productive in the Surinamese creoles, which possess by far the widest range of directional serial verbs of all New World Creoles.

- (60) Sranan *Yu musu go na kownu go aksi en wan wroko.*  
 You must go LOC king go ask him one work  
 ‘You must go to the king to ask him one favor.’

(Sebba 1987: 61)

5.2.2. *Dative/benefactive serial verb constructions*

Another common SVC is one in which a verb meaning ‘give’ functions as V2, and introduces a recipient or a benefactive argument. The recipient type SVC involves a V1 expressing some kind of transfer such as ‘sell’, ‘send’.

- (61) Sranan *Mi seri a oso gi en.*  
 I sell DET (sg) house give her  
 ‘I sold the house to her.’

The Surinamese creoles also employ ‘give’ to introduce several other types of arguments or thematic roles, including “substitutive”, “experiencer”, and “source”; see Migge (1998).

5.2.3. *“Comparative” SVCs*

Comparison is expressed by an SVC in which the V2 is either *pasa* ‘(sur)pass’ or *moro* (Sranan) and *moo* (EMarC) ‘exceed’ (< English *more*). The latter is the more frequently used.

- (62) Sranan *Amba tranga moro/pasa Kofi.*  
 Amba strong exceed/pass Kofi  
 ‘Amba’s stronger than Kofi.’

Sranan has adopted more Dutch-like comparative structures, though not all native speakers accept these.

- (63) Sranan *A man moro gridi leki a uma.*  
 The man more greedy than DET (sg) woman  
 ‘The man is more greedy than the woman.’

5.2.4. *Other types of SVC*

The Surinamese creoles also employ a wide variety of SVCs in which *teki* ‘take’ functions as the V1, introducing arguments of various types. The following is an example in which ‘take’ introduces an instrumental argument.

- (64) Sranan *Kofi teki a nefi koti a brede.*  
 Kofi take the knife cut the bread  
 ‘Kofi took the knife and cut the bread.’

We also find so-called resultative SVCs, in which the V2 expresses a result stemming from the action of the V1.

- (65) EMarC *A naki a bata(a) booko.*  
 She hit DET (sg) bottle break  
 ‘She broke the bottle by hitting it.’

There are various other kinds of SVCs found in these creoles, which are more difficult to classify, because there is freer selection of verbs. They include sentences like the following:

- (66) Sranan *Amba go na wowoyo bai nyan.*  
 Amba go LOC market buy food  
 ‘Amba went to the market and bought food.’

## 6. Subordination

### 6.1. Complement clauses

Sentential complements can be divided into two types: indicative (*that*-type) and non-indicative or subjunctive (*for*-type). These complements may appear as full sentences, or may be “reduced” in some way (e.g. lacking overt subjects, TMA marking, etc.). Each type can be further differentiated.

#### 6.1.1. Indicative complements

Indicative-type complements include the following:

- arguments of predicates like *seem*;
- complements of assertion verbs (*say, tell, etc.*); of psyche state verbs (*know, believe, etc.*); and of perception verbs (*see, hear, etc.*).
- complements of causative *make*

Complements to *seem* and to evaluative predicates like *true* are always extraposed sentential subjects. Such complements are clearly full (finite) sentences.

- (67) Sranan *A gersi taki den kuli wani teki a*  
 It seem COMP DET (pl) Hindustanis want take the  
*kondre now op.*  
 country now up  
 ‘It seems that the Hindustanis want to take over the country now.’  
 (Winford 2000b: 96)

#### 6.1.2. Complements to verbs of saying, etc.

The verb *taki* ‘talk’ also introduces complements to a variety of verbs, including verbs of assertion (*say, tell, etc.*), desideratives (*wish, hope, etc.*), verbs of psychological state (*believe, know, think, etc.*), and perception verbs (*see, hear, etc.*).

- (68) EMarC *A man á be sabi taki na so wan*  
 DET (sg) man NEG PAST know COMP FOC so one

*sani be o du en.*  
 thing PAST FUT do him  
 ‘The man didn’t know that such a thing would happen to him.’

In Sranan *taki* is often replaced by *dati* (< Dutch *dat*) or by a zero complementizer.

(69) Sranan *En mi hoop dati a kondre o kon bun yere.*  
 and I hope DEM DET (sg) country FUT come good hear  
 ‘And I hope that the country will get better, right.’  
 (Winford 2000b: 115)

### 6.1.3. Perception verb complements

Perception verbs take two types of complement, a finite type introduced by ‘talk’ as well as a reduced (small clause) type without ‘talk’. Veenstra (1996) demonstrates this distinction for Saamaka with examples like the following:

(70) Saamaka a. *De sí táa dí ógi wómi*  
 They see talk (DET) sg bad man  
*bì disá dí kónde gó.*  
 PAST leave DET (SG) village go  
 ‘They saw that the wicked man had left the village.’  
 b. *De sí dí ógi wómi disá dí kónde gó.*  
 ‘They saw the wicked man leave the village.’

As Veenstra points out, the “reduced” type involves events that are simultaneous with the time of the matrix verb, while the finite type does not.

### 6.1.4. Complements to causative ‘make’

Complements of causative *make* are also finite sentences, which can function as both subject and object arguments.

(71) Saamaka *Egber bebé daán hía pói mbéi a fíká a*  
 Egber drink rum much spoil make 3-subj stay LOC  
*wósu siki-siki.*  
 house sick  
 ‘[The fact that] Egber drank too much rum made him stay at home sick.’  
 (Veenstra 1996: 101)

## 6.2. “For” complements

Non-indicative complements in these creoles are introduced by the preposition *fu* ‘for’, which can also function as a modal auxiliary. For convenience, we will refer to these collectively as “for” complements.

These complements express potential events or states. The predicates that take them include desideratives (verbs of desire, intent, request and command), “aspectual” verbs like *start* and modal predicates like *have*, *able*, *obliged*, etc. *Fu* also introduces adverbial clauses of purpose and reduced relatives.

“For” complements may be either reduced or full clauses. The following are examples of the former type. Note that, when matrix and complement subjects are co-referential, *fu* may be omitted.

- (72) Saamaka a.  $A_i$  *ke* (*fu*) $\emptyset_i$  *go* *a* *di* *wosu*.  
 s/he want (for) go LOC DET (sg) house  
 S/he wants to go to the house.’ (Caskey 1990: 703)
- b.  $Kofi_i$  *ko* *a* *wosu* *fu*  $\emptyset_i$  *sikifi* *di* *lete*.  
 Kofi come LOC house for write DET (sg) letter  
 ‘Kofi came to the house to write the letter.’  
 (Caskey 1990: 700)

Note also that an overt subject may appear in the complement clause, and may refer either to the matrix subject or some other party, as in the following:

- (73) Saamaka  $Kofi_i$  *ko* *a* *wosu* *faa\_{ij}* *skikfi* *di* *lete*.  
 Kofi come LOC house for-him write DET (sg) letter  
 ‘Kofi came to the house (for him/her) to write the letter.’  
 (Caskey 1990: 700)

When the matrix and subordinate clause subjects are clearly different, the latter is always overtly expressed.

- (74) Sranan *Wan* *pikin* *aksi* *a* *man* *fu* *a* *man* *rij*  
 A girl ask DET (sg) man for DET (sg) man ride  
*a* *laatst* *rij*.  
 DET (sg) last ride  
 ‘A girl asked the guy to take one last ride.’  
 (Winford 2000a: 433)

A corollary to this is that complements to desiderative verbs are interpreted quite differently when they have null pronominal subjects as opposed to overt pronominal ones. The following is an example from Caskey (1990: 701).

- (75) Saamaka a. *Di* *mujee\_i* *hakisi* *da* *di* *womi\_j* *fu*  $PRO_i$   
 DET (sg) woman ask give DET (sg) man for

*go a di wenke.*  
 go LOC DET(sg) store  
 ‘The woman asked the man [permission] to go to the store.’

- b. *Di mujee<sub>i</sub> hakisi da di womi<sub>j</sub> faa<sub>j</sub> go a di wenke.*  
 ‘The woman asked the man to go to the store [requested that he go].’

These few examples will serve to illustrate the complexity of control relationships in such complements. Caskey (1990: 694) suggests that these relationships depend largely on the inherent meaning of matrix predicates.

### 6.3. Relative clauses

Relative clauses in these creoles include both restrictive and non-restrictive types. We will confine our attention to the former, which are the more common ones. The main relativizer is *di* ‘who, that, which’ (< *disi* ‘this’), an item that also has a variety of other subordinating functions, being interpreted as ‘where, when, because’, etc. (see discussion below).

- (76) EMarC *Luku a uman di e weli a buuku.*  
 Look DET (sg) woman REL IMPFV wear DET (sg) trousers  
 ‘Look the woman who is wearing the trousers.’

Other types of relative clauses in ACs include “for” relatives (similar to infinitival relatives in English), reduced relatives (similar to small clauses); and place relatives. “For” relatives follow the pattern of other “for” subordinate clauses that we discussed earlier.

- (77) EMarC *A feni kwaka fu bai.*  
 She PAST search-manioc for buy  
 ‘She found baked manioc to buy.’

Place relatives are among a few types in which the Surinamese creoles use a *wh*-form as a relativizer.

- (78) EMarC *Na a konde pe a e tan.*  
 FOC DET (sg) country where she IMPFV stay  
 ‘It’s the village where she lives.’

Interestingly, Sranan is increasingly employing its interrogative pronouns, particularly *suma* ‘who’ and *san* ‘what’ as relativizers, perhaps on the model of *pe* ‘where’, which is long established in place relatives.

- (79) Sranan *Den ben bigin ferteri yu wan sani san yu musu*  
 they PAST begin tell you one thing REL you must

*ben sabi.*  
 PAST know.

‘They started to tell you things that you had to know.’

(Winford 2000b: 74)

In general, noun functions such as subject and object, which are high on the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (Keenan and Comrie 1977), lend themselves more readily to relativization of the type that leaves a gap in the site of the relativized noun. When nouns lower on the scale (e.g., objects of prepositions, possessives, objects of comparison) are relativized, a resumptive pronoun must occupy the position of the relativized NP.

(80) Sranan *Dan a man di mi nanga en e taki,*  
 Then DET (sg) man REL I with him IMPFV talk

*a man taki, “yu kan go”.*

DET (sg) man talk you can go.

‘Then the man who I was talking with said, “You can go.”’

#### 6.4. Adverbial clauses

We find once more a marked difference between the Surinamese creoles and English varieties in their repertoire of subordinators that introduce adverbial clauses. Some of these are reflexes of English conjunctions, e.g., *bikasi* < *because*. However, the Surinamese creoles have also developed their own peculiar set of subordinators, including *di/te* ‘when’, *pe* ‘where’, *fa* ‘how’, and others. Several of these are identical to the *wh*-forms we discussed earlier.

##### 6.4.1. Temporal clauses

The creoles employ several temporal subordinators, the chief of which are *di* and *te*, both meaning ‘when’. *Di* is used in cases where a specific (usually past) situation is referred to, while *te* is used for irrealis (future or speculative) or non-specific, including habitual and non-realized, situations.

(81) EMarC *Di mi be yonku, te u be go a foto*  
 when I PAST young when we PAST go LOC town

*u bai tjaipi sani.*

we buy lots thing

‘When I was young, whenever we used to go to town, we bought lots of things.’



Other temporal conjunctions include *fosi* ‘before’ and compounds like *baka di/te* ‘after’.

- (82) Sranan *Baka di a dringi a dresi, a koso wan*  
 After REL he drink DET (sg) medicine, he cough one  
*heri yuru.*  
 whole hour  
 ‘After he drank the medicine, he coughed for a whole hour.’

- (83) EMarC *Fosi a njan a diingi wan bii.*  
 Before she eat she drink a beer  
 ‘Before she ate she drank a beer.’

We also find complex forms such as *vanaf di* (Sranan), *fanafu di* (EMarC) ‘since’, which combine a Dutch loan *vanaf* ‘from’ with *(fu) di*.

- (84) Sranan *Vanaf di a oto naki mi dan mi no*  
 Since REL DET (sg) car knock me then I  
 NEG  
*kan hori wan owru*  
 can hold one machete.  
 ‘Since the car struck me I can’t hold a machete.’

#### 6.4.2. Clauses of reason

Clauses of reason generally fall into two types, the first introduced by a subordinator meaning ‘because’ *bikasi* (Sranan), *bika* (EMarC) and *biga* (Saamaka) and the second introduced by *fu di*. All creoles also use Dutch-derived subordinators such as *want(i)* and *omdat(i)* ‘because’.

- (85) EMarC *Mi o bai en bika a moi.*  
 I FUT buy it because it nice  
 ‘I’ll buy it because it is nice.’
- (86) Sranan *Someni ben dede fu di den no ben kisi*  
 So-many PAST die for that they NEG PAST get  
*wan bun yepi.*  
 one good help  
 ‘Too many died because they didn’t get a good helping hand.’  
 (Nickel and Wilner 1984: 27)

6.4.3. *Conditional clauses*

There are two kinds of condition – real and unreal. The former refer to actual events, whether present, generic or past. In these cases, the speaker leaves open the possibility that some state of affairs does or did exist.

- (87) Sranan *Efu mi no ben wroko mi no nyan.*  
 If I NEG PAST work I NEG eat  
 ‘If I didn’t work, I didn’t eat.’ (Winford 2000b: 108)

Unreal conditions may be divided into predictive (future) and imaginary types (Thompson and Longacre 1985: 191). Predictives are somewhat like real conditions in that the speaker adopts an “open” or neutral stance toward the state of affairs. The Surinamese creoles in fact treat both types as the same, syntactically.

- (88) EMarC *Efu a feni en, da a o boo.*  
 If she find it then she FUT breathe  
 ‘If she finds it (French papers), she’ll be happy/relieved.’

Imaginary conditions include hypotheticals and counterfactuals, both of which have a strong element of epistemic modality. Both of these types are conveyed by the use of the past tense in the *if*-clause and by combinations of past plus modal or future in the consequent clause. This applies to both present and past situations.

- (89) Saamaka *Yee di wagi bi naki mi, mi bi o dede.*  
 If DET (sg) car PAST hit me I PAST FUT die  
 ‘If the car had hit me, I would have been dead.’
- (90) Sranan *Efu mi ben abi moni mi bo bai wan oto.*  
 If 1sg PAST have money 1sg PAST+FUT buy ART car  
 ‘If I had money, I would buy a car.’

The combination of past and future is also used in hypothetical statements like the following:

- (91) Sranan *Kande a no bo sabi mi moro.*  
 Perhaps she NEG PAST+FUT know me more  
 ‘Perhaps she wouldn’t have recognized me.’

6.4.4. *Concessive clauses*

Concessive clauses may be divided into three types: concessive conditionals conveying the sense of ‘even if’; indefinite concessives (the sense of ‘whatever’, ‘no matter what’); and “definite” concessives (the sense of ‘although’) (Thompson and Longacre 1985: 196–198).

Concessives conveying the sense of ‘even if’ are quite similar to open conditions, and have been referred to as concessive conditionals (Thompson and Longacre 1985: 196–198). They are introduced by the conjunction (*a*) *winsi* (source unknown).

- (92) Sranan *Wins i yu no wani nyan moro tog yu e*  
 Even-if you NEG want eat more TAG you IMPFV  
*nyan.*  
 eat  
 ‘Even if you don’t want to eat any more, right, you keep eating.’  
 (Winford 2000b: 119)

The same conjunction is used to introduce indefinite concessives.

- (93) Sranan *A winsi san e pasa a plan fu*  
 FOC no-matter what IMPFV happen DET (sg) plan of  
*a Masra e go doro.*  
 DET (sg) Master IMPFV go through  
 ‘Whatever happens, the Lord’s plan continues.’

Definite concessives fall into two sub-types: those that convey the sense of ‘although’ or ‘in spite of’, and those that convey the stronger sense of ‘no matter how much’. The former are introduced by *ala di*, or *ala fa*.

- (94) Sranan *Ala fa mi bari a meisje, toku a teki*  
 All how I shout DET (sg) girl still she take  
*waka nanga a boi.*  
 walk with DET (sg) boy  
 ‘In spite of the fact that I warned that girl, she still went with that guy.’

To convey the stronger sense of ‘no matter how much’, the creoles employ a type of concessive involving predicate clefting.

- (95) Sranan *Ala di na kosi den kosi en, a no piki*  
 All that FOC curse they curse him, he NEG answer  
*den noti.*  
 them nothing  
 ‘No matter how much they cursed him, he did not answer them.’  
 (John Wilner, pc. 5/03)

6.4.5. *Clauses of purpose*

Purpose clauses are introduced by the preposition *fu* ‘for’. The subject of the purpose clause may be overt, even when it is coreferential with the matrix subject.

- (96) Sranan a. *A no ben abi moni fu a ben kan*  
 he NEG PAST have money for he PAST can  
*seni pai mi.*  
 send pay me

‘He didn’t have money so he could send it to pay me.’

(Winford 2000b: 80)

- EMarC b. *Mi ná a moni fu seeka mi tifi.*  
 I NEG have money for fix my teeth  
 ‘I don’t have money to fix my teeth.’

Like desiderative clauses, discussed earlier, ‘for’ purpose clauses express unrealized situations, and may be contrasted with purposive ‘go/come’ clauses like the following, which usually express realized goals.

- (97) Sranan *A pikin waka go na wowoyo go bai aleisi.*  
 ART child walk go PREP market go buy rice  
 ‘The child walked to the market to buy rice (and did so).’

(Sebba 1987: 61)

Bickerton (1981) in fact claimed that this contrast was diagnostic of “prototypical” creoles, though this claim is not generally accepted.

## 7. Morphology

The creoles of Suriname lack inflectional (bound) morphology. Grammatical relationships such as agreement are not overtly expressed at all, while categories such as number and possession in nouns and tense/aspect in verbs are expressed by free forms.

### 7.1. Nouns

#### 7.1.1. *Definiteness in nouns*

The Surinamese creoles distinguish among definite, indefinite and generic nouns, but the way they mark these distinctions differs subtly from the way English marks them. Definiteness is marked on singular nouns by the preverbal determiner *a* (Sranan, EMarC) and by *di* in Saamaka while plural nouns are marked by plural forms of these articles, namely, *den* (EMarC, Sranan) and *dee* (Saamaka).

- (98) EMarC a. *A minisiti e kisi diitenti dunsu wan mun.*  
 DET (sg) minister IMPFV get 300 thousand one month  
 ‘The minister is getting 300.000 guilders per month.’
- Saamaka b. *Dee sembe, dee bi go a foto.*  
 DET (pl) people they PAST go LOC town  
 ‘The people, they went to town.’

Indefinite nouns are marked by preverbal *wan* (< *one*), while unmarked nouns are either generic or abstract in character.

- (99) EMarC a. *A tja wan bii kon gi mi.*  
 she carry a beer come give me  
 ‘She brought me a beer.’
- b. *Di mi go ape, mi si pikin a ini*  
 when I go there I see child LOC in  
*a osu.*  
 DET (sg) house  
 ‘When I went there, I saw children in the house.’

### 7.1.2. Demonstratives

Sranan has a distinct class of (definite) demonstrative modifiers. The proximate demonstrative modifier is expressed by *disi* and the distal demonstrative modifier is *dati*, both of which occur post-nominally.

- (100) Sranan *Den ten disi a son e faya.*  
 DET (pl) time DEM DET (sg) sun IMPFV fire  
 ‘These days it is hot.’

In the maroon creoles a demonstrative meaning is expressed by placing the definite article before the noun and a locative adverb after it. In this combination, the proximate locational adverbs *ya* (EMarC) and *aki* (Saamaka) ‘here’ express the meaning ‘this’, and the distal adverbs *de* (EMarC) and *de* (Saamaka) ‘there’ convey the meaning ‘that’. *Anda* (EMarC) and *ala* (Saamaka) ‘over there’ refer to an entity that is even further removed from the point of reference.

- (101) Saamaka *Di mii de sa wata bunu.*  
 DET (sg) child there know water well  
 ‘That child can swim well.’

## 7.1.3. Number, gender and case

As noted above, plurality in nouns is indicated by plural forms of articles. Gender distinctions are sometimes expressed through compounds with *man-* and *uma-* (*womi-* and *muɣɛɛ-* in Saamaka), e.g. *manpikin* ‘boychild’ vs *umapikin* ‘girlchild’, but in general gender is not marked. Possession is conveyed either by juxtaposition, with the possessor preceding the possessed noun, or by the preposition *fu*, (*u* in Saamaka) which introduces the possessor. Possessive pronouns precede the noun.

- (102) Saamaka *Di boto u gaama.*  
 DET (sg) boat for chief  
 ‘The chief’s’ boat.’
- (103) EMarC *A kabiten osu*  
 DET (sg) capitain house  
 ‘the lineage head’s house’
- (104) EMarC *mi sutuu*  
 ‘my chair’

## 7.2. The pronominal system

## 7.2.1. Personal pronouns

The three creoles organize their pronominal systems quite similarly, and in ways that differ in three important respects from the English system. First, subject, object, and possessive meanings are generally expressed by the same form. The only exception to this are the third person singular forms, where the subject form is distinct from an oblique (object and possessive) form. Second, the creole third person singular pronouns are not gender-differentiated. Third, the creoles have special pronouns that are used for emphasis. Table 2 presents an overview.

Table 2. Strong and weak forms of pronouns in the creoles of Suriname

Saamaka	EMarC	Sranan	Meaning
<i>mi</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>mi</i>	1. person singular subject, object, possessive pronoun
<i>míi</i>	-	-	1. person singular emphatic pronoun
<i>i</i>	<i>i</i> and <i>yu</i>	<i>yu</i>	2. person singular subject, object, possessive pronoun (Ndjuka)
<i>i, yu</i>	<i>i, yu</i>	<i>i, yu</i>	2. person singular emphatic pronoun

Table 2. (continued) Strong and weak forms of pronouns in the creoles of Suriname

Saamaka	EMarC	Sranan	Meaning
<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	3. person singular subject pronoun
<i>en</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>en</i>	3. person singular object and possessive pronoun
<i>hen</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>en</i>	3. person singular emphatic pronoun
<i>u</i>	<i>u, wi</i>	<i>unu</i>	1. person plural subject, object, possessive pronoun
<i>un, unu</i>	<i>u, wi</i>	<i>unu, wi</i>	2. person plural subject, object, possessive pronoun
<i>de</i>	<i>de(n)</i>	<i>den</i>	3. person plural subject, object, possessive pronoun

Emphasis on subject and object pronouns may also be indicated by putting special stress on the pronoun or by combining it with the emphatic marker *seefi* (EMarC), *srefi* (Sranan) or *seei* (Saamaka). Emphasis may also be conveyed through focus (see section 5.2.2.).

- (105) Saamaka *Mi seei du en.*  
 I self do it  
 ‘I did it myself.’ (Rountree 1992: 51)

In the maroon creoles, several of the subject pronouns change phonological shape when they are combined with vocalic or vowel-initial markers of negation, tense and aspect.

- (106) Pamaka *U án si en ete.*  
 [wá]  
 we NEG see it yet  
 ‘We haven’t seen it yet.’

Reflexivity is expressed by *seefi* (EMarC), *srefi* (Sranan) and *seei* (Saamaka) ‘self, same’ placed after the personal pronoun.

- (107) Ndjuka *A e taki anga en seefi.*  
 she IMPFV speak with her self  
 ‘She’s talking to herself.’ (Huttar and Huttar 1994: 278)

### 7.2.2. Demonstrative pronouns

In Sranan and the EMarC, *disi* ‘this’ and *dati* ‘that’ also function as demonstrative pronouns. They may be pluralized by combining them with the plural determiner and in the EMarC they may co-occur with the locative adverbs *ya* and *de*.

- (108) EMarC    *A        dati    o        kii    en.*  
                  FOC   DEM   FUT    kill   her  
                  ‘That will kill her.’
- (109) EMarC    *Den        disi    ya    án    hogi    enke    den        disi    de.*  
                  DET (pl) DEM here NEG bad like    DET (pl) DEM there  
                  ‘These ones here [cassava bread] are not as bad as these ones  
                  there.’

### 7.3. Derivational morphology (word formation)

Three kinds of word formation process are attested in the creoles of Suriname: reduplication, affixation, and compounding.

#### 7.3.1. Reduplication

Reduplication creates a new word by copying all or part of a base form. It can be divided into five major types, each yielding words that share some common meaning.

- Intensive or emphatic reduplication;
- Attributive-forming reduplication;
- X-like reduplication, forming verbs denoting an X-like quality, where X refers to the meaning of the base;
- Deverbal noun-forming reduplication;
- Distributive reduplication, conveying a sense of ‘scattered, here and there’.

The first two of these types are highly productive in the Surinamese creoles, the other three less so. (For other minor types of reduplication, see Huttar and Huttar [1997].)

Intensive reduplication yields words that augment the meaning of the base. It usually involves full reduplication, that is, the entire base is copied, and may apply to adjectivals (property items), nouns or verbs. It adds a sense of “more of X”, where X is the base. With property items, it conveys an emphatic or intensive meaning, that is, the sense of ‘very’. With nouns, the resulting word conveys augmentative sense (‘many’), while with verbs the result conveys the sense of recurrence or continuation.

- (110) Sranan    a. attribute    *bruya* ‘confused’    *bruya-bruya* ‘very confused’  
                  b. noun        *saka* ‘sack, bag’    *saka-saka* ‘many sacks/bags’  
                  c. verb        *tai* ‘to tie; bind’    *tai-tai* ‘to tie repeatedly’

Attributive-forming reduplication, sometimes referred to as stative reduplication, also involves full reduplication, and takes verbs as its input, creating items that



refer to (unusual) states. In general, verbs referring to an activity that results in a visible or ascertainable state, or verbs referring to concepts of human propensity, may function as inputs.

- (111) EMarC a. *booko* ‘to break’            *booko-booko* ‘(in a) broken (state)’  
 b. *baaka* ‘to blacken’            *baaka-baaka* ‘(in a state of) black’  
 c. *giili* ‘to make greedy’            *giili-giili* ‘(in a) greedy (state)’

The resulting elements are not verbal, but function as predicative and attributive adjectives. In the former function, they are introduced either by the copula *de* or the verb *tan* ‘stay’.

- (112) EMarC    *E    uwii    de    lusulusu    kaba.*  
 his    hair    COP    loose-loose    already  
 ‘His hair is in an loosened/unbraided state.’

They also function as postposed modifiers of NPs.

- (113) Saamaka    *De    mbéi    hen    límbo-límbo*  
 they    make    it    clean-clean  
 ‘They made it clean.’ (Veenstra 1996: 158)

X-like reduplication forms verbs denoting an X-like quality, where X refers to the meaning of the base. Certain nouns and (most kinds of) verbs can be inputs to this process. The verbs derived thus convey diminutive, approximative and similar senses, and can be either intransitive or transitive.

- (114) EMarC    a. *A            dagu    ya    fatu-fatu.*  
 DET (sg)    dog    here    fat-fat  
 ‘This dog is/has gotten fattish.’  
 b. *A    baakabaaka    den    buuku.*  
 she    black-black    DET (pl)    trouser  
 ‘She made the trousers blackish.’

It would appear that, in general, the same items that undergo attributive reduplication can also undergo X-like reduplication. The precise relationship between the two kinds of reduplication is still in need of further research.

De-verbal noun-forming reduplication, as the name implies, creates nouns from verbs, and may be full or partial. The nouns produced may refer to instruments, results and various other unpredictable interpretations. This process is no longer productive, though.

- (115) all            a. *nai* ‘to sew’            *nanai* ‘needle’  
 Sranan            b. *dyompo* ‘to jump’    *dyompo-dyompo* ‘grasshopper’

Distributive reduplication is somewhat similar to X-like reduplication, but Gooden (2003) argues that this is a separate type in Jamaican Creole, distinguished by a





- (124) EMarC    *A*    *puu*    *en*    *ne*    *en*    *ana*.  
                   he    pull    her    LOC    his    hand  
                   ‘He took her from him.’

The locational marker also heads complex phrases that express a variety of spatial relationships. In these phrases, the location-denoting NP is modified by locational specifiers that function as nouns. In Sranan and the EMarC they are either derived from English prepositions, such as *ini* ‘inside’ (< *in*), *ondro/ondoo* ‘underside’ (< *under*), etc., or from English nouns *tapu* (< *top*), *baka* (< *back*), *se(i)* (< *side*) etc. In Saamaka some of the specifiers have a different (possibly Portuguese) origin, e.g. ‘top, on’ is conveyed by *liba*, and ‘in’ by *dendu*. These specifiers are either juxtaposed to the NP, thus creating a possessive construction, or are connected to it by a possessive marker, *fu*.

- (125) EMarC    a. *A*    *e*            *taampu*    *na*    *a*            *tafa*    *tapu*.  
                   It    IMPFV    stand-up    LOC    DET (sg)    table    top  
                   ‘It is standing on the table.’
- b. *A*            *uku*            *fika*    *na*    *a*            *se*  
                   DET (sg)    fishing-rod    leave    LOC    DET (sg)    side  
                     
                   *fu*            *mi*            *osu*.  
                   POSS    my            house  
                   ‘The fishing rod was left behind/remains at the side of my house.’

## 8. Conclusion

This summary provides only a rough overview of the syntactic phenomena of the Surinamese creoles. Many of these phenomena remain relatively under-researched, and many questions remain unanswered. The issue of origins continues to attract most attention, particularly the relative contributions of superstrate and substrate languages, and the role played by universal principles of acquisition, as well as internally motivated changes. Besides descriptive studies, a significant amount of work on the creoles of Suriname has therefore focused on analyzing textual sources from early Sranan, investigating the socio-historical matrix of creole formation, comparing creole grammar and lexicon with those of their possible input languages and with universals of language acquisition. The interaction among these factors explains many of the similarities, as well as the differences, found among the Surinamese creoles. At the same time, issues like these cannot be fully explored in the absence of sound empirically-based analyses of the grammar of these creoles. There is need of more research on complex constructions such as

subordination and relativization, as well as co-ordination. There is also much that needs to be done on areas that have only been partly explored, such as passivization and focus constructions. Finally, while a great deal of attention has been paid to Sranan, and to a lesser extent to EMarC and Saamaka, the other varieties have not been explored in any detail. Future research will no doubt reveal much more about the workings of their grammar, and its sources. It is also hoped that future research will devote attention to sociolinguistic issues since practically nothing is known about the sociolinguistic makeup of these communities.

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Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# **Belize and other central American varieties: morphology and syntax**

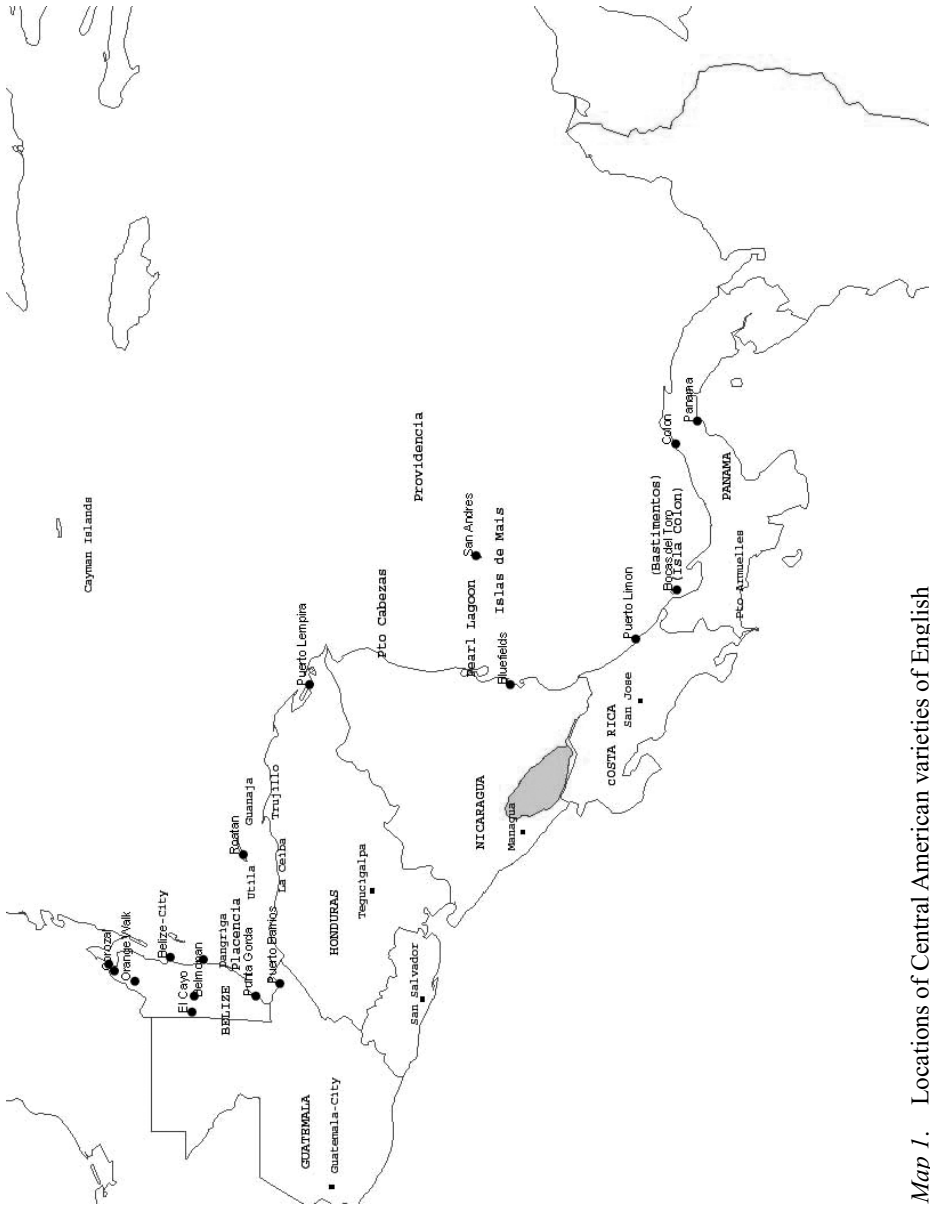
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## **1. English in Central America**

In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Spanish empire subjugated the Amerindian population from the Caribbean to Central and South America, ruling from the island of Hispaniola, but in the 17<sup>th</sup> century other European powers started disputing Spanish supremacy in the New World. Thus, the Central American region has been subjected to multiethnic and multilingual influences over the last centuries. I will specifically address the lingering linguistic effects of England's encroachment on Central American territories whose colonial histories are similar to that of the Caribbean. They include, from North to Southeast, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and the offshore islands. The location of English speakers in Central America reflects the tumultuous conflicts that opposed Spain and England between the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. All English-speaking regions are located on the Caribbean coast of Central America, and except for Belize, they are part of overwhelmingly Spanish-speaking republics. The goal of this overview is therefore to describe the use of English-based varieties spoken by minority groups, in particular by the Creoles, i.e. the Afro-Caribbean descendants of transported African slaves, but also by some whites who have settled at various times in coastal areas. The primary emphasis is on Belize, which includes the highest percentage of English speakers, but I will also refer to other English-speaking communities, specifically those of the Bay Islands of Honduras, the Miskito Coast of Nicaragua, the Puerto-Limón area of Costa Rica, and the Bocas del Toro province of Panama. The English-based creoles spoken in these areas include Belizean Creole (BelC), Bay Islands Creole (BIsC), Miskito Coast Creole (MisC), Limón Creole (LimC), Panamanian Creole (PanC), as well as varieties spoken in the islands of Providencia (ProC) and San Andres (SanC) (See map 1).

### **1.1. English and Creole**

The label "English" is a misnomer as far as West Indian varieties (including Central American varieties) are concerned. As elsewhere in the Caribbean, the circumstances were such that vernaculars commonly called pidgins and creoles



Map 1. Locations of Central American varieties of English



developed in the course of interactions between Africans and Europeans. The resulting linguistic phenomena include wide ranging repertoires often called creole continua. The special relation of creoles to English must be briefly examined before focusing on their specific morphosyntactic aspects.

Two varieties, one carrying overt prestige, and the other covert prestige, typically co-exist or overlap in postcolonial societies where English is officially or nationally recognized as the standard language. Belize (previously British Honduras) is the only Central American country to have assigned official recognition to English. It is also the country with the highest percentage of English speakers. But in spite of its official status, English in Belize is not anyone's native language. English may be unanimously recognized as the language that one must acquire to participate in official government activities, but it is not commonly used in its external (American or British) standard form. This fact is largely ignored, or unidentified by both language users and language planners. In other countries, English has vernacular or identity value, and its speakers are usually bilingual or multilingual (in Spanish or other languages). The isolated geographic location of Afro-Caribbean groups and their neglect by local Spanish governments contributed to the maintenance of native forms of English in historically remote areas. Thus, on Roatán (one of the Bay Islands of Honduras, a territory that was for ten years a Crown colony), English-based varieties have long been the primary language of the Creole segment of the black population, as well as of some early white settlers. Similarly, the Limón area of Costa Rica was totally cut off from the rest of the country until a railroad was completed in 1975 after a twenty-year construction delay (Herzfeld 2003). Consequently, the different areas to be examined will display varying, though related English structures that are different from standard varieties. Table 1 presents an approximate comparison of the English-speaking Afro-Caribbean population in the five Central American countries based on various census sources, estimates, and websites. When official sources refer to language use, they pay little attention to minority groups and their languages, providing vague combined numbers for the black / West Indian / mixed group, thus not differentiating between Creoles, Miskitos, or Garinagu (Afro-Indians; note that the singular form is Garifuna). Some of them speak only Spanish, and others may speak Creole or English as L1 or L2. Belize and Honduras figures – checked on location in 2003 – are fairly accurate.

In Belize, where English is the educational medium while the creole variety (BelC) has strong vernacular value, the continuum is extensive, ranging between two poles: the creole vernacular is the basilect, whereas the official English norm is the acrolect. Intermediate varieties constitute the mesolect. The persistent legacy of colonialism is still reflected in the widespread belief that any variety that does not conform to English canonical norms is *brokop* (broken English) a term that often denotes basilects as well as mesolects. In countries in which no official English model is available, English varieties may have a more limited range; they may be

Table 1. Creole/English speaking population in Central America

	<b>Total population</b>	<b>Creole/English speakers (%)</b>	<b>Est. pop. ('Black' West-Indian)</b>	<b>Other ethnic groups</b>
Belize	240,204	67,480 (28.1%)	35%	Mestizo, Maya, Garifuna, other
Honduras	6,560,608	80,000 (1.2%)	5%	Mestizo, Garifuna, Miskito, Pech
Nicaragua	5,023,818	40,000 (0.8%)	9%	Mestizo, Miskito, Rama, Garifuna
Costa-Rica	3,344,934	55,000 (1.6%)	3%	Mestizo, Bribri, Cabecar, other
Panama	2,882,329	100,000 (3.5%)	14%	Mestizo, Cuna, Chiriqui, other

more conservative, or on the contrary may be the result of contact with dialectal forms of English that may, or may not, have been exposed to African influences.

## 1.2. Lectal shifts

The examples presented below to illustrate the morphosyntax of 'English in Central America' are meant as a summary representation of the complex systems available to speakers of English. For example, although the basilect is the norm in Belize, it is not the only variety used by Belizeans. Thus, it would be misleading to solely illustrate Belizean varieties exclusively with creole forms. Furthermore, each individual controls a wide-ranging repertoire. Consequently, I will adduce structures commonly used in daily natural situations that require shifting up or down depending on the context, setting, topic, or participants. Lectal shifts also regularly occur within conversations, or even within sentences, as represented in the two short samples below that I collected in Placencia, Belize. This means that there are no strictly basilectal, mesolectal, or acrolectal speakers. In the examples shown, simple English orthography is used to denote an acrolect, in spite of numerous phonetic differences from Standard English. For mesolects and basilects, I use a broad phonetic transcription of the type generally accepted in creole studies. In this case a general translation is also provided (more specific glosses are used in the second part of the section when necessary).

Text 1: In this sample, an elderly lady, Tina, 80, uses the acrolect when addressing a little girl, Betty, with occasionally intruding mesolectal features. She switches to a consistent mesolect to address a friend [the author]. It is not unusual for older women to select acrolects when addressing children. This choice appears

to reflect the nefarious consequences of the traditional colonial shame associated with the use of the creole.

[Tina admonishes Betty, 7, who tries to drink out of a glass containing stale water]

- (1a) *I say, what is this? It's hot now, that is not cool again, it isn't cool again, that isn't cool again, it's hot, it isn't nice again. Don't do it! Don't! Tell me something: you had your supper already? No? Let me see your mouth. Mani no give you your supper today? What you eat tonight, child?*

[to me, continuing conversation]:

- (1b) *Mai hosban waz a mada ankl, ha gramada ankl. A deliva aal ha chidrn, nayne a em, dey aal kaal mi 'aanti.' Po, i had kensr, kensr a di lang.*

'My husband was her mother's uncle, her grandmother's uncle. I delivered her children, all nine of them, they all call me 'auntie.' Paul, he had cancer, lung cancer.'

[to girl]

- (1c) *Betty Jane, what are you doing now?*

[to me]

- (1d) *Smok an drink. Finally, tri o for yaz i stap di drinkin, i yuztu tek wan o tu bia wen i kom hom i se i bonin op insaid.*

'(Paul used to) smoke and drink. He finally quit drinking in the last three or four years (before he died) he was down to one or two beers. When he would come home, he would say that he was burning up inside.'

(Escure 1997: 101)

The lectal variation represented in Text 1 illustrates the astonishing adaptability of creole speakers to varying interlocutors, topics and moods. Acrolectal forms can be characterized by the frequent use of the copula/auxiliary, as well as – phonetically – by the occasional use of interdental. The shift to a basi-/mesolectal structure with preverbal negative and absence of the *do* auxiliary, as in *Mani no give you? [...] What you eat?* within the context of a generally acrolectal discourse is not unusual. It signals a move away from the admonishment mode to a friendlier inquiry. When switching back to the topic of her dead husband's illness, Tina eventually reverts to another lect, a more natural vernacular for her: no possessive case, agreement or tense marking, but no creole morphemes either – typically a mesolect, often considered appropriate when addressing serious topics in an informal context. This variable behavior is indeed typical: A Belizean speaker fluidly shifts from one set of forms to another, combining an acrolectal form such as *was* or *is* with the zero-possessive *he was her mother uncle*. Such combinations are no evidence of 'imperfect' acquisition of the standard. They merely represent the natural options available to creole speakers.

Text 2: The following short sample represents a more basilectal, and animated version of the speech genre we may call ‘admonishment.’ This type of remonstrance, usually delivered in a lively and humorous fashion, is a common mode of address when parents or elders disapprove of younger people’s behavior, and the admonished typically listen respectfully (though this does not necessarily entail behavior modification). In this case Cara, 65, upbraids her son Raul, 40, for being an alcoholic, and she does so by occasionally addressing me, referring to him in the third person (although he is present). Raul accepts his mother’s disapproval, though he tries to ‘up’ her by arguing that her watching television is just as bad an addiction, then by pointing out that he is now drinking water. Note the frequent use of the preverbal morpheme *de*, which is a marker of imperfective [ IMPFV ] (both progressive and iterative/habitual):

- (2) C=a. *Dada an mi sit down watch tivi i de drink evriday.*  
 Dad and me sit down watch TV he IMPFV drink everyday
- b. *dey en nayt, so a biliv i naw*  
 day and night, so I believe it now  
*de afek yo breyn.*  
 IMPFV affect your brain
- R=c. *Samtaym tivi da di bad ting*  
 Sometimes TV that the bad thing
- C=d. *bot di layf we yu liv wid alkohol da*  
 But the life that you live with alcohol that  
*notin gud in dat*  
 nothing good in that
- R=e. *da lown wata a de drink yu now.*  
 That only water I IMPFV drink you know
- C=f. *yu now wat a taak a no taak bawt di wata*  
 You know what I say I NEG talk about the water
- g. *yu now we a kom from*  
 you know where I come from
- h. *yu destray yuself bway di ting dat yu de sey*  
 you destroy yourself boy the things that you IMPFV say
- i. *Raul mos awta yo rayt mayn*  
 Raul must out of your right mind

'C=While father and I watch TV, he [Raul] drinks everyday, day and night, so I believe that it is now affecting your brain  
R=It's watching TV that is a bad thing (simultaneous speech)  
C=But it's awful, the way you live under the influence of alcohol  
R=It's just water I'm drinking now  
C=You know what I'm talking about, I'm not talking about (this glass of water, you know what I mean; you are destroying yourself, my boy. And the (stupid) things that you say (when you are drunk), Raul, you must be out of your right mind' [dialogue partly included in Escure 1997: 114].

The short texts presented above suggest that the selection of a representative sample of English in Central America presents a real challenge because of the variability available to speakers. Methodological scope is crucial, since explanations are directly dependent on the kind and range of speech data collected. A brief sociolinguistic overview of each region provides an essential perspective illustrating the differential reasons for language use in various parts of Central America.

## **2. Belize: Sociolinguistic and demographic background**

Belize, the former British colony of British Honduras, is a complex society in spite of its small size: it has the lowest population density in Central America (240,204 according to the 2000 Population Census) for a territory covering barely 13,000 square kilometers. Because of its pivotal geographical position at the juncture of Central America and the West Indies, and its complicated history, it exhibits both multiculturalism and multilingualism. It is also the Central American country with the highest percentage of English speakers, since the Creole group currently amounts to almost one third of the total population.

When the Spaniards arrived in the Bay of Honduras in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the great Mayan cities had already been deserted. The Spanish used the area for the extraction of the precious woods favored in Europe, but did not dwell there. This remote coast, its long reef, and outlying islands were thus a favorite retreat for pirates throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Placencia natives trace their ancestry to French, Dutch and English pirates). Some say that the name *Belize* was derived from *Wallis*, the name of a Scottish buccaneer. The diverse Belizean population results from waves of immigrants who supplemented the indigenous Amerindian population of Mayas and Kekchis. After the English snatched Jamaica from Spain in 1655, African slaves were brought to the Bay settlement to work on logging camps, and Miskito Indians joined them a century later after the English colonists were forced (by the Spanish) to evacuate the British settlement of the Mosquito Coast (now Nicaragua) in 1787. On September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1798, the British defeated the Spanish armada near St George's Caye, just outside Belize City. Subsequently, England

took possession of British Honduras as a colony (1862), then a Crown colony (1871) until 1981, at which time Belize became independent, and acquired its new name. Belize's ethnic diversity was enriched by the emigration of a small Garifuna population (or Black Caribs, deported by the British from St Vincent to Honduras in 1797), by Mestizos (Spanish/Indian refugees of the Indian Caste War in Mexico), and by indentured servants from India. More recent immigrants include Mennonites, and Hispanic refugees or laborers. The current population is generally identified as including four major groups: Amerindians, Creoles, Mestizos, and Garinagu. All speak different native languages as shown in Table 2. As Latinos move in from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras (they almost exclusively constitute the labor force on the banana and citrus plantations), the Mestizo community has increased by at least 15% since the 1991 census (Escure 1997: 29). Consequently, English speakers (Creoles) would seem to amount to no more than 29%, and are amply surpassed by Spanish speakers. In 1991, the Creole and Mestizo population co-existed in roughly equal numbers, about 32%. However, Belizean Creole English is now gaining new native speakers as Garinagu are losing their native Garifuna language.

*Table 2.* Ethnic groups in Belize in 2000: Total=240,204

<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>%</b>
Mestizo	Spanish	112,935	47.0
Creole	Belizean Creole	67,480	26.1
Maya	Maya	24,400	10.2
Garifuna	(Garifuna)* BelC	15,685	6.5
Mennonite	German	8,125	3.4
East Indian	Belizean Creole	8,020	3.3
Other	Chinese, Arabic	3,559	1.5

[\*indicates that the Garinagu are losing their language and acquiring BelC as L1]

As is the case everywhere in Central America, a large segment of the population has emigrated abroad, mostly to the United States, in search of better economic opportunities. The number of emigrants over the last 30 years may have reached as much as 150,000. High emigration patterns are reflected in the relative youth of the Belizean population: 65% is under age 24, whereas the most productive segment of the population (age 25-54) amounts to 28%, and individuals over 54 constitute only 8% of the population. This generational distribution suggests that the breadwinners live abroad (sending home regular checks), and that they have only limited influence on the linguistic and behavioral development of the younger generation.

Ethnic groups are not evenly distributed all over the country, but on the contrary, ethnic enclaves are still very clearly segregated from each other across the six districts that make up Belize, as shown on Table 3. The Creole population is primarily located in the Belize District that includes the main city (Belize-City), and the administrative capital of the country, Belmopan (much less populated than Belize-City), and neighboring districts to the West (Cayo) and the South (Toledo).

Table 3. Ethnic groups in the Six Districts of Belize (1991)  
[northern to southern geographical locations] (Escure 1997: 31)

<i>Districts</i>	<b>Creole</b>	<b>Garifuna</b>	<b>Mestizo</b>	<b>Maya</b>
Corozal	7.6%	1.3%	74.1%	5.0%
Orange Walk	7.4	1.2	71.7	9.1
Belize	<b>67.9</b>	5.3	18.7	1.2
Cayo	<b>23.0</b>	1.7	58.0	8.7
Stann Creek	<b>25.1</b>	36.2	23.7	8.0
Toledo	5.7	10.0	11.9	62.8

In Table 3, the districts including the highest Creole population are shown in bold characters. I conducted fieldwork primarily in the Stann Creek District, and in particular in the village of Placencia, located on the coast. Although Belizean structure has been linked to Jamaican influence, its morphology differs significantly from that of Jamaican Creole; for example, its imperfective morpheme is *de – a* in JC, and its past/anterior morpheme is *me – bin* in JamC. BelC is more similar to Nicaraguan varieties (Miskito Coast, Providencia Creole, and San Andrés Creole), and that is due to frequent migrations in the 18<sup>th</sup> century across the British settlements of the Miskito Coast and Belize. Various aspects of BelC have been documented by Greene (1999), Hellinger (1972), and LePage and Tabouret-Keller (1985).

### 3. Other Central American countries

There is a minority English-speaking population in each of the four remaining Central American nations located south of Belize (Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama). Guatemala is not discussed because it has no substantial Creole population. However, the creole is spoken on the narrow coastal strip separating Belize from Honduras, especially in the busy port of Puerto-Barrios, and there are several Garifuna communities (e.g., Livingston) that almost certainly include

speakers of English Creole as L2 because of frequent interactions with Belizean and coastal Honduran populations. Spanish is the dominant and increasingly encroaching language in each of those countries. Some form of English is spoken by only 1 to 3% of the overall population, but it is still the primary language in some areas. There are also a few speakers of English Creole in the islands of Providencia, San Andrés, and St. Catalina. Those islands politically belong to Colombia, a South American nation, but they have close historical and cultural ties with the Caribbean coast of Central America, and they are thus included in this description.

As England assumed control of Jamaica in 1655, the island became a major holding port for African slaves, who were then sent to various logging camps or settlements all along the Central American coast. All Central American countries gained independence from Spain in 1821, but many did not achieve complete independence from England until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3.1. Honduras

All speakers of English or Creole English reside primarily in the Bay Islands (Roatán, Utila, and Guanaja), and a few along the coast, in Tela, and other communities reaching into Guatemala, and then Belize. Until the 1980s, the Honduran government had neglected the Bay Islands. The identification of English/Creole speakers in Honduras is complicated by the fact that Creoles and Garinagu (Afro-Indians) are often counted together as *morenos* (blacks), or *población negra de habla inglesa* (English-speaking black population). The Creole population has been estimated to be 20,000 but often excluded from the discussion of Honduras's seven ethnic groups. However, more recent figures obtained in Honduras in 2003 (*Fiscalía especial de etnia y patrimonio cultural, Ministerio público Honduras*) give much higher and separate figures for English speaking blacks (80,000) and Garinagu (250,000) (Escure 2004). There is some general confusion as to the origin, history and demography of the Garinagu as differentiated from that of the Creoles. Whereas the Garinagu inhabit remote villages on the east side of the island, at or around the original landing site of Punta Gorda, the Creole population mostly lives on the western part of the island (in Sandy Bay, West End, Flowers Bay, and Coxen Hole), but also in older settlements in Oak Ridge, and in French Harbour, that used to be an active commercial center. The Spanish never stayed on the Bay Islands, and the English attempted to settle the islands at various times, but the Spanish/British conflicts constantly interfered with long-term settlements. The first permanent settlement was established in the 1830s after emancipation, when freed slaves and former slave owners emigrated to Roatán from the Cayman Islands, Belize, or the Mosquito Shore. They brought with them the variety of Creole/English spoken elsewhere along the coast. By 1855, the Bay Islands harbored 1,600 blacks and 200 whites (mostly on Utila). After a brief stint as a Crown



colony, the Bay Islands were ceded to the Republic of Honduras, but the islands remained isolated from the mainland.

Until the late 80s education was strictly in English and provided 'sparsely' by private religious schools. By then, the Honduran government realized the economic potential of the Bay Islands, and began to develop a tourist industry on Roatán, as well as a basic educational and social infrastructure. Education in Spanish is now obligatory, which means that individuals under 40 grew up with a consistent external Spanish model. The increase in the Hispanic population from the Honduran mainland seeking work on the island contributes to the spread of Spanish. In addition, there are recent incentives – especially among younger people – to learn American English because of the developing tourist industry (mostly upscale diving groups in a few select hotels) that provides jobs for local people. Young adults are increasingly socialized in outgroup cultural and linguistic systems.

It has been claimed that the variety of English spoken on the Honduran Islands (BIsC) is not a creole. The smallest islands, Utila and Guanaja (Bonacca), have a dominant white population that appears to speak mesolectal varieties, or perhaps English dialects (Graham 1997; Warantz 1983). *Wellerism* – the merger of /w/ and /v/ – is identified as a typical 'white' feature, which is also a characteristic of Cayman Islands English. There is also a very small white minority on the largest island of Roatán that may have been established on the island before Africans moved in (Graham 1997), though Evans accurately says that they are more likely to be light-skinned Creoles. This succinctly documented variety also appears to be a mesolect: it is said to include *doz* and *don* as habituais, and *had* as preverbal past. However, the black Creoles speak a more basilectal variety. My personal observations (2000-2003) indicate that, in spite of the development of the western part of the island, and the construction of a paved road that facilitates access to Sandy Bay, West End and West Bay – Bay Island Creole (BIsC) is still used by young people in informal conversations. It is also heard in villages located toward the eastern side (in particular Politilly Bight and Oak Ridge). A variety of creolized English is spoken by those older Garinagu (over 50), who grew up on the island at a time where BIsC was the dominant language. Those people are truly trilingual in Garifuna, BIsC and Spanish. Creoles also control some variety of acrolectal English, and increasingly so due to the tourism and diving industry, and frequent emigration to the United States. In this sense Roatán is not unlike the situation in Belize on a smaller scale.

### 3.2. Nicaragua

Two creole varieties have been identified along Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast, Miskito Coast Creole (MisC), spoken by Creoles and Afro-Indians (Miskitos) around the Bluefields, and Pearl Lagoon areas, as well as on the Corn Islands (Islas de Mais), and Rama Caye Creole (RamC), spoken by the Rama Indians on a small

island whose population is no more than 500 (Assadi 1983). 9% of the population of Nicaragua is of African descent, 69% is Mestizo, and 5% indigenous, but only about 1% (or less) speak MisC. O'Neil (1993: 280) claims that "indeterminate numbers of nearly 70,000 Miskito Indians have Nicaraguan English as their native language."

The Puritans who had settled on Providencia Island in 1630 probably traded with the Indians on the Miskito Coast, and a form of contact English may have developed there, then submitted to other influences as African slaves, maroons and English buccaneers, loggers and planters interacted with local Indians. The Miskitos intermarried with the Africans, and now most Miskitos are Afro-Indians, and many live in Honduras (Gracias de Dios province, just north of the border with Nicaragua). Africans were brought from other parts of the Caribbean in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century when the coast was a British Settlement from 1740 to 1787, at which time the English were forced to leave the area to the Spanish. Some moved to Belize with their African slaves and their Miskito allies, but many also remained along the coast. Other groups migrated there by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, including Garinagu who had moved down the coast from Honduras. Native Miskito and Rama Indians (many of them are now Afro-Indians like the Garinagu) have mostly lost their native languages. It is likely that Spanish has now spread as surface communication between Managua and the coast has improved since the Sandinista revolution in 1979. Consequently, the use of English is probably receding (not unlike the situation in Costa Rica) in spite of efforts to encourage cultural pluralism, and literacy campaigns to preserve English on the Atlantic coast.

It is claimed that RamC is distinct from MisC, mostly because of the influence exerted by German missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, this influence appears to be primarily lexical, as the two varieties share a similar morphology.

### 3.3. Providencia and San Andrés islands (Colombia)

The Old Providence Island (Providencia) was the site of one of the earliest English settlements in the New World, as a small group of Puritans settled there in 1630. Their experiment lasted only ten years, as the Spanish forced them to move to the Bocas del Toro area, now in Panama (see 3.5). San Andrés was settled later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but in 1786, the Miskito Shore and the offshore islands were ceded to Spain. English settlers were allowed to stay on San Andrés, and it is generally considered that the variety (*Islander*) spoken on San Andrés (SanC) is more basilectal than the variety spoken on Providencia (ProC), and the smaller St Catalina (Washabaugh 1975, 1983). Recent forays show that in spite of Spanish dominance, Caribbean English has continued to exert an influence in Providencia and St Catalina, resulting in continuum maintenance.

### 3.4. Costa Rica: Limón Creole

There is a population of English Creole speakers in the Limón area along the Atlantic coast, estimated to be around 55,100 (Herzfeld 1983a, 1983b, 2003).

Spain claimed Costa Rica from native Indians in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and imported a small number of African slaves – about 200 during the colonial period. When slavery was abolished in 1824, there were no more than 100 Africans. Jamaicans and others were brought in large numbers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to build the railroads, and work for the United Fruit Company until 1942, and they primarily resided in the Puerto-Limón area. This part of Costa Rica has long been isolated, both geographically and culturally, until the 1970s, which has probably contributed to the survival of Limonese Creole (LimC), commonly known as *mekaytelyu*, from Jamaican Creole *let me tell you*. Since the construction of a highway connecting the coast to the rest of the country in 1975, population movements have been facilitated, and Spanish has become dominant, but the creole is still associated with an extensive continuum (Herzfeld 1978, 2003). However, Afro-Costa Ricans have acquired negative attitudes toward their native language, and LimC is often restricted to family contexts. Calypso lyrics may be the last bastion of LimC, usually presented in its mesolectal form. Some calypso songs preserve Anansi stories, and others reflect the nostalgic loss of Creole identity.

### 3.5. Panama

Panamanian English Creole (PanC) is spoken as a first language in the Caribbean coastal areas, in parts of the two major cities – the capital Panama, and Colón – and in the province of Bocas del Toro in the northwest of the country. In addition, it is reported that there is a Creole community in Puerto Armuelles on the Pacific coast, although this creole remains undocumented (Herzfeld 1983a: 150). The creole, commonly known as *wari wari*, is a purely oral language. Speakers claim that there are different varieties of PanC spoken across the nation. However such variation has yet to be studied.

During Spanish colonization in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Panama was an important transition zone for the placement of slaves, including as many as 30,000 Africans, but this early wave had acculturated by the time Panama was liberated from Spanish domination in 1821. Thus, most Afro-Panamanians or Mestizos speak only Spanish. A second wave of immigrants arrived in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century as 500 English puritans emigrated with their 450 African slaves (originally imported from Barbados and other parts of the Eastern Caribbean) from the island of Providence, as mentioned above. They settled in the remote Bocas del Toro area, and PanC probably developed there. Most other West Indians came from Jamaica to work on the banana plantations, or to build the railway and the canal in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Consequently, the English varieties spoken in Panama may have been

influenced both by Eastern and Western Caribbean varieties. It is estimated that 14% of the Panamanian population are blacks of African or mixed origin, while 65% are Mestizo, and the rest Amerindian, but half of the coastal population is claimed to speak PanC (Herzfeld 1983b: 25). Spanish is of course the medium of instruction and of all public functions, as in other Central American countries, thus Creole English is waning as it is elsewhere. A standard variety of English is probably spoken because of the long US involvement in Panama affairs (Panama only regained control of the canal in 1999).

The creole spoken on the islands of Colón and Bastimentos (Bocas del Toro province) has been more particularly studied (Aceto 1996; Herzfeld 1978, 1983a, b, 2003). Exposure to metropolitan varieties of English is extremely restricted in the islands, so one might expect to find that PanC is a more conservative variety, and perhaps less likely to have developed acrolectal features than others, such as Belizean Creole. However, this does not seem to be the case. On the contrary, PanC – perhaps because of Barbadian influence – appears to include more mesolectal features than the current basilectal features found in BelC. For example, PanC uses *did* and *waz/woz* as preverbal past morphemes besides *ben*, whereas *me*, *men* are found in Belize, Nicaragua, and the offshore islands.

This does not mean that PanC is totally deprived of basilectal features found in other creoles. PanC includes the widespread preverbal imperfective *de*, but also the variation between *de-*,  $\emptyset$  and *iz-* (Aceto 1996: 52), a typical basilectal-mesolectal-acrolectal variability found elsewhere in the West Indies.

#### 4. The verb phrase in Central American creoles

There is no unified Central American Creole (CAmC), but rather several partially overlapping varieties, as illustrated with the Belizean samples shown above. All show some evidence of a lectal continuum stretching between formal and informal varieties, although some appear to be deprived of a true basilect (Utila English for example). This section examines briefly the verb phrase across CAmC varieties, and across lects, including only major categories, such as unmarked verbs, TMA markers, adjectival or copular predicates, serial constructions, passives, and negation, and some aspects of the noun phrase. The noun phrase is also illustrated in the following samples, and will be briefly discussed. Abbreviations used below include: IMPFV=imperfective; PA=past; FUT=Future; LOC=locative; TOP=topicalizer, topic particle; REL= relative pronoun; INDEF=indefinite determiner; DET=determiner and POSS=possessive.

4.1. Tense, aspect, modality system

4.1.1. Unmarked past

This feature is shared by all creoles, including CAMC, and it is widely illustrated across the samples provided, thus only one example is shown here. There are several preterites relexified as unmarked verbs (e.g., *lef* ‘leave’, *brok* ‘break’). The same applies to *ku* ‘can’ which functions as a tense-neutral modal, not ‘could’. Note, however, the use of *gaan* ‘went’, only used in past contexts (*gwain* in present contexts).

(3a) *So i hapn dat i hia bawt wan ledi*  
 So it happen that he hear about a lady

(3b) *we ku kyur eni kaynda siknes*  
 who can cure any kind of sickness

(3c) *So di fela gaan tu di owl ledi en i tell a[...]*  
 so the fellow go to the old lady and he tell her[...]

‘He happened to hear about a woman who could cure any disease, so the fellow went to see that woman and he told her: “..”.’

(BelC, Escure, collected in 1981)

4.1.2. Imperfective (IMPFV)

In CamC, the imperfective refers to continuative (progressive) functions as well as to iterative (habitual) functions. They are often marked by the same preverbal morpheme, which can be *de* (in BelC, MisC, PanC, and ProC), and sometimes *a* (in LimC, and occasionally ProC). But in varieties closer to English, the progressive and habitual functions may be split. Thus, PanC uses *de* as progressive marker (7), but *doz* as habitual marker (10). Other morphemes can also function as iterative or progressive markers. For example, *stodi* in ProC (13), *stedi* in BelC (17b), or *wuda* in BelC (14) are common non-past habituals. In mesolectal varieties (as in BIsC, Utila or Roatán), the morphemes *bi/biz* and *doz bi* (11, 12) function as habitual markers. Habitual past is frequently marked with *yuztu/yuwsa* ‘used to’ (15, 16).

(4) *i gat mora wan ting we a de tink baut*  
 it get more one thing REL I IMPFV think about  
 ‘There’s more than one thing that I am thinking about’

(BelC, Escure, collected in 1987)

(5) *wen a de work lang di ki ya hia wan li ‘kiling kiling’*  
 when I IMPFV work along the caye you hear a little ‘kiling-kiling’  
 ‘When I work on the caye, you can hear a noise’

(BelC, Escure 1983: 34)

- (6) *a de dɛd*  
I IMPFV die  
'I am dying.'  
(BelC, Escure, collected in 1985)
- (7) *ay de tahk kriol tahk [..] ay de tahk it*  
I IMPFV talk Creole talk [..] I IMPFV talk it  
*from mi hed*  
from my head  
'I am speaking Creole, it comes naturally.'  
(PanC, Herzfeld 1983a: 152)
- (8) *a siy litl modi wahta de kom*  
I see little muddy water IMPFV come  
'I saw some muddy water coming out.'  
(ProC, Washabaugh 1983: 159)
- (9) *if im a kom mi gan owm ron*  
if he IMPFV come I go home run  
'If he is coming, I run home.'  
(LimC, Herzfeld 1983a: 135)
- (10) *in de rekreo taym yu doz kowm owt eniy taym*  
in the break time you IMPFV come out any time  
'During the break, you come about any time.'  
(PanC, Herzfeld 1983b: 30)
- (11) *hi alveyz biz telin mi abaw da gorlz owva*  
he always IMPFV telling me about the girls over  
*der in seyba*  
there in Ceiba  
'He is always telling me about the girls in La Ceiba.'  
(BisC-Utilla, Warantz 1983: 84)
- (12) *shi sik shi doz bi havin som bad spelz*  
she sick she IMPFV IMPFV having some bad spells  
'She is sick, she often has bad spells.'  
(BisC-Roatan, Graham 1997: 356)
- (13) *a sen it gens i howl we a siy im stodi pahs tru*  
I send it in its hole REL I see it IMPFV pass  
through  
'I sent [the line) in the hole where I see it (a fish) regularly passing.'  
(ProC, Washabaugh 1983: 159)
- (14) *soma dem bway wuda go awt an[.] luk bawt di mangrurut-de*  
Some the boy would go out an look about the mangrove-root  
'Some fishermen usually look around the mangrove roots (for items from shipwrecks).'  
(BelC, Escure 1983: 36)

- (15) *wat geym yu yuztu pley wen yu smahl?*  
 what game you IMPFV play when you small  
 ‘What games did you play when you were small?’  
 (LimC, Herzfeld 1983a: 135)
- (16) *i yuwsa layk fishin an evar dey hi gowz awt fishin*  
 he used to like fishing and every day he goes out fishing  
 ‘He used to like fishing and he would go fishing every day.’  
 (MisC, Holm 1983: 112)

#### 4.1.3. Past and anterior morphemes (PA)

Although simple past time reference is not marked on the verb, as seen above, all CAMC varieties also use at least one preverbal morpheme to refer generally to some anterior past event. Although some creoles seem to assign different meanings to the use of that morpheme before stative verbs (it would then mean simple past), the variation is not systematic, as seen in the examples below. The basilectal past morpheme is *me* (in BelC, RamC, MisC and SanC), but variants occur as well: *men*, *wen*, and *we* in SanC, and ProC, or *ben* in PanC and BIsC. The negative equivalent of *me* is invariably *neva*, which does not mean ‘never,’ but simply negates a past event (18, 22a, 26). Other CAMC varieties, especially those that are less basilectal, include other preverbal markers such as *did*, and *woz* in LimC, PanC and BIsC. Note again that several morphemes can co-occur in a single variety (for example *ben/did* in PanC, BisC, and *me/did* in MisC).

- (17a) *wen a da me wan grup lida de a now dem gyal*  
 when I TOP PA a group leader DET I know the girl
- (17b) *dey layk stedi go run go tell run go tell pan dis girl*  
 they like IMPFV go run go tell run go tell on this girl  
 ‘When I was group leader, I knew that the girls [office workers] always liked to gossip about this girl.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1987)
- (18) *him me mek di kyar gwayn [..] bika i neva siy di kenip triy*  
 he PA make the car go because he NEG see the guinep tree  
 ‘He kept the car going because he didn’t see the guinep tree.’  
 (SanC, Washabaugh 1983: 166)
- (19a) *yu no haw ay we de prey fi im kom howm*  
 you know how I PA IMPFV pray for him come home  
 ‘You know how much I prayed for him to come home.’  
 (SanC, Washabaugh 1983: 167)

- (19b) *we sayd dem wen de?*  
 What side they PA LOC  
 ‘Where were they?’ (SanC, Washabaugh 1983: 167)
- (20) *ay ben gat mowr intris in dis howl man an yu ben gat*  
 I PA got more interest in this old man than you PA got  
 ‘But I had more interest in the old man than you did.’  
 (PanC, Herzfeld 1983a: 152)
- (21) *an him pey de moni? Wel im did hav tu pey it*  
 And he pay the money? Well he PA have to pay it  
 ‘And he paid the money? Well, he did have to pay it.’  
 (LimC, Herzfeld 1983a: 153)
- (22a) *i se: ‘a did tayad an neva kom’*  
 he say: I PA tired and NEG-PA come  
 He said: ‘I was tired so I didn’t come.’ (MisC, Holm 1983: 103)
- (22b) *a se: ‘yu me drinkin da way yu no me wan kom ya’*  
 I say ‘you PA drink that why you no PA FUT come here’  
 I said: ‘you were drinking, that’s why you wouldn’t come here.’  
 (MisC, Holm 1983: 103)
- (23) *shi hir that it was come through*  
 she hear that it PA come through  
 ‘She heard that it had arrived.’  
 (BisC-Roatan, Graham 1997: 367)
- (24) *Dem aks mi if a woz want it*  
 they ask me if I PA want it  
 ‘They asked me if I wanted it.’ (PanC, Aceto 1996: 54)
- (25) *ay bin had it redi ay weytin an yu*  
 I PA PA it ready I waiting for you  
 ‘I’ve had it ready, I’m waiting for you.’  
 (BIsC-Roatan, Graham 1997: 367)

#### 4.1.4. *Past-Imperfective (IMPFV + PA morphemes)*

The combination *me de+Verb* (or *men de+Verb*) is representative of basilectal progressive past aspect. Some varieties combine morphemes generally attributed to different lects, such as *di(d)+de* and *woz+de* (in PanC, in 28, 29), but there is an occasional *me+V+ing* – only in MisC, see (22b) above. Those ‘mismatches’ may indicate a mesolect, or may indicate that the basilect is unstable. Such combinations have not been observed in BelC, which suggests that it is a more vigorous creole.



- (26) *dat da we dey me de du riper pan we dey*  
 that TOP REL they PA + IMPFV do repair on REL they  
*neva du gud*  
 NEG-PA do good  
 ‘That’s what they were repairing, and they did not do it well.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1987)
- (27) *a klowz i men de wash*  
 TOP clothes he PA+ IMPFV wash  
 ‘That’s clothes he was washing.’ (SanC, Washabaugh 1983: 168)
- (28) *yu di de waak hier ar yu di de ron de*  
 you PA+ IMPFV walk here or you PA IMPFV run there  
 ‘Were you walking or running (to get here)?’ (PanC, Aceto 1996: 55)
- (29) *mi woz jos de taak*  
 I PA just IMPFV talk  
 ‘I was just talking.’ (PanC, Aceto 1996: 55)

#### 4.1.5. Future (FUT)

Several creoles have grammaticalized the volition verb *want* into the preverbal future marker *wan*. This is the case in BelC, but also in RamC. Others use *go*, *gwain*, or *wi/wil*. Aceto (1996) claims that a new future marker *gwainan* is developing in PanC.

- (30a) *a tel dem pipl da nobadi els wan de da kamp*  
 I tell the people that nobody else FUT LOC that camp  
 ‘I told them that nobody else will be at the camp.’
- (30b) *a wan mek im nou dat wen a gaan dat dey kant du dat*  
 I FUT let him know that when I leave that they can’t do  
 that  
 ‘I will let him know that when I’m gone, they can’t do that.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1998)
- (31) *di man go tu moch ina di kol an no wan lisen*  
 the man go too much in the cold and NEG FUT listen  
 ‘Theman goes out too much in the cold, and won’t listen.’  
 (RamC, Assadi 1983: 119)
- (32) *bot diz bastad wi milk yu dey wi milk yu ontil yu go*  
 but these bastards FUT milk you they FUT milk you till you go  
 ‘But those bastards will exploit you, they will exploit you until you leave.’  
 (MisC, Holm 1983: 103)

4.1.6. *Counterfactual [anterior + future combination] (PA+ FUT)*

The combination of the anterior marker and the future marker is often used to capture an irrealis modality that refers to an unrealized event, often conditional to another. Thus in (33a) a hypothetical situation is evoked (if you can see some rope on top of the mangrove, it's no good). This presupposes a prior event ('someone would have picked it up if it was good rope'). This reconstructed event is represented in BelC by the *me wan* combination. In (34) the irrealis situation is somewhat different: the use of '*me wan kum in*' refers to uncertainty, or a simple putative event. (35) represents also an unrealized situation, specifically negating the possibility of an event. In some varieties (LimC), a past marker alone can function as irrealis (36). There is no mesolectal counterpart (*\*did will*).

(33a) *If yu si an hay pantap a mangru no go luk i gaan lang taym*  
If you see it high on top of mangrove no go look it gone long time

(33b) *sambadi me wan pik it in*  
somebody IMPFV FUT pick it up  
'If you see [some rope] on top of the mangrove, don't even look, it's no good, somebody would have picked it up already.'

(BelC, Escure 1983: 36)

(34) *Toni kaal mi tel mi dey me gat tu pipl we me*  
Toni call me tell me they IMPFV get two people that IMPFV

*wan kum in*  
FUT come in

'Toni called me to tell me that they had two people who might come in.'

(BelC, Escure 1997: 101-2)

(35) *yu me drinkin das way yu no me wan kom ya*  
you PA drinking that why you NEG PA FUT come here  
'You were drinking, that's why you couldn't have come here.'

(MisC, Holm 1983: 103)

(36) *we did hapn if aal dowz pipl..*  
what PA happen if all those people

'What would have happened if all those people...'

(LimC, Herzfeld 1978: 205)

4.1.7. *Completive aspect (COM)*

A preverbal completive marker is present in all varieties, and it is usually *don*, regardless of the lectal level. This morpheme can be combined with other aspectual functions.

- (37) *shi se shi did don giv sombodi els di skalaship*  
 she say she PA COM give somebody else the scholarship  
 ‘She said that had already given the scholarship to somebody else.’  
 (LimC, Herzfeld 1978: 223)

#### 4.1.8. Locative verb (LOC)

All creoles have a distinctive locative verb, whereas in English the copula is used in locative as well as in equative contexts. The most frequent creole locative verb is *de* [de] (probably derived from *there*). This is clearly a verb, because, like all creole verbs, it can be preceded by TMA markers such as *me*, *neva*, or *wan* (30a).

- (38) *only di lida de*  
 only the leader LOC  
 ‘Only the leader is there.’ (BelC, collected by Escure)
- (39) *elektrisite neva de*  
 electricity NEG-PA LOC  
 ‘There was no electricity.’ (BelC, collected by Escure)
- (40) *We im wok de naw?*  
 Where he work LOC now  
 ‘Where is he working now?’ (MisC, Holm 1983)
- (41) *di biebi de onda tri*  
 the baby LOC under tree  
 ‘The baby is under the tree.’ (LimC, Herzfeld 1978: 193)

#### 4.2. Adjectival predicate or copular predicate

The English copula has no clear equivalent in basilectal CAMC, but acrolects and sometimes mesolects have acquired some forms of *be* – either *is*, *are*, or both. An adjectival predicate need not contain a verb per se, thus adjectives are verbal categories. This is confirmed by the fact that predicate adjectives can be preceded by TMA markers, such as *me*, or *did*. In some cases (especially in mesolects), the English copula *iz* functions as a topicalizing particle. For example, the first clause of (43) has zero copula, but the second clause includes *iz* – clearly for emphasis, and the same applies to (44). See 4.3. below.

- (42) *Da me wan propaganda ting an I kom wan taym wen*  
 TOP IMPFV DET propaganda thing and it come DET time when  
*dis Guatemala kwesion me kaynda hat.*  
 this Guatemala question IMPFV kind of hot  
 ‘That was pure propaganda, and it occurred when Guatemala was a hot issue.’  
 (BelC, Escure 2001: 69)

- (43) *Omar i brayt i iz veri bray*  
 Omar he bright he is very bright  
 ‘Omar is bright, he is indeed very bright.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1999)
- (44) *di baibl now wat gud fa yu rayt so iz haad.*  
 The bible knows what good for you right so is hard.  
 ‘The bible knows what’s good for you, right? So it is hard.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1999)

#### 4.3. The pseudo-copula or topicalizer (TOP)

Since a morpheme *da* (with occasional variant *a*) frequently occurs in the copular position in basilectal sentence, it has been assumed that *da* is a creole copula. This is unlikely because the same morpheme also occurs in sentence initial position (including a question) as a highlighter or pragmatic particle. This element is probably derived from English ‘that’, and is often repeated – *da(t) (d)a* as in (26). Mesolects clearly transfer this topicalizing function to *iz* (49, 50). Like the locative verb *de*, *da* can be accompanied by an aspect particle in basilects, but in the order *da me*, contrary to the regular sequence *me de*. This confirms that *da* is not a verbal item, though it occurs at the beginning of the predicate:

- (45a) *da den bad ting hapn. da him mek a*  
 TOP then bad things happen. TOP him make it  
 ‘That’s when bad things happen, it’s him who causes that.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1983)
- (45b) *da Tatabuende mek yu get chap*  
 TOP Tatabuende make you get hurt  
 ‘It’s Tatabuende (a mythical Boogeyman) who hurts you.’  
 (BelC, Escure 1983: 42)
- (46) *da hu fo hu da fu blyem?*  
 TOP who to who TOP to blame  
 ‘Who is it who is to blame?’  
 (RamC, Assadi 1983: 119)
- (47) *dat no riva dat a siy*  
 that no river that TOP sea  
 ‘That’s not a river, that’s the sea.’  
 (LimC, Herzfeld 1978: 194)
- (48) *da elba giv wi wan*  
 TOP Elba give we one  
 ‘It’s Elba who gave us one.’  
 (RamC, Assadi 1983: 119)

- (49) *Yu no now iz huu*  
 you not know TOP who  
 ‘You don’t know who it really is.’ (MisC, Holm 1983)
- (50) *iz da vuman hi sey dat bringz ya da nuwz*  
 TOP the woman he say that bring you the news  
 ‘He says that it’s the woman who brings you the news.’  
 (BIsC-Utila, Warantz 1983: 79)

#### 4.4. The passive

Since there is no auxiliary such as *be* in basilects, there is no passive structure in those varieties, although English-style passivization is introduced in acrolects. However, the passive meaning is derived from the context in spite of apparent ambiguity, for example in *a disgas* ‘I am disgusted’, and *i tich* ‘he teaches/he taught’, or ‘he is taught /he was taught’ (51).

- (51) *yu aks im bawt wat i tich doz nayt i downt ivn rimemba*  
 you ask him about what he teach those night he don’t even remember  
 ‘When you ask him [5-year old son] what he was taught in evening  
 school, he doesn’t even remember.’ (BelC, collected by Escure)
- (52) *No fret baw dat pleyz dat gon kliyn a gon kliyn i*  
 No fret about that place that going clean I going clean it  
 ‘Don’t worry about that place, it’s going to be cleaned, I’m going to clean  
 it.’ (MisC, Holm 1983: 102)
- (53a) *yu put it in di woven tu byek en yu sidon*  
 you put it in the oven to bake and you sit down
- (53b) *an wyet ontil i beyk*  
 and wait till it bake  
 ‘You put it in the oven to bake, then you sit down, and wait till it is  
 baked.’ (LimC, Herzfeld 1978: 188)

#### 4.5. Non-declarative sentences (imperative, interrogative, and negative)

Imperative, interrogative and negative sentences typically use the declarative order, with preverbal negative *no* or *neva* (in past contexts). As indicated above, a question is often – but not necessarily – introduced by the particle (*da*, *a* or *iz*). The auxiliary *do* is only introduced in mesolects, typically without agreement marker, such as *don’t* in (51).

- (54) *may ticha neva yuzta liv dat fa*  
 my teacher NEG-PA IMPFV live that far  
 ‘My teacher didn’t live that far.’ (BelC Escure, collected in 1999)

- (55) *we hapn? yu no tel im bawt di layt?*  
 What happen? you NEG tell him about the light?  
 ‘What happened? You didn’t tell him about the light?’  
 (BelC Escure, collected in 1999)

- (56) *den da haw yu ga dem dat?*  
 Then T how you give them that?  
 ‘Then, how did you give it to them?’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1999)

#### 4.6. Serial verbs

Series of adjacent verbs are frequently found in creoles. In some cases they look like English structures without coordinating elements (especially in mesolects and acrolects), but basilectal sentences display a distinctly different breakdown of the semantic structure of verbs. See for example (17b) above *dey layk stedi go run go tell run go tell pan dis girl* ‘they always gossip about this girl’; or (34) *Toni kaal mi tel mi.* = ‘Toni called to tell me.’

- (57) *samtaim di bebi wan gu wak*  
 sometimes the baby want go walk  
 ‘Sometimes the baby wants to walk.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1999)

- (58a) *dey pas kum don dey me de meyt*  
 they pass come down they PA IMPFV mate

- (58b) *en dey pas klos alang al di kos*  
 and they pass close along all the coast  
 ‘They (manta rays) came close to the coast to mate.’  
 (BelC, Escure 1991: 183)

#### 4.7. Existential structures (expletives)

There is a variety of structures equivalent to ‘there is/are’, ranging from *ga/gat/i gat* to *hav/i have*, and *it’s* that overlap often with clefting/focusing constructions. So, topicalizers such as *da, dat*, and *iz* often fulfill the role of expletives in existential structures.

- (59) *ga li aystaz we grow pan dem*  
 got little oysters REL grow on them  
 ‘There are small oysters growing (on the mangrove trees).’  
 (BelC, Escure 1983: 35)

- (60) *dey hav tu difren tayp af obia*  
 they have two different type of obeah  
 ‘There are two different types of obeah.’ (BelC, Escure 1997: 96)
- (61) *hav no wan tu teyk ke af dem*  
 have no one to take care of them  
 ‘There is nobody (no teacher) to take care of them.’  
 (BelC, Escure 1997: 97)
- (62) *iz meni yang men rawn hia dat pik dis habit op*  
 is many young men around here that pick this habit up  
 ‘There are many young men here who get addicted to it.’  
 (Graham 1997: 380)

## 5. The noun phrase

The structure of the noun phrase is amply illustrated in the above examples, so few additional sentences are provided here. As indicated above, English morphology is acquired in acrolects, but basilects and mesolects variably present idiosyncratic features. The most prominent include the use of the numeral ‘one’ as indefinite article (INDEF) (65), and the use of pronominal as well as postnominal determiners (DET) – usually in the objective form – as plural markers, as in (63). There is also a distinctive second person plural pronoun *unu/una* clearly derived from West African sources (66). There is a widespread merger of the English objective and subjective pronominal forms. Thus the creole counterpart of the English objective pronoun can be used in subject position, and the subjective in object position, as in (64). Basilects typically do not have distinctive gender marked pronouns – *i* is the universally unmarked pronoun for third person singular, but there is frequent variation and co-occurrence of *shi* and *i* in mesolects (67). We could say then that there are simply no number or case morphemes in creoles. Possession is marked by simple juxtaposition, but there is also a periphrastic possessive construction with *fi* (POSS) (65).

- (63) *gi dem di wom pilz dem*  
 give them the worm pills DET  
 ‘Give (the dogs) the worm pills.’
- (64a) *if enitin tu stodi a hav tu ripit dat tu shi*  
 if anything to study I have to repeat that to her
- (64b) *bifa a gu tu may bed*  
 before I go to my bed  
 ‘If (she had) homework, I had to repeat it to her before going to bed.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1997)

- (65) *da wan nays sayz papi dog pa fi dem pap*  
 TOP INDEF nice size puppy dog father POSS DET pup  
*da wan big dog*  
 TOP INDEF big dog  
 ‘That a good size puppy; those pups’ pa is a big dog.’  
 (BelC, Escure, collected in 1999)
- (66) *hu unu me gat da trip fa*  
 who 2-PL PA got that trip for  
 ‘Who did you do that trip for?’  
 (BelC, Escure 1999: 174)
- (67) *Elvita shi no kom we i de we shi de?*  
 Elvita she NEG come where she LOC where she LOC  
 ‘Elvita hasn’t come? Where is she? Where is she?’  
 (MisC Holm 1983: 104)

## 6. Conclusion

Central America is a linguistic and ethnic *masala* that reflects multiple influences originating from various continents. Varieties of English spoken along the Central American Atlantic coast cover a broad lectal range. Some display similarities to Western Caribbean creoles (especially Jamaica), others to East Caribbean creoles (especially Barbados), and still others to British dialects.

Only Belizean Creole appears to be thriving. In spite of the growing encroachment of Spanish, it has even gained popularity with young people from different ethnic backgrounds, but BelC functions primarily as a marker of black identity. In other countries, Spanish seems to be gaining the linguistic battle as Afro-Caribbeans are no longer isolated, and are concurrently getting more acculturated to Hispanic dominance. However, it was observed that in the Bay Islands (especially Roatán) increased tourism may lead to the maintenance of English-based varieties. But this renewed interest may in fact be geared toward the acquisition of a standard variety of American English rather than to the preservation of creolized forms. This situation may be symptomatic of future trends in Central America, featuring the usual conflict between allegiance to native identity and the need for external communication.

## 7. Speech samples

The speech samples include Anansi stories (basilectal Belizean Creole) told by a 60-year old woman, a conversation (basilectal-mesolect) between three Belizean



women (ages 50, 60 and 80), a story told in Roatán Creole/English (mesolect) produced by a trilingual Garifuna woman (55), and a sample of Limonese Creole produced by a man (35) (mesolect) kindly contributed by Anita Herzfeld.

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# **The Pacific and Australasia**

Kate Burridge and Bernd Kortmann (eds.)



# **Introduction: varieties of English in the Pacific and Australasia\***

Kate Burridge and Bernd Kortmann

## **1. A note on geographical coverage**

This part of the Handbook provides linguistic sketches of the most significant Englishes currently spoken in the Pacific (on islands between the American continents, Asia and Australia) and Australasia (in Australia and New Zealand and on neighbouring islands of the South Pacific Ocean). These sketches cover a range of the different variety types (including both native and contact varieties) that have evolved as a consequence of the spread of English into these regions. Even though the Hawaiian Islands are politically part of the United States, and have been since 1958, they are included in this volume on account of their geographical location in the northern Pacific, and the special linguistic relationship with other Pacific rather than North American varieties.

## **2. Australian and New Zealand English**

Both Australia and New Zealand have in common a relatively recent history of European settlement and both share transplanted Englishes. Towards the end of the 18th century, the population of the British Isles was only about 15 million. A considerable number of these people spoke their own Celtic languages and little or no English. Moreover, a good many of the English speakers spoke only their regional dialects and dialect differences could be striking – we are after all talking of a time when horses and sailing vessels were the most efficient means of travel and communication. This then was roughly the state of the language when exploration southwards established the first English-speaking settlements in the Antipodes.

For Australia, the first appearance of English coincides with the arrival of Captain Cook in 1770. However, it wasn't until later in 1788 that we can really talk about a European settlement there. Over the course of the next 20 years or so Britain established its first penal colony in Sydney in order to alleviate the problem of its overcrowded prisons. The early arrivals were therefore largely prisoners, prison officers and their families. Non-convicts, or free settlers as they were known, did not really reach significant numbers until the middle of the 19th century.

On the other side of the Tasman, English got off to a later and somewhat slower start. Cook had charted the islands around the same time he visited Australia, and

although there was unofficial settlement in New Zealand as early as the late 1700s (involving small numbers of people often from Australia), the official colony was not established until 1840. After this time immigration from both Australia and Britain increased dramatically.

The different mixes of original dialects, the different dates of settlement, the different settlement patterns and the contact with the different indigenous languages have meant that varieties growing up in Australia and New Zealand are already quite distinct. The physical separation from other English-speaking regions has allowed this distinctiveness to flourish. Regional variation within Australian and New Zealand English, however, is minor compared to other varieties. The blending of the original British dialects (the so-called “melting pot” effect) has left behind remarkable regional homogeneity – even within Australia, a continent some thirty times the size of Britain. Notwithstanding stylistically and socially marked variation, there is very little in the way of clearly identifiable regional variation. There is one notable exception; namely, those speakers from the Southern part of the South Island of New Zealand. This group have a striking semi-rhotic variety of English; in other words, /r/ is (variably) pronounced in postvocalic positions, especially after the NURSE vowel (cf. chapters by Gordon and Maclagan and also Bauer and Warren, this Handbook).

However, lay perceptions are quite different. Speakers are often puzzled by linguists’ claims of regional homogeneity, pointing to obvious vocabulary differences they have encountered in their travels. A type of large, smooth sausage in Auckland is *polony*, in Christchurch *saveloy* and in Southland *Belgium* or *Belgium roll/sausage*. Both *polony* and *saveloy* are familiar terms for some Australians, although people in Adelaide (South Australia) are more comfortable with *fritz*, Brisbanites (Queensland) and Sydney-siders (New South Wales) with *devon*. Lexical variation of this kind will always exist of course and is certainly fascinating to speakers, but it does not make for distinct dialects. Moreover, popular claims that people can identify someone’s place of origin purely on the basis of how s/he speaks are exaggerated. With the exception of the so-called Southland “burr” just mentioned, accent and dialect differences are more likely to be a matter of statistical tendency, with certain differences occurring more or less frequently in one place than another. Some of these differences have existed from the beginning of settlement. They evolved because of the different dialect mixes in each region. The Southland “burr”, for example, can be explained by the significant number of Scots who settled in these southern regions.

Although there is limited regional diversity now, we might expect that over time both physical and social distance will have the effect of increasing regional differences in Australia and New Zealand. Also the fact that there is no single prestige regional variety of the language in either country means that varieties will be freer to go their separate ways. In other words, speakers will not want to shift towards a distinctively Canberra or Wellington usage because it has more status. Certainly

the separation of urban and rural communities looks currently to be inspiring the richest regional diversity in these places. In Australia, for example, we already find significant differences, particularly with respect to speed and also broadness of accent. For example, people in the city of Melbourne (Victoria) tend to speak faster than those in rural Victoria of the same socio-economic background. There is also a greater proportion of broad speakers in the rural regions. This is one popular stereotype that does appear to have some basis in reality (although cf. Bradley, this Handbook). Rural speakers of vernacular varieties are not only showing distinctness of accent and vocabulary, there are also signs of significant grammatical differences emerging (cf. Pawley's contribution in this Handbook). But social factors are crucial here as well. It is difficult to talk about regionally defined variation without appealing to social aspects of the area. Non-standard vernacular varieties are also typical of the lower socio-economic classes in a speech community – basically, the higher up the social scale you go, the closer the speakers tend to be to the standard language and therefore the less remarkable the regional differences are. Moreover these grammatical features are by no means confined to the vernacular Englishes of Australia and New Zealand. Features such as irregular verb forms, special pronouns for plural “you”, and *never* as a general negator crop up in non-standard varieties all over the English-speaking world.

Effects of globalization are also contributing to this increasing diversity by fostering new socially-defined ethnic variation in these countries. Massive flows of people, including tourists, refugees and migrants, have produced an intermixing of people and cultures which is unprecedented. Clearly culture and language at the local level have been changed irrevocably by this “inter-national” movement of people. And as each individual group seeks to assert its own identity, different ethnic varieties of English can become an important means of signalling the group boundaries. Italian or Greek features in a group's English, for example, can be potent markers of that group's ethnicity. To give some idea of the potential for diversity here, consider that over the last 30 years or so, speakers from well over 40 different ethnic groups have migrated to Australia. These different ethnic mixes are now adding a vibrant new socially relevant aspect to Australian English. In cities such as Melbourne and Sydney, for example, the Italian and Greek communities are of particular interest because of their size and also because they have been in these places long enough now to have teenagers who were born in the country.

Ethnicity is clearly a crucial part of social identity and is something that people want to demonstrate through their use of language. Even though New Zealand English and Australian English have incorporated very little from Maori or Aboriginal languages respectively, varieties of Maori English and Aboriginal English are providing an interesting new dimension to the “Extraterritorial Englishes” in the Antipodes (cf. section 3 below on contact varieties). In the face of the disappearance of local indigenous languages in these two countries, such distinct Englishes have become an important means of signalling these speakers' cultural and

social identity. Of the 200–250 Aboriginal languages that existed in Australia at the time of earliest European contact, only around 90 have survived and of these as few as 20 can be described as robust; e.g. Warlpiri, Arrente and Western Desert, each with about 3,000 speakers (see Schmidt 1990). In New Zealand, by the 1980s the number of Maori speakers was already as low as 12% of the total Maori population. Few contexts remain where Maori is the natural means of communication (cf. Benton 1991). In both Australia and New Zealand vigorous efforts are now being made to maintain, even revive, these languages, and time will tell how successful they are in reversing the overall trend toward language death.

Another consequence of the rise of the global village is that native Englishes such as New Zealand English and Australian English are now much more open than ever before to global influence. There is of course a pervasive American dimension to much of what is global – a clear distinction between globalization and American cultural imperialism is at times difficult to maintain. It would be surprising therefore, given the global presence of the United States and the inevitable loosening of ties between Britain and its former Antipodean colonies, if there were not some sort of linguistic steamrolling going on. Certainly, the “Americanization” of Australian and New Zealand English is currently a hot topic within these speech communities – and reactions are generally hostile. Newspaper headlines like “Facing an American Invasion” go on to “condemn this insidious, but apparently virile, infection from the USA”. In letters to the editor and talkback calls on the radio, speakers rail against “ugly Americanisms” (many of which, it turns out, are not Americanisms at all; cf. the discussion in Burridge and Mulder 1998: ch. 12). Lay concerns about language usage are not based on genuine linguistic matters, but reflect deeper and more general social judgements. In this case, the current hostility towards American usage is undoubtedly born of the linguistic insecurity that comes from the dominance of America as a cultural, political, military and economic superpower.

In fact, the actual impact of American English on Antipodean Englishes is difficult to determine. Most of the complaints centre around vocabulary. Lexical influences are the most obvious to speakers and intensify the wide-spread perception of American influence. This is undoubtedly fuelled by the high visibility of spelling – although Australian and New Zealand spelling conventions derive traditionally from the British, the technological presence of America means this is an area of rapidly growing American influence. Certainly there are areas, such as fast food industry and technology, where American influence on the lexicon is evident. There is also a strong American aspect to teenage slang. Elsewhere, however, influence remains slight. Phonological and grammatical transfers are also not much in evidence. Apparent American imports in the area of phonology include features of stress (such as *pri*<sup>1</sup>*marily* in place of <sup>1</sup>*primarily*), affrication of /tr/ and /str/ (where *tree* sounds much like “chree”) and flapping or tapping of intervocalic /t/ (where *latter* and *ladder* become similar in pronunciation). Since examples like these illustrate natural phonological changes, however, it is difficult to establish



the exact role of American influence here. Contact with American English could simply be accelerating trends already underway. Apparent grammatical imports such as an increase in the use of the subjunctive could also represent independently motivated change rather than direct borrowing. And while the resurgence of conservative features like *gotten* may well be due to American English influence too, it is also possible that these come from the vestiges of dialectal users downunder (cf. further discussion in Hundt et al., this Handbook).

As a final note, we use linguistic labels such as Australian English or New Zealand English, as if each were a single immutable language variety. Clearly, this is not the reality. The reality is that speakers from different regions, from different social classes, of different ages, of different occupations, of different gender identification, of different sexual orientation will all talk differently. People talk differently in different contexts too – an informal chat, an interview, a lecture and so on. It must always be remembered that labels like Australian English or New Zealand English are convenient cover terms for what are really clumps or clusters of mutually intelligible speech varieties.

### 2.1. A note on source material

For both New Zealand and Australian English there are several notable corpora that the authors here have drawn from: the Canterbury Corpus (containing recordings over the last 10 years made by students enrolled in the New Zealand English Course at the University of Canterbury), the Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English (comprising texts from 1986), the Australian Corpus of English held at Macquarie University (one million words of published material from 1986). Descriptions in the morphosyntax chapters also derive from elicitation tests and popular surveys (local or national-wide), as well as secondary references (such as usage guides and grammatical handbooks).

## 3. Contact varieties

A number of the contributions in this Handbook focus on the English-based pidgin and creole languages in the Pacific and Australasia. Generally speaking, pidgins are a type of makeshift language that springs up when speakers of different linguistic backgrounds come into contact and need to talk. In the formation of a pidgin, there are always two (or more) languages that are involved, although the pidgin takes one language, usually the socially dominant one, as its point of origin for the lexicon. It is this language that contributes most of the vocabulary, though significant features of the grammar are likely to derive from other sources. At one time there were many more pidgin varieties in these regions. In the pearling fisheries around Broome in Western Australia, for example, pidginized forms of Malay

were used during the early part of the last century. But pidgins such as this one are typically as short-lived as the social circumstances that spawned them and Broom Pearling Pidgin is now extinct. If the contact ceases or the different groups end up learning each other's language, the pidgin will then drop by the wayside.

If the situation stabilizes, however, and the contact continues, there can be a very different outcome as the language expands beyond its original very limited context of use. Change is then typically rapid, especially in vocabulary and grammar, as the makeshift pidgin metamorphoses into a fully-fledged and dynamic language, able to serve its speakers in all kinds of settings and circumstances. In theory it is straight-forward to say when a pidgin ends and a creole begins, at least according to those definitions that see pidgins and creoles as separate stages in a single process of development – as soon as children in a community are brought up speaking the pidgin as their first language, it becomes a creole. Accordingly, a creole is simply a nativized pidgin. The linguistic reality, however, is another matter – linguistically it is impossible to say where the boundary lies. Even before a pidgin becomes somebody's first language, it can develop a highly elaborated structure (close to that of a so-called creole), if it is used for a number of different purposes. For this reason some linguists avoid the labels "pidgin" and "creole" and refer to these varieties straightforwardly as "contact languages" (cf. Crowley, this Handbook).

Clearly, both Australia and New Zealand offer situations where English comes into close contact with other languages. Since European contact, Aboriginal Australia and Maori New Zealand have seen members of several language groups living in the same community and engaging in daily interaction. In Australia, pidgins based on English appeared not long after the arrival of the Europeans. The pidgin varieties became increasingly important for contact, not only between Aboriginal speakers and English speakers, but also as a *lingua franca* between speakers of different Aboriginal languages.

It has long been observed that linguistic change follows closely on the heels of drastic social upheaval. We see striking illustration of this in the evolution of the creoles in these regions. After the arrival of Europeans in Australia, for example, there came extreme social disruption with the movement of Aboriginal people to mission stations, pastoral properties and towns. More than ever before Aboriginal people from different linguistic groups found themselves together and needing to communicate. Although there had always been widespread bilingualism among adults, this was not adequate to cover communicative needs in these new settlements, where children of different linguistic backgrounds were thrown together and where there was continued uneven interaction between Aboriginal and English speakers. Pidgins therefore fulfilled the communicative needs of these speakers. Out of these, creoles evolved in the Kimberley Region, the Roper River area and parts of North Queensland. These various English-based creoles have much in common, but they also show some regional differences too. These depend on the Aboriginal languages represented in the community where the pidgin originated

and also influences from other pidgins and creoles brought into Australia from the outside (cf. Malcolm, this Handbook).

In New Zealand the situation was somewhat different. As Ross Clark (1979) documents, in the early 1880s a “foreigner-talk” system known as South Seas Jargon was used in various parts of the Pacific primarily between European whalers and indigenous crew members, some of whom were Maori. In New Zealand this jargon developed into Maori Pidgin English which was used for early contact between Maori and Pakeha (or European New Zealanders). However, this pidgin never stabilized enough to evolve further. For one, in New Zealand there was only ever a single indigenous language, so there was never a need for a *lingua franca* between indigenous groups as there was in Australia. The historical records also suggest that the most common pattern was for English speakers to learn enough Maori to communicate. As a result the New Zealand pidgin was short-lived. However, Maori continue to be recognizable linguistically when speaking English through their preferential use of a wide range of linguistic forms, especially with respect to pronunciation (cf. Warren and Bauer, this Handbook).

The Pacific/Australasia part of this Handbook contains descriptions of six other contact languages: Bislama (as spoken in Vanuatu), Solomon Islands Pijin, Tok Pisin (as spoken in Papua New Guinea), Hawai‘i Creole, Fiji English and Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English. The first three creoles all have their roots in earlier Melanesian Pidgin and share lexical patterning and a number of structural characteristics. However, different external influences (for example, contact with French for Bislama and with German for Tok Pisin) and interaction with different local languages have given rise to distinct developments within these varieties. Hawai‘i Creole is another English-lexifier contact language, but also draws vocabulary from Hawaiian and Japanese. Although its story is very different, it does have episodes in common with the creoles from the southwestern Pacific: (1) early links with South Seas Jargon (as mentioned above, a jargon variety used for short-term communication by crews on ships and by individuals on shore in various locations around the Pacific Islands) and (2) input from Melanesian Pidgin spoken by labourers recruited for the sugarcane plantations in the early 1800s. These four Pacific contact varieties have, since the beginning of the 20th century, undergone substantial functional and structural expansion.

Fiji English shows many characteristically creole features although it is technically not a creole. For one, there is the absence of a stable pidgin at an earlier stage. Descriptions such as “creoloid” and “semi-creole” for this variety attest to the blurred nature of the category creole (cf. discussion earlier). Fiji English also has historical links with the previous creoles and these links are still evident in lexical and grammatical relics of Melanesian Pidgin (originally introduced by plantation labourers during the 19th century).

Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English represents the linguistic outcome of contact between the British English of the *Bounty* mutineers and Tahitian. It is a remarkable

example of a contact language since we know precisely the number of speakers who originally settled on Pitcairn in 1790, the places of origin of these speakers and even their names. However, its subsequent development has not yet been fully established and although there are clear early influences from the Pacific Pidgin English of the Melanesian islanders on Norfolk, the exact relationship of Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English to the contact varieties just described is problematic.

Variation within these speech communities is considerable. Speakers of Melanesian Pidgin, for example, frequently switch between, say, Bislama or Tok Pisin and their local variety of Standard English. The situation can become even more complicated because of the so-called “creole continuum”. Take the example of the interaction of Kriol with Aboriginal English and Australian English. As previously discussed, linguistic labels such as these give the impression of easily identifiable and neatly compartmentalized entities, but such tidy classifications are not reality. The many different varieties of English and creole that Aboriginal people speak range from something which is virtually identical to Standard Australian English in everything but accent (dubbed the “acrolect”) through to pure creole which is so remote from Standard Australian English as to be mutually unintelligible (dubbed the “basilect”). In between these two polar extremes you find a whole range of varieties (or “mesolects”). Generally, speakers have command of a number of these varieties and they move along the continuum according to the situation and the audience.

The label “variety of English” might at first seem problematic when dealing with these creole varieties, especially at the basilectal end of the continuum. These are very different Englishes in all respects – vocabulary, grammar and phonology. The very “unEnglish-looking” structures that characterize creoles, as well as their unique development (as contact languages resulting from pidgins), set them apart. There is also the question of the lack of mutual comprehension. Moreover, these languages have distinct names of course – Bislama, Tok Pisin, Kriol. The speakers themselves would never call their language a kind of English. Nonetheless, these contact languages share vocabulary and grammatical features that align them with the English of the international community. All have links of some sort with the group of continental Germanic dialects that ended up in the British Isles sometime in the 5th century AD. These off-springs of English are clearly an important dimension to the diversification of English world-wide (cf. also discussion in the General Introduction to this Handbook).

#### **4. A note on the order of chapters**

The chapters are arranged (partly on linguistic and partly on geographical grounds) in the following order: New Zealand English, Maori English, Australian English, Aboriginal English together with Kriol and Torres Strait Creole (Australia), Bis-

lama (Vanuatu), Solomon Islands Pijin, Tok Pisin (Papua New Guinea), Hawai'i Creole, Fiji English and Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English.

Clearly, all the chapters are self-contained entities and are not intended to be read left to right, chapter by chapter – although of course readers can do that if they wish. Nonetheless, the reader's attention is drawn to certain contributions in the Handbook that complement each other and are best read as companion chapters. The shared linguistic features and trends between Australia and New Zealand and the question of an Antipodean standard (as distinct from the supervarieties of the northern hemisphere) make these chapters obvious ones for comparison. Similarly, since Maori English and Australian Aboriginal English show some of the same characteristics as their respective standard languages, the readers should also think of these chapters collectively. A tangled linguistic history unites the various contact varieties that follow. The Australian creoles that feature earlier also share in this tangled history. The similar socio-historical conditions that gave rise to these off-springs of English, coupled with common input early on from nautical jargon, have given rise to obvious similarities between these varieties (similarities also due in part to linguistic universals). Particularly striking are the linguistic resemblances between the contact varieties of Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Their common origin in earlier Melanesian Pidgin naturally unites the three relevant chapters here, and readers will find Crowley's sociohistorical backdrop for Bislama a useful backdrop also for Solomon Islands Pijin and Tok Pisin. The account of Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English is placed last in this group of Pacific contact varieties on account of the fact that the diffusion of creole features from St Kitts now places this variety linguistically closer to Atlantic creoles.

All varieties have counterpart chapters in both the phonology and morphosyntax volumes. There is not complete parallelism, however. Variation in New Zealand English phonology has two special chapters devoted to it – one on general social and regional differences, especially those that relate to on-going changes, and another that looks specifically at Maori English. Morphosyntactic variation in New Zealand English, on the other hand, is included within only the one general chapter. The reader's attention is also drawn to an additional contribution in the morphosyntax volume. This is a chapter that deals specifically with features of lexical morphology in Australian English.

#### 4.1. The chapters on phonology

In the opening chapter, Bauer and Warren provide an account of the consonant and vowel systems, as well as the prosodic features, of New Zealand English. Attention is also paid to contact with Maori, in particular the pronunciation of words of Maori origin. The next two chapters are natural companion chapters. Gordon and Maclagan focus on the social and regional variation in New Zealand English phonology. Although, as they point out, regional variation is slight compared to

other varieties, there are notable differences to be heard in the Southern part of the South Island (the variable rhoticity of Southland-Otago is something Bauer and Warren also take up in their chapter). These two authors highlight in particular those aspects of variation that are indicative of vowel and consonant changes in progress (e.g. NEAR-SQUARE merger, vocalization of /l/ and affrication of /tr/ and /str/). In a separate chapter, Warren and Bauer go on to focus on the characteristics of Maori English phonology. They emphasize that although many of these consonant and vowel features appear in Pakeha English (spoken by European New Zealanders), they are nonetheless more prevalent and more consistently maintained in Maori English and therefore go to make this a distinct variety. Strikingly different features also obtain within Maori English prosody, most notably with respect to voice quality and rhythm.

The next three chapters move to Australia. Horvath examines the features of Australian English phonology, the most significant being the vowels. She also picks up on social dimensions, focusing on those sounds that are indicative of change in progress. Bradley takes up the issue of change but looks at regional characteristics. As alluded to earlier in this Introduction, these regional differences are not striking but they do exist and they are on the increase, especially within the system of vowels. Of particular interest with respect to variation elsewhere in the English-speaking world are the regional differences in the BATH vowel class. In the next chapter, Malcolm examines the complex variation that exists within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speech communities. This includes the phonological systems of two creole varieties, Kriol and Cape York Creole (with focus on the basilectal varieties), and also Aboriginal English. Malcolm concludes by examining some of the serious educational implications, especially the question of better integration of these Englishes into the school system.

The next chapters present sketches of the other contact varieties. Crowley begins with a description of the phonological features of Bislama. This is followed by Jourdan and Selbach on Solomon Islands Pijin and Smith on Tok Pisin. Sakoda and Siegel's account focuses on the variety of Hawai'i English that differs most strikingly from mainstream varieties of English (namely, the basilectal or "heavy" varieties) and compares these to the mesolectal varieties placed closer to English. The descriptions in all four chapters attest to the rich diversity that exists in the Englishes of these regions. This is diversity involving an array of different factors such as education, bilingualism and location (in particular, urban versus rural).

Tent and Mugler go on to examine the extraordinary variation that exists within the phonological systems of the different varieties that are included under the broad umbrella of Fiji English. The authors point out that variation here depends largely on two factors: (1) education of the speaker and (2) first language of the speaker (principally Fijian and Fiji Hindi). Accordingly, these authors divide their discussion into "Pure Fiji English" (spoken by indigenous Fijians and part-Europeans) and "Indo-Fijian Fiji English" (spoken by Indo-Fijians or "Fiji Indi-

ans”) – readers are also provided with a brief phonological sketch of Fiji Hindi for comparison. Mühlhäusler and Ingram conclude this part of the Handbook with a description of the most salient aspects of the phonological system of Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English, specifically that variety spoken on Norfolk Island (Norfuk). They base their analysis initially on recordings made in 1957 (the Flint dialogues), which they then compare with recordings made in 2002 of seven Norfuk speakers.

#### 4.2. The chapters on morphosyntax

The first two papers in this part of the Handbook are heavily corpus-based. Hundt, Gordon and Hay present their analysis of the standard and non-standard features of New Zealand English morphosyntax as they stand in relation to British English, American English and also Australian English. The authors identify those features that are genuinely New Zealand English and those that are used either more or less frequently in New Zealand English as against other varieties. Their chapter highlights the problem of identifying the shared morphosyntactic features that are the result of external influences (principally in this case American English influence) and those that represent parallel but independent developments. Collins and Peters’ analysis of Australian English is a useful companion chapter. In particular, these authors examine the case for endonormativity; in other words, the extent to which Australian English is “consolidating its own norms as an independent national standard”. Comparisons are made with New Zealand English and the two northern hemisphere standards.

Pawley’s contribution looks at regional variation within Australia, with a focus on Tasmania. In particular, he examines the “Australianness” of what he calls Australian Vernacular English, an informal spoken English, largely working class, male and rural. This variety has a number of non-standard grammatical features that can be found in many places where English is spoken, including other parts of Australia. However, Pawley also identifies some distinctive features, most notably the system of gender assignment (where animate pronouns *he/she* are used in reference to inanimate objects). The next paper by Simpson shows the interface between lexicon and grammar. One earmark of Australian English has become the rich system of nominal derivation that produces forms like *Chrissie* (< *Christmas*) and *rellie* or *rello* (< *relative*), *journno* (< *journalist*) and *arvo* (< *afternoon*), or what Simpson calls “hypocoristics”. Here she examines the meanings and uses of these forms and also the linguistic processes that produce them. In the next chapter, Malcolm compares the morphology and syntax of Aboriginal English and Kriol and Torres Strait Creole (in particular how these last two differ from Atlantic creoles).

The following four chapters are also concerned with contact varieties and complement each other and Malcolm’s contribution nicely. Crowley presents the mor-

phosyntactic features of Bislama, Jourdan the features of Solomon Islands Pijin, Smith those of Tok Pisin and Sakoda and Siegel those of Hawai‘i Creole (with focus on the basilectal varieties). The grammatical structures examined in these four chapters are strikingly different from mainstream Englishes. They include, for example, extensive patterns of verb serialization, lack of inflectional morphology, elaborate pronoun systems, distinguishing, for example, dual, sometimes even trial, and plural as well as inclusive and exclusive first person.

In the chapter that follows, Mugler and Tent focus on those features that are distinctively Fijian English and those shared by other varieties of English. Many of these features are creole-like. The descriptions here are based on 80 hours of recordings, television news and advertisements and also written sources (principally newspapers). Once again, variation is rife within this speech community (again depending largely on education and different first languages).

Finally, Mühlhäusler’s contribution highlights the creole features of Norfuk that are shared with other Pacific contact varieties, and also those features that place this variety typologically closer to the creoles of the Atlantic. The reader’s attention is also drawn here (as it is in many of the previous chapters) to the increasing influence of English on the morphosyntax of this variety.

Readers of this part of the Handbook will be struck by the grammatical similarities that obtain not only between the contact varieties in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea (i.e. derived from earlier Melanesian Pidgin), but also between the English-based contact languages in the Pacific and Australasian regions generally. Indeed contact varieties globally share striking resemblances, and most dramatically in their grammars (cf. the creoles described in the Americas and Caribbean section of this Handbook). Moreover, many of the features are also prevalent in colloquial non-standard varieties of English spoken in places where English is the first language of the majority; cf. for instance Pawley’s chapter on Australian Vernacular English in this volume. Discussion of these shared features can be found in the synopses.

\* We are very grateful to Terry Crowley for his comments on an earlier version of this introduction.

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# **New Zealand English: morphosyntax**

Marianne Hundt, Jennifer Hay and Elizabeth Gordon

## **1. Introduction**

The study of New Zealand English (NZE) has concentrated almost exclusively on phonology and vocabulary, with syntax and morphology notably absent. It is not until the late 1980s that New Zealand syntax is described in Bauer (1987, 1989a–c, 1994), Quinn (1995, 2000) and Hundt (1998). Some of the descriptions are based on personal observation and some on empirical research and elicitation experiments (e.g. Bauer 1987).

Proponents of the null hypothesis (e.g. Todd and Hancock 1986) claim that NZE grammar is (virtually) identical with British English (BrE) grammar. (The term ‘British’ English is used because some of the data on which this article is based come from corpora of standard written British English.) BrE, however, can no longer be the model against which varieties such as NZE are to be measured. The morphology and syntax of Standard English in New Zealand do not differ categorically from those of standard British and American English. But even if, in terms of grammar, usage in New Zealand is found to agree closely with the standards of the United States and Britain, that does not mean that it makes no sense to speak of New Zealand English morphosyntax. Differences between national standards are a question of degree. The standard in New Zealand can therefore best be described in relation to other national varieties, such as BrE, American English (AmE) and Australian English (AusE). As far as grammar is concerned, the following two types of difference between NZE and other national varieties can be expected: a) statistical tendencies, i.e. structures used more or less frequently in NZE than in other varieties, resulting in a characteristic NZE mix of pan-English features and b) genuine NZE collocations/idioms, i.e. unsystematic peculiarities at the interface of grammar and the lexicon.

One reason that early research on NZE concentrated on phonetics and phonology (see Bauer and Warren, other volume) as well as the lexicon was because it is in these aspects NZE differed most obviously from other national varieties. The New Zealand accent and vocabulary were not only perceptually more salient but also easier to describe empirically than morphosyntactic aspects of NZE. It is therefore symptomatic that the first monograph on NZE, Bell and Holmes (1990), largely neglects the grammar. The most recent volume (Bell and Kuiper 2000) features only two articles on grammatical aspects.

The first studies that investigated NZE morphosyntax empirically (Bauer 1987, 1988, 1989a–c) were based on elicitation tests. Before the compilation of the Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English (WCNZE), elicitation tests such as Bauer's were the only way to approach the grammar of NZE empirically. Two book-length studies that have explored the WCNZE for the study of NZE morphology and syntax are Hundt (1998) and Sigley (1997).

This paper deals separately with patterns of standard and non-standard morphosyntax in NZE. Discussion of the former (sections 2 and 3) focusses primarily on data from written corpora, whereas discussion of the second (section 4) is focussed on data from spoken sources.

The data for the discussion of standard NZE morphosyntax come from one million-word corpora of British, American, New Zealand and Australian English (cf. the full bibliography on the CD-ROM for manuals providing background information on the individual corpora):

corpus	corpus abbreviation	variety	sampling period
Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus	LOB	BrE	1961
Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English	FLOB	BrE	1991
Brown corpus	Brown	AmE	1961
Freiburg-Brown Corpus of American English	Frown	AmE	1992
Wellington Corpus of Written New Zealand English	WCNZE	NZE	1980s
Australian Corpus of English	ACE	AusE	1980s

Occasionally, evidence from the spoken component of the British National Corpus (BNC) and from the spoken corpus of NZE (WCSNZE) are used. Additional data comes from newspapers available on CD-ROM (the 1991 *Guardian* for BrE and the 1992 *Miami Herald* for AmE) and machine-readable versions of two New Zealand newspapers, the *Dominion* and the *Evening Post* (DOM/EVP).

There is very little data available on patterns of non-standard NZE morphosyntactic patterns. In section 4 we outline what is known about non-standard patterns, illustrating the phenomenon with examples extracted from the Canterbury Corpus. This corpus consists of recordings made by students enrolled in the New Zealand English Course at the University of Canterbury over the last 10 years. The limited patterns of regional variation are discussed in section 5.

## 2. Morphology

### 2.1. Verb morphology

NZE verb morphology is interesting as far as irregular verbs are concerned. In an ongoing regularization process involving verbs such as *spoil* or *dream*, NZE can be placed relative to AmE, BrE and AusE. For *prove* and *get*, on the other hand, the irregular form persists in some varieties of English, sometimes involving functional specialisation. We will look at these two areas of verb morphology in turn.

AmE has been expected to lead world English in the long-term regularisation of irregular past tense forms. For verbs such as *spoil*, *leap* or *spill* AmE is said to prefer the regular *-ed* preterite and past participle forms (cf. Quirk et al. 1985: 104). Peters (1994) compares verb morphology in LOB and Brown with that in ACE (see Collins and Peters, this volume). She concludes that “[...] the Australian data is a law unto itself. It shows no consistent commitment to either British or American patterns, and does not lend support to the notion that Australian English is now heavily influenced by American” (Peters 1994: 157). Table 1 supplements Peters’ results from Brown, LOB and the ACE with data obtained from searches in the FLOB and Frown corpora and the WCNZE. The search included the following verbs: *burn*, *dream*, *lean*, *leap*, *learn*, *smell*, *spell*, *spill* and *spoil*. Care was taken to exclude homonyms like (*to*) *smelt* or the noun *spelt* from the count.

Table 1. Irregular and regular past tense

	<i>-ed</i>		<i>-t</i>	<b>Total</b>
Brown	265	95.3%	13	278
Frown	232	93.5%	16	248
LOB	153	65.1%	82	235
FLOB	149	68.7%	68	217
WCNZE	127	56.4%	98	225
ACE	142	56.6%	109	251

The relative frequency of regular verb forms in Brown shows that AmE, thirty years ago, had almost reached the putative endpoint of the regularisation process. This still holds for AmE in the early 1990s, despite the fact that the ratio of irregular forms is higher in Frown than in Brown. Table 1 also shows that the relative frequency of irregular and regular verb forms in NZE and AusE is very similar. BrE, on the other hand, appears to be more advanced in the regularisation of irregular past tense forms. The overall increase in regular verb forms in FLOB is sufficient to produce a marked contrast between BrE and the two Southern Hemi-

sphere varieties which proved significant at the 1% level in a chi-square test. The term *colonial lag* thus appropriately describes the relation between BrE and the two younger colonial varieties, which exhibit a greater conservatism. The older colonial variety, American English, is the most innovative.

In addition to this more or less superficial quantitative analysis, it is possible to focus on possible functional differences. The regular and the irregular form of the verbs are not necessarily functionally equivalent. Quirk et al. (1985: 106), for instance, claim that the irregular forms of *burn* and *learn* are used more frequently as past participles than as preterite forms. The past participle, in turn, may function as both a verb and an adjective. Data obtained from a corpus of newspaper language indicate that the irregular participle is predominantly used with adjectival function in AmE but more frequently as a verb in BrE and NZE, as the following figures show (for raw frequencies, see Hundt 1998: 31):

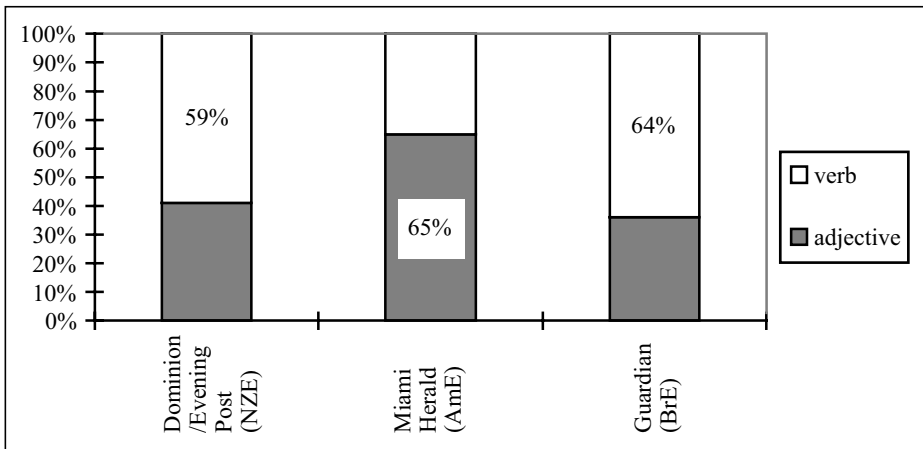


Figure 1. Functional analysis of *burnt*

Regional differences have also been observed regarding the use of *prove*. But in this case the irregular past participle *proven* is more typical of AmE. Corpus data (Figure 2) again suggest that NZE takes an intermediate position between BrE and AmE in the use of the past participles *proved* and *proven*.

A close look at the functions of *proven* shows that it is used significantly more frequently as a verb in the *Dominion/Evening Post* (66 occurrences/59%) than in the *Guardian* (38 occurrences/34%). A comparison of the WCNZE with FLOB confirms that *proven* is relatively more frequent in NZE than in BrE: the New Zealand corpus yields 15 occurrences of *proven* and 32 of the participle *proved*; FLOB contains only 8 instances of *proven* but 50 examples of the regular participle *proved*. Data from spoken New Zealand corpora show that *proven* is not used more frequently in spoken NZE. The WCSNZE contains approximately 1 million

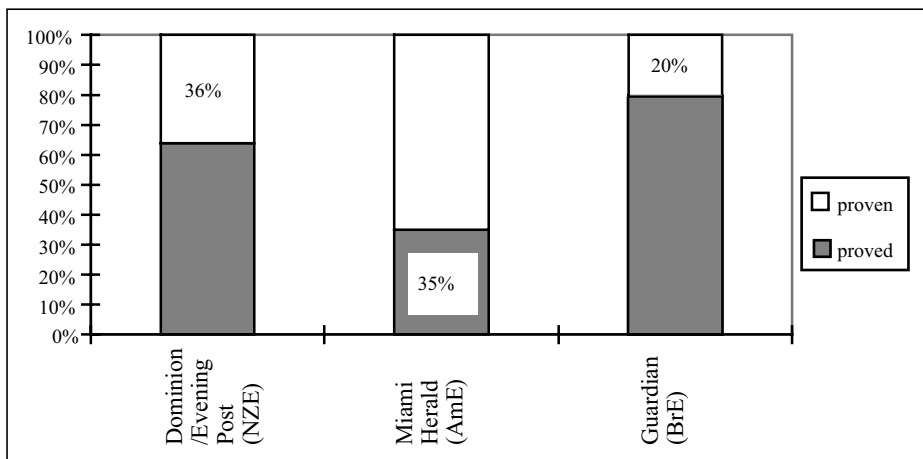


Figure 2 *Proved vs. proven*

words, too, but it yielded only 3 occurrences of *proven* and 11 occurrences of the regular participle. Similarly, the Canterbury Corpus contains approximately 900,000 words of spoken New Zealand English, with 3 examples of *proven*, and 12 examples of *proved*. The variable is thus relatively *infrequent* in spoken NZE. As far as functional differences are concerned, data from two elicitation experiments (Bauer 1987 and 1989c) indicate that there might be a cline of irregularity in NZE: active past participles are more often regular than passive participles, and that passive participles, in turn, are more often regular than participles in attributive position. In principle, this also holds for the material collected from the *Dominion and Evening Post*. Of the 111 instances of *proven*, 45 were examples of the attributive use, 35 were active participles and 31 passive participles. But taken together, active and passive participles outnumbered the cases in which *proven* was used attributively.

The use of *gotten* as the past participle of *get* seems to be a relatively recent innovation in spoken NZE. There is no example of *gotten* in LOB and only one each in the FLOB corpus, ACE and the WCNZE. Bauer (1987: 46), on the basis of the evidence from an elicitation test, claims that the use of *gotten* appears to be a recent innovation in NZE. He considers it a likely example of AmE influence (Bauer 1994: 418). Corpus evidence does not support the view that the irregular form is part of the (written) standard language use in New Zealand. The only example from the WCNZE is from a very colloquial dialogue passage of a novel. Of the 8 examples from the *Dominion and Evening Post*, 5 are quotations of the direct speech of Americans. The remaining 3 uses of *gotten* also support the view that it is not yet part of the core grammar of NZE: one (in a letter to the editor) was used by a Maori writer, the second occurred in a quotation of direct speech from an

Irish speaker, and the third was used by a New Zealander – the topic was Reggae music – who had “[...] just returned from two years in London [...]” (*Dominion*, 26/1/1995: 20). Preliminary evidence that *gotten* might be more frequent in Maori than in Pakeha speech comes from the spontaneous conversations in the spoken New Zealand corpus (a Pakeha is a New Zealander of European decent): of the 8 occurrences, 7 were uttered by Maori speakers, most of them in the age-group 20–25 years. The data from this corpus also suggest that the irregular variant is not used more frequently in spoken than in written NZE. The acceptability ratings Bauer (1987a) obtained in his pilot test may have been caused by two factors: first, informants were asked to rate sentences that had allegedly been produced by non-native speakers of English, a task in which obvious Americanisms are more likely to be left uncorrected even if the respondents would not use them themselves; second, the subjects were undergraduate students at Victoria University, Wellington, and Bauer (1987: 49) himself allows for possible influence of the age factor on the results for *gotten*. Quinn (1995: 152–154) also obtained high acceptability ratings in a survey among high school students in the South Island. These high acceptability ratings may coincide with an increase in frequency of the verb form. The Canterbury Corpus, recorded more recently than the spoken New Zealand Corpus, contains 14 instances of *gotten*, none of which appear particularly marked. Examples are given below.

- (1) *and then I caught two sharks and no one else had **gotten** anything but then the big red cod was pulled in by Alan* (1994JP)
- (2) *you know we got our friendship's **gotten** stronger and stronger and stronger* (1999IK)
- (3) *one straight to Univer- ah straight to Polytech out of school and done a journalism course which had **gotten** me a job straight in the industry* (1998HC)

## 2.2. Noun morphology

An interesting feature of variation between national varieties of English in the noun phrase is that between the *s*- and the *of*-genitive. Prototypical nouns, i.e. conscious, volitionally acting, animate creatures like *John* or *the dog*, are more likely to occur with the *s*-genitive than things or more abstract entities. The semantic restrictions on the use of the *s*-genitive developed only after the *of*-phrase construction started to be used as an alternative pattern. An interesting, more recent development is the weakening of the semantic restrictions, a trend in which AmE is apparently more advanced than BrE. Corpus evidence from the press sections of the corpora (Table 2) shows that the overall frequency of *s*-genitives in both the WCNZE and the ACE is considerably lower than in FLOB and Frown. This suggests that the two

Southern Hemisphere varieties may be lagging behind in the development towards a greater use of the inflected genitive.

*Table 2.* The *s*-genitive in four varieties of English – absolute (#) and relative (%) frequency

	<b>WCNZE</b>		<b>LOB</b>		<b>FLOB</b>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
personal names	364	27	443	38	692	40
personal nouns	259	19	259	22	245	14
collective nouns	289	21	175	15	311	18
(higher) animals	12	1	5	0.4	9	0.5
geograph. nouns	238	18	159	14	286	16
temporal nouns	110	8	80	7	120	7
other nouns	76	6	38	3	79	4.5
Total	1348	100	1159	99.4	1742	100
	<b>ACE</b>		<b>Brown</b>		<b>Frown</b>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
personal names	433	31	466	37	687	38
personal nouns	257	18	238	19	281	16
collective nouns	233	17	191	15	280	16
(higher) animals	6	0.4	6	0.5	1	0
geograph. nouns	295	21	207	16	313	17
temporal nouns	87	6	83	6.5	85	5
other nouns	78	6	74	6	145	8
Total	1389	99.4	1265	100	1792	100

That diachronic change, on the whole, is likely to be more important than regional differences in the use of inflected genitives can be shown in a comparison of the press sections of LOB and Brown with their 1990s counterparts: more significant differences can be found between LOB and FLOB or Brown and Frown than between LOB and Brown or FLOB and Frown. The most striking regional difference concerns the category ‘other nouns’. The press section of Brown contains significantly more *s*-genitives with nouns from this category than the press section of LOB. This difference also exists between Frown and FLOB. Furthermore, a comparison of WCNZE and ACE with Frown also demonstrates that the American corpus contains significantly more inflected genitives with ‘other nouns’ than the corpora of the two Southern Hemisphere varieties. The obvious conclusion is that AmE is leading the change towards a greater use of inflected genitives with



non-prototypical nouns. The younger colonial varieties are closer to BrE in this respect than to AmE. Future studies will probably confirm that journalistic texts take the lead in the increasing use of the *s*-genitive. Preliminary evidence for this hypothesis comes from a comparison of the press sections with subcorpora of nonfictional writing tailored to match the press sections in size (Hundt 1997: 139). A growing use of *s*-genitives was also observed in the nonfictional sections, both in BrE and AmE, but the overall frequency of *s*-genitives in the 1990s nonfictional sub-corpora had not quite reached the level observed for the 1960s press sections in both BrE and AmE.

### 3. Syntax

Syntactic variation in national varieties of English spans a fairly wide field, covering aspectual differences, mood, the use of auxiliaries, *do*-support in negation, relativization patterns, agreement with collective nouns, noun-phrase structure and voice. We will look at these in turn.

#### 3.1. Aspect

Historically, the systematic distinction between past and perfect is a fairly recent development in English. It had not been grammaticalised in BrE when the first settlers arrived in America. Its scarcity in AmE has therefore been interpreted as an aspect of colonial lag. As New Zealand was settled after the grammaticalisation of the present perfect we would expect usage to resemble BrE rather than AmE. A detailed analysis of all occurrences of *have* in the corpora would be necessary to verify hypotheses on differences between national varieties. Instead, a microscopic approach was chosen: three temporal adverbials were chosen for a closer analysis (*yet*, *since* and *just*) which are said to vary as to their co-occurrence with either the simple past or the present perfect. AmE is said to favour the simple past with these adverbials. Corpus data, however, reveal that the perfective aspect is still preferred with *yet* and *since* in all national varieties of English. The use of nonperfective forms can mostly be ascribed to one of the exceptions attested in Quirk et al. (1985: 1016–1017), such as the use of *it + be + a time expression* or references to situations distanced in past time. Aspectual variation with *yet* and *since* therefore seems to be a case of stable (non-regional) variation rather than ongoing syntactic change. Corpus data on *just* are not conclusive as there are only between 10 and 18 instances in each corpus with possible variation of preterite or perfective verb forms. The only cases where *just* collocates with the simple past are from Frown. The New Zealand material does not provide evidence of this type of variation. The perfective appears to be the preferred aspect in formal (written) standard varieties of English with the temporal adverbials *yet*,

*since* and *just*. However, *just* seems to be on the verge of becoming acceptable with the simple past or ‘colloquial preterite’ in the reporting style of American newspapers. AmE probably has preserved a certain amount of variation in the spoken language (colonial lag) from where it is now reintroduced into the written medium (colonial innovation). BrE, NZE and AusE can be described as being more advanced in the grammaticalization of the opposition between the simple past and the present perfect.

Bauer (1987, 1989a) claims that in NZE a reverse development can be observed, i.e. the generalisation of the present perfect to simple-past-contexts as in *I haven't talked to him last week*. There is some evidence that this change is not only happening in NZE. Trudgill (1984: 42) claims that there is an increase in the usage of such sentences as *I've seen him last year* or *He's done it two days ago* in Southern BrE. Interestingly, Bauer's examples are all from the news programme of the prestigious news station *Radio New Zealand*. Even though they were collected from spoken texts, they do not appear to be the result of spoken replannings, e.g. afterthoughts of the type *I have seen him yesterday, in fact*, as the following example illustrates (quoted from Bauer 1989a: 71):

- (4) *Sanctions have been imposed by the UN thirteen years ago.* (Radio New Zealand news, 12/79)

This innovation does not seem to have made it into written usage: the New Zealand corpus does not give evidence of *yesterday* being used with the present perfect. Even in the spoken New Zealand corpus, *yesterday* and the present perfect co-occur only once (in a judge's summation). But the example does not illustrate a generalisation of the present perfect to past contexts:

- (5) *now the second point is that you must come please er to your er verdict solely on the evidence which you have heard yesterday and today* (MUJ009)

Bauer (1994: 401) thus rightly includes the generalisation of the present perfect to simple-past contexts among the non-standard features of NZE grammar.

Mair and Hundt (1995: 114, 121–122) have shown that in a comparison of progressive forms in LOB, FLOB, Brown and Frown, the diachronic factor is more important than the synchronic one: significant differences in the overall frequency of progressive forms were found between LOB and FLOB and Brown and Frown but not between LOB and Brown or FLOB and Frown. It is therefore not surprising that the differences between the WCNZE, LOB and Brown and between ACE, LOB and Brown also proved significant, while there were no significant differences between the number of progressives in the WCNZE and ACE. What is surprising, though, is that the differences between the WCNZE and ACE on the one hand and Frown on the other did prove significant. (The figures are based on the analysis of the press sections, only.)

Table 3. Progressive forms – Overall frequencies

WCNZE 802	LOB 606	Brown 593
ACE 789	FLOB 716	Frown 663

The two Southern Hemisphere varieties thus appear to be more advanced in the change towards a more frequent use of progressives than AmE. BrE takes an intermediate position between the younger colonial varieties (NZE and AusE) and AmE. It is important to bear in mind that this interpretation is based on the assumption that the analysis of other relevant parameters (e.g. the finite-verb/non-finite verb ratio) would produce comparable results for all corpora. This assumption has recently been proved to hold true (Mair et al. forthcoming).

Both the WCNZE and ACE contain examples of stative verbs like *think*, *hear*, *feel* in the progressive, but these uses are neither new nor frequent enough to explain the difference between the Southern Hemisphere varieties and AmE. The same applies to other uses discussed in Mair and Hundt (1995). The ACE, for instance, contains a nice example of *always* followed by a progressive without a negative emotional undertone, a use which is likely to have contributed to the weakening of the restrictions on the use of progressives (see Mair and Hundt 1995: 119):

- (6) *I think that being a mother is also very sensuous. You're always being touched and cuddled. You enjoy that intimacy.* (ACE, A14 107–108)

Further studies will therefore have to show whether the difference between NZE and AusE on the one hand and AmE on the other is accidental or not.

Kuiper (1990: 31) claims that in NZE, the progressive aspect often combines with future time. Corpus data on the use of *will + be \*ing* and *will + verb* (see Hundt 1998: 77) seem to confirm Kuiper's hypothesis as the press section of the WCNZE contains significantly more future progressives than Brown, Frown and ACE. But this is a trait which NZE appears to share with BrE. Furthermore, the more frequent use of the future progressive does not go hand in hand with a less frequent use of the 'unmarked' future. Additional evidence is needed to verify that both NZE and BrE differ from other varieties of English in their use of the future progressive.

### 3.2. Mood

In subordinate clauses after expressions of demand, recommendation, intention etc., AmE is generally said to prefer the mandative subjunctive, e.g. *I propose that*

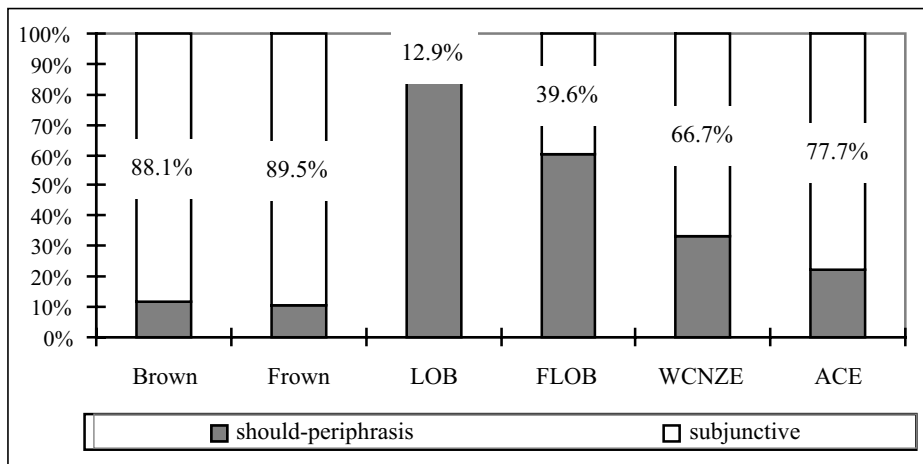


Figure 3. Mandative subjunctive vs. *should*-periphrasis in four varieties of English

*he talk*. This usage is considered formal in BrE, where a periphrastic construction with the modal auxiliary *should* followed by an infinitive is more common. Corpus evidence shows that AmE is leading world English in a revival of the mandative subjunctive. NZE and AusE are more advanced in their use of the subjunctive form than BrE, as the following figure shows:

With all this evidence of AmE providing the model for other varieties of World English, we should not forget that there is also a certain amount of overlap in features not found in AmE. The indicative in subordinate clauses after suasive verbs, nouns and adjectives is a case in point. This is a feature that NZE shares with BrE, as the following examples from FLOB and the WCNZE show:

- (7) *Holmfirth Police Community Forum is now writing to the Tory MP to complain at his lack of support and request he attends the next meeting of the forum [...].* (FLOB, A30 231)
- (8) *I recommend that this meeting passes a motion tonight commissioning me to travel to Wellington [...].* (WCNZE, K59 161)

### 3.3. Auxiliaries

The avoidance of *shall* is a feature which is said to distinguish NZE, AusE and AmE from BrE. But NZE allegedly resembles Scottish English (ScE) in taking the avoidance one step further: *will* is apparently used instead of *shall* with first-person pronouns in questions to express offers or suggestions as in *Will I close the window?* Table 4 summarizes the corpus data on the use of *shall* and *will* (the negated forms *shan't* and *won't* are included in the figures):

Table 4. *Shall* and *will* (press sections only)

	WCNZE	ACE	LOB	FLOB	Brown	Frown
<i>shall</i>	2	5	27	20	26	8
<i>will</i>	680	656	625	668	681	596

Corpus data confirm the view that NZE is even more advanced in avoiding *shall* than AmE and AusE. The comparison of the press section of the WCNZE with those of LOB, FLOB and Brown produced significant results; the differences between the WCNZE, Frown and ACE, on the other hand, are not significant. That *shall* is used rather sparingly not only in NZE but also in AmE and AusE is confirmed in a comparison of the whole WCNZE with the other corpora: the New Zealand corpus contains only 143 instances of *shall*. Even though *shall* has decreased significantly from 348 in LOB to only 200 in FLOB, the difference between the WCNZE and the more recent British corpus is still significant. In the 1960s, *shall* was still fairly frequent in AmE, as the 267 instances in Brown indicate, but in the Frown corpus this figure has decreased to 150. In AusE, it is used even more sparingly (the ACE corpus yields a mere 85 instances of *shall*).

The use of *will* with first-person pronouns in questions expressing offers or suggestions is far from frequent in the WCNZE: there is only one example in an informal context (narrative dialogue): “*Babe, will I ring us a taxi and take you to the doctor?*” (K32 145). *Shall*, on the other hand, is used in 11 instances with the first person to express an offer or suggestion. The use of *will* in this context thus appears to be informal in NZE. Data from the spoken corpus of NZE, however, do not support the hypothesis that *will* is used more frequently with first-person pronouns to express offers or suggestions in informal spoken texts. The corpus does not contain a single example of this pattern. Despite this evidence, Trudgill and Hannah still list this pattern as one of the few grammatical New Zealandisms in the most recent edition of *International English* (2002: 25). Corpus data clearly show that the use of *will* with first-person subjects in questions expressing offers or suggestions is not part of standard NZE usage. It may be typical of Southland English, a regional variety strongly influenced by ScE (see section 5).

An aspect which is discussed both in the context of differences between national standards and ongoing syntactic change is the use of the modal semi-auxiliary *have to* and the modal idiom *have got to*. The data from the press sections for both modal expressions are summarized in Table 5. *Have got to* did not occur frequently enough to be treated separately. Table 5 also includes occurrences of the modal idiom where *have* is omitted.

Table 5. *Have (got) to*

	WCNZE	LOB	FLOB	Brown	Frown	ACE
Present	70	59	78	41	70	55
Past	44	29	38	25	22	38
pres.perf.	5	9	6	2	3	3
past perf.	1	–	1	–	–	–
Future	17	8	26	12	20	18
<i>Would</i>	10	19	12	12	15	13
Modal	3	6	8	3	7	5
inf.	2	–	3	2	–	–
Total	152	130	172	97	137	132

The increasing use of *have (got) to* is clearly an example of ongoing change in which BrE is most advanced, followed by NZE with both AmE and AusE lagging behind. That this is not a text-type specific development has been shown with additional data from nonfictional subcorpora (Hundt 1997: 144). The usage is extremely common in spontaneous speech, as evidenced by high frequency counts in the Canterbury Corpus (1310 examples of *have to*, 161 of *have got to*).

Table 5 includes instances where the auxiliary is omitted. This omission is said to be very informal or non-standard in written English. The few cases in which the auxiliary is deleted in the corpora seem to confirm this; it is only deleted in quotations of direct speech, in titles or clearly informal contexts. See also section 4.1. for discussion of *have-drop* patterns in informal speech.

The marginal modal auxiliaries *dare* and *need* have attracted comments from linguists both in terms of regional variation and diachronic change. Comments on regional differences between BrE and AmE suggest that the development from a modal auxiliary towards a full lexical verb is more advanced in transatlantic English: *dare* and *need* as auxiliaries are rarer in AmE than in BrE (cf. Trudgill and Hannah 2002: 60). Bauer (1989b: 8) observed that New Zealand informants also showed a preference for mixed constructions with *dare*. He also found that NZE resembled AmE in the preference for *do*-support (1989b: 14). The auxiliary pattern, however, did not prove to be “recessive”, which in Bauer’s opinion suggests that in the use of these auxiliaries NZE is closer to BrE than to AmE. Corpus data, while confirming the trend towards a greater use of the full-verb pattern, surprisingly do not reveal regional differences in the use of this variable. Table 6 is based on the analysis of all occurrences of *need* followed by an infinitive in the complete Brown, LOB, FLOB and Frown corpora and the WCNZE. Occurrences with emphatic *do* in affirmative contexts are not included. Blends of the auxiliary and full verb construction were also not included in Table 6.

Table 6. *Need*

	full-verb construction			auxiliary construction		
	affirmative	negative	question	affirmative	negative	question
Brown	53	12	1	4	27	1
Frown	135	18	-	7	31	-
LOB	45	8	-	12	61	-
FLOB	163	16	1	7	28	5
WCNZE	171	13	-	6	24	1

The trend towards the full-verb pattern is even more pronounced in spoken data. A search for *need* in non-assertive contexts in the WCSNZE yielded 38 occurrences of the full-verb pattern (33 negative declarative sentences and five questions) but only one auxiliary pattern.

Surprisingly, the corpus data provide evidence that the auxiliary pattern is not restricted to non-assertive contexts, as Quirk et al. (1985: 138) claim. The following examples show that the modal use of *need* also occurs in genuinely affirmative contexts:

- (9) *The louder the noise, the shorter daily exposure need be before this occurs.* (WCNZE, F31 42)

The material studied also yielded a few examples of blends between the auxiliary and the full-verb construction of *need*. An example from the New Zealand newspaper *Evening Post* illustrates this pattern:

- (10) *Computer security problems can cost small businesses more proportionally than big businesses, because a small business security breach needs only be a small problem while a big business breach has to be a whopper to have the same impact.* (*Evening Post* 3/12/1994: 28)

The data on *dare* from the one-million-word corpora are too meagre to verify any hypotheses on diachronic change or regional variation, as Table 7 shows:

Table 7. *Dare*

	auxiliary	blend	main verb	Total
Brown	4	9	14	27
Frown	8	8	13	29
LOB	9	14	9	32
FLOB	8	11	8	27
WCNZE	4	7	8	19

A possible conclusion based on this table would be that the auxiliary pattern is less frequent in NZE than in BrE, but this may well have to be attributed to the slightly lower overall frequency of *dare* + infinitive in the WCNZE. The data on *dare* from these corpora are therefore far from conclusive. Further evidence from larger newspaper corpora was collected for *dare*. The *Dominion* and *Evening Post* yielded only 51 occurrences of the verb *dare*. Of these, 18 were examples of the main-verb construction, 23 were pure auxiliary constructions and 10 were blends. For the comparison with BrE and AmE, samples of the same size were selected from the *Guardian* (1991) and *Miami Herald* (1992). On the basis of this evidence, NZE appears to be closer to BrE than to AmE: the sample from the *Guardian* yielded 20 occurrences of the main-verb construction, 19 auxiliary patterns and 12 blends. The *Miami Herald* sample, on the other hand, confirmed that in AmE the auxiliary pattern is used far less frequently (6 occurrences) while blends are almost as frequent as main-verb constructions (22 and 23 instances, respectively). Blends in the New Zealand sample were significantly less frequent than in the American sample. No significant differences were found in a comparison of the New Zealand with the British newspaper material. This suggests that usage patterns of *dare* in NZE are more or less the same as in BrE. AmE is the variety which is most advanced in the change towards the lexical verb pattern.

For the marginal modal *ought* (*to*), corpus data confirm that there is no regional difference at all (see Hundt 1998: 66). *To*-deletion is rare but attested in affirmative contexts for both NZE and AmE, despite the fact that it is described as “unacceptable” in Quirk et al. (1985: 140). Even though examples of *to*-less constructions with affirmative *ought* are still rare, they provide some evidence of a development towards the central modal auxiliary pattern:

- (11) *And as such he ought be carrying out our will.* (*Evening Post*, 22/11/1994: 4)
- (12) *A house with a formal living room, formal dining room, casual family room and breakfast nook and small, paneled library with a fireplace and shutters ought do the trick.* (*Miami Herald*, 18/12/1992)

As with *ought* (*to*), corpus evidence on *used to* in non-affirmative contexts is extremely scarce. In the WCNZE, the marginal modal occurs 129 times. The only relevant instance of negation comes from the fiction section and illustrates the main verb pattern:

- (13) *Tennis isn't all that strong on the Shore – or it didn't used to be.* (K81 174)

Data from the spoken New Zealand corpus also provide some evidence of the main verb pattern rather than the auxiliary pattern with *used to*: *do*-support is used in all four examples of non-affirmative *used to* (all examples are from the spontaneous conversations-section of the corpus). NZE does not show a preference for



contracted negations of *used to*. The absence of regional variation thus probably holds even more strongly for *used to*.

### 3.4. Negation

Negation patterns are not only of interest with respect to auxiliary usage but also in the context of full verb *have* and the mandative subjunctive. We look at these in turn.

The stative use of *have* meaning ‘possess’ varies in negations and interrogatives both diachronically and regionally. Simple *have* is the formal construction in BrE with the more common alternative *have got*. AmE is said to prefer *do*-support. In the dynamic senses of the full verb (i.e. ‘receive’, ‘take’, ‘experience’) both BrE and AmE normally have *do*-support. Bauer’s (1989a: 80) results on the stative use of *have* suggest that in NZE, both *have got* and *do*-periphrasis are common variants of simple *have* with a slight preference for *do*-support. Corpus evidence on the stative and dynamic uses of *have* in negations and interrogatives are summarized in the following table (from Hundt 1998: 56):

Table 8. Full verb *have* in negations and interrogatives (press sections only)

	WCNZE	ACE	LOB	FLOB	Brown	Frown
simple <i>have</i>	6	1	9	2	1	1
<i>do</i> -support	24	22	5	14	7	25
<i>have got</i>	2	1	6	4	–	2
Total	32	24	20	20	8	28

Even though the difference in the total number of lexical *have* in negations and interrogatives makes a comparison difficult, a few interesting trends can be gleaned from the corpus data. *Do*-support has become the dominant pattern in BrE. *Have got* does not appear to be a real alternative in any of the recently compiled press sections.

The relatively high frequency of simple *have* in the WCNZE can easily be explained. Two instances are quotations from the Bible, which contains formal and archaic language. Of the remaining four examples, two are contracted negations. The informal character of contractions thus seems to counteract the formal stylistic connotations associated with simple *have*:

- (14) *Those of us who haven't much faith in public education [...].* (WCNZE, A42 82)

Furthermore, corpus data from the whole WCNZE confirm that *do*-support is clearly the favoured construction in negatives and interrogatives of the full verb *have* in NZE:

Table 9. Full verb *have* in interrogatives and negations in the WCNZE

	press	non-fiction	fiction	Total
simple <i>have</i>	6	5	8	19 (12.2%)
<i>do</i> -support	24	39	43	106 (67.9%)
<i>have got</i>	2	4	25	31 (19.9%)
Total	32	48	76	156 (100%)

The relatively high frequency of *have got* in fictional texts suggests that *have got* is felt to be very informal. It is not surprising, therefore, that 14 instances of *have got* co-occur with contractions (either of the negation particle or *have*), and five with non-standard features such as *have*-deletion (four occurrences) and *ain't* (one example); all 25 instances of *have got* are used in fictional dialogue or interior monologue, not in descriptive passages. *Have got* thus seems to be unusual in formal written NZE. Additional evidence that it is not preferred to *do*-support in informal contexts, either, comes from the spoken New Zealand corpus. A search for negated forms of the full verb *have* in the spontaneous dialogue section of the corpus (approximately half a million words) yielded 162 occurrences with *do*-support but only 105 with *got*. The search was limited to *not*-negation and those cases where no more than two other elements intervened between the forms of *have* and *do/got*. A more refined search may produce slightly different results but is likely to confirm the general outcome, i.e. that negation of full verb *have* with *got* is not preferred to *do*-support in informal NZE.

Above, we saw that AmE provides the model for World English in the revival of the mandative subjunctive. Interestingly, other varieties of English also seem to be following AmE in terms of negation patterns in mandative sentences. AmE has preserved an old negation pattern in which the negative particle *not* simply precedes the subjunctive, as in *I suggest that he not be suspended*. This option is also available in NZE, as the following example from *The Dominion* shows:

- (15) *It is important that the college not be seen to be a party to a cover-up.*  
(*The Dominion*, 29/12/1994: 9)

This feature is one that NZE shares with BrE and with its Australian cousin. Peters (personal communication) found two cases of negated subjunctives in the ACE. Both were examples of negated passive subjunctives.

### 3.5. Relativization

In a systematic comparison of the New Zealand corpora with LOB, Brown and Flob, Sigley (1997: 477) found that NZE patterned almost identically with BrE in relativizer strategies; AmE turned out to be the divergent variety in favouring relative *that* in impersonal subject relative clauses.

## 3.6. Agreement

In English, collective nouns like *team* or *government* can, in principle, be used with both singular and plural concord marking on verbs or pronouns. What makes this dual concord interesting for a description of NZE syntax is the regional variation in the preference for concord types: BrE speakers are said to have a choice between singular and plural concord whereas speakers of AmE are generally believed to treat collective nouns as singular. Singular concord, overall, is more likely to occur with verbs than with pronouns. This is probably linked to the usual proximity of verbal concord and the possibility of pronominal concord to extend over sentence boundaries. The greater probability of plural pronouns with (singular) collective nouns, even in AmE, often results in mixed concord if both verb and pronoun occur: *The committee has not yet decided how they should react to the Governor's letter*. Ongoing linguistic change in BrE towards a greater use of singular concord makes the matter even more complex.

The evidence for this variable is based on sets of 100 occurrences of both verbal and pronominal concord with five nouns sampled from *The Dominion* and *Evening Post*, the *Guardian* and the *Miami Herald*. Evidence for AusE (from the 1995 *Sydney Morning Herald*, *SMH*) comes from a study by Levin (2001: 167). The nouns were chosen to represent three groups with different concord patterns: (a) a tendency towards singular or grammatical concord (*government* and *committee*), (b) variation between singular and plural concord in BrE (*team* and *family*) and (c) preference for plural or notional concord in BrE (*police*).

Table 10. Verbal and pronominal concord (singular : plural)

VERBAL	DOM/EVP	SMH	Guardian	Miami Herald
<i>government</i>	100 : 0	100 : 0	100 : 0	100 : 0
<i>committee</i>	99 : 1	95 : 5	97 : 3	100 : 0
<i>team</i>	93 : 7	93 : 7	62 : 38	98 : 2
<i>family</i>	59 : 41	84 : 16	72 : 28	97 : 3
<i>police</i>	1 : 99	–	1 : 99	0 : 100
PRONOMINAL	DOM/EVP	SMH	Guardian	Miami Herald
<i>government</i>	97 : 3	93 : 7	96 : 4	95 : 5
<i>committee</i>	94 : 6	85 : 15	92 : 8	91 : 9
<i>team</i>	64 : 36	60 : 40	23 : 77	65 : 35
<i>family</i>	29 : 71	29 : 61	26 : 74	18 : 82
<i>police</i>	0 : 100	–	3 : 97	1 : 99

With the exception of *police*, the figures for verbal concord confirm the view that AmE nearly always has the singular, even with nouns like *team* and *family*. In BrE, these nouns still pattern quite frequently with the plural. NZE is very similar to AmE in the use of singular verbal concord with *team*. With the noun *family*, however, speakers of NZE still use plural verbal concord frequently, a preference also found in BrE. AusE patterns closely to both NZE and BrE but has a higher proportion of singular verbal concord with *family*. When it comes to pronominal concord, however, all varieties prefer plural pronouns over singular concord with *family*.

If the general development is one from notional towards grammatical verbal concord (see Levin: 2001: 36–39 and 86–87), NZE could be seen as more advanced in this development than BrE but not quite as advanced as AmE. AusE is close to AmE in that it prefers singular verbal concord with *family*. The concord patterns for the other nouns are closer to the distribution found in BrE. A more comprehensive study based on a larger number of nouns will have to verify whether this is actually the case. Levin (2001: 159), on the basis of a larger set of nouns, found that AusE was more innovative than BrE but lagging behind AmE in the general shift towards more singular concord. The collective noun *police* shows that grammatical concord may also be of the plural-type.

The only statistically significant regional difference in pronominal concord patterns is that for *team*: this collective noun shows a clear preference for plural pronominal concord in BrE, but not in NZE or AmE. The most interesting result emerging from a comparison of verbal and pronominal concord is that AmE, while generally showing a clear tendency towards singular concord with verbs, has (with the exception of *team*) the highest figures for plural pronominal concord. It therefore does not come as a surprise that American data show the highest incidence of mixed concord (28), followed by the British (18) and New Zealand samples (7). This is especially surprising because the NZE sample, on the whole, shows a greater tendency towards singular verbal concord than BrE. The reason why mixed concord occurred less frequently in the NZE sample may be that we are dealing with edited material. It would be interesting to see whether on the basis of comparable spoken corpora New Zealanders would be found to use less or as much mixed concord as American speakers.

In sum, variable verbal concord does not seem to be deeply rooted in the grammatical system. Pronominal concord, on the other hand, is still much more variable. This is especially the case with nouns like *family* and *team*, for which singular grammatical concord has not become an almost absolute rule yet. But the fact that even singular collective nouns like *government* and *committee* occasionally occur with plural pronouns shows that pronominal concord may turn out to be a stronghold for notional concord in the long run. Future studies will have to show whether this holds even more for unedited spoken language.

## 3.7. Complementation

As pointed out in the introduction, differences among national varieties of English often occur at the interface of grammar and the lexicon. Bauer (1989c: 15–16), for instance, found that his New Zealand informants preferred *in the weekend* over *at* or *on the weekend*.

National varieties of English differ in their choice of preposition following *different*. Historically, *to* is the oldest one, followed by *from* and *than*. Nevertheless, *from* is the variant recommended in most usage guides; *different to* has a long tradition of being attacked by purists as ‘illogical’ (on the grounds that *to* is not used after the verb *to differ*). *Different than* is said to be more acceptable in AmE, where it can even be used to introduce a noun phrase rather than a clause (e.g. *My parents are very different than yours*). In BrE, it is recommended as a stylistically preferable choice to *different from that which*.

Table 11. Prepositions used after *different*

	WCNZE	ACE	LOB	Brown	FLOB	Frown	ACE
<i>from</i>	47	32	34	39	52	42	32
<i>to</i>	8	10	7	0	9	0	10
<i>than</i>	2	0	1	6	0	5	0

The figures confirm intuitions about regional differences in the use of prepositions after *different*. Further evidence from larger newspaper corpora (Hundt 1998: 107–108) supports the trend indicated in Table 11: *different from* is the preferred variant in all three varieties, *different than* is avoided in both BrE and NZE. Interestingly, the American variant with *than* is also avoided in spoken NZE and BrE. In terms of language history we may therefore be witnessing a genuinely divergent development: the (almost) complete avoidance of *different than* in BrE and NZE which appears to be firmly rooted in AmE. NZE and AusE both share the variant *different to* with BrE, an option that seems to be avoided in AmE. Interestingly, the Canterbury Corpus of spoken English has slightly more tokens of *different to* (23) than *different from* (17). Some individual speakers contribute tokens to both counts, as illustrated by the following two examples, both produced by the same speaker.

- (16) *oh so man yes it's very **different to** what it is today with all the computers and a very different . style of . work* (1994JT)
- (17) *I was speaking just the other day to a man who came from . North of Auckland and he had a very marked accent and yet he's a born and bred New Zealander . and was very **different from** the way that we speak in the South Island* (1994JT)

The avoidance of *different than* is also evident in the Canterbury Corpus – with just 4 examples.

In BrE, the verbs *protest* and *appeal* both typically take prepositional objects as their complements. In AmE, both verbs can be used without the preposition. They are mentioned in the context of possible American influence on NZE grammar (cf. Gordon and Deverson 1985). Bauer (1994: 418) is careful about claims that there is direct influence from AmE; he says the innovative form in NZE often coincides with the AmE form. Evidence from standard one-million-word corpora suggests that *protest* without a preposition might be more frequent in NZE than in BrE (Hundt 1998: 110). But the figures from these corpora are too small to draw any definite conclusions. Additional data from newspapers indicate that NZE uses the variant without the preposition more often than BrE but not quite as frequently as AmE. Interestingly, most of the occurrences of *protest* without a preposition are from the *Evening Post* and only few from the *Dominion*. Together with information from the style-sheets of the two newspapers, this distribution indicates that the variable might be socially stratified in NZE: the style sheet of the *Dominion* proscribes the use of *protest* and *appeal* without a preposition, while that of the *Evening Post* does not comment on the usage of these verbs.

Corpus data for the verb *appeal* with or without *against* were even more extreme than those for the complementation patterns of *protest*. There was not a single instance of *appeal against* in the whole year of the *Miami Herald* investigated. Out of the 100 instances of *appeal* from the *Guardian*, on the other hand, only one was without *against*. Again, the data from the *Dominion* and *Evening Post* at first sight seem to suggest that NZE takes an intermediate position between BrE and AmE: of the 169 instances of the verb *appeal* followed by a noun phrase, 89 occurred with the preposition. Closer inspection revealed that the variant with *against* is preferred in the *Dominion*, whereas *appeal* without a preposition is the dominant pattern in the *Evening Post*.

If we bear in mind not only the general attitude towards American influences on NZE but also that language prescription and actual usage often diverge, the evidence from the New Zealand newspapers could be interpreted slightly differently: complementation patterns of *protest* and *appeal* in NZE, on the whole, might be closer to those in AmE than to BrE preferences. In this case, only a minority of conservative speakers would be trying to keep up the linguistic link with Britain. Future studies, based on less heavily edited material, will have to verify this hypothesis. Preliminary evidence from spoken New Zealand corpora suggests that *appeal* without a preposition is probably by now a well-established variant in NZE: in the three examples from the WCSNZE where variation is possible, and the two examples from the Canterbury Corpus, *appeal* is used consistently without a preposition.

Among lexico-grammatical features worth investigating in NZE, we find a usage which is likely to be typical of NZE but not of BrE or AmE: the use of *farewell* as a

transitive verb (e.g. *They farewelled retiring members of staff*). Evidence from the WCNZE and the other one-million-word corpora suggests that this verb is indeed a Southern Hemisphere idiosyncrasy: there were 4 instances of transitive *farewell* in the WCNZE and one in the ACE, but none in any of the other corpora.

### 3.8. Noun-phrase structure

Bell (1982: 251, 255) claims that determiner deletion (e.g. *Prime Minister David Lange* instead of *the Prime Minister, David Lange*) in NZE is an example of the influence of AmE. Jucker (1992), on the other hand, is able to show the social stratification of this variable in BrE. The growing acceptability of determiner deletion in noun phrase name appositions that Bell discovered for NZE is probably not due to regional variation but could be triggered by social/stylistic factors instead.

### 3.9. The *get*-passive

Sussex (1982: 90) claims that *get*-passives are most frequently used in AmE, with AusE taking an intermediate position between BrE and AmE. He further states that “[...] they are more common now in Australian English than they were a decade ago.” He attributes this change within AusE to the influence of AmE (see Collins and Peters, this volume). The comment on the internal change within AusE again suggests that this variable of possible regional variation is not a diachronically stable one. The question is whether AmE is really more advanced in this ongoing change than BrE, AusE and NZE. The question is also whether AmE is having an influence on other national varieties or whether we are dealing with a case of parallel but independent development.

Possible candidates for *get*-passives are all instances of *get* (i.e. *get*, *gets*, *got*, *gotten*, *getting*) followed by a past participle. In a qualitative analysis, the passive uses of *get* + past participle have to be distinguished from those where the participle functions as an adjective (as in *he got drunk*); some instances are ambiguous between a passive and an adjectival reading (e.g. *he got dressed*).

Table 12. *Get* + participle – passives and related constructions in four varieties of English

	passive		adjectival	ambiguous	Total
Brown	31	42.5 %	30	12	73
Frown	64	45.7 %	57	19	140
LOB	35	38.5 %	29	27	91
FLOB	51	44.3 %	42	22	115
ACE	43	51.2 %	25	16	84
WCNZE	63	55.3 %	30	21	114

The data in Table 12 do not corroborate Sussex's hypothesis that AmE is the most advanced national variety in the spread of the *get*-passive. The results obtained from stylistically balanced one-million-word corpora do not provide evidence of significant regional differences in the use of *get*-passives. A look at the figures from Frown and FLOB suggests that the very slight gap in relative frequencies of the passive construction between Brown and LOB has almost levelled out over the last thirty years. Surprisingly, though, the New Zealand and Australian corpora yield higher relative frequencies of *get*-passive constructions than any of the other corpora if we calculate the relative frequency of *get*-passives against the overall number of constructions where a form of *get* is followed by a past participle. Alternatively, the relative frequency of *get*-passives could be obtained by using the overall number of *get*-construction as a basis. In this case, the relative frequencies in the four national varieties are all close to the 4 per cent mark:

Table 13. *Get*-passives – relative frequency in relation to overall number of *get*-constructions

	<i>get</i> -constructions	<i>get</i> -passives	
Brown	1340	31	2.3 %
Frown	1646	64	3.9 %
LOB	1380	35	2.5 %
FLOB	1346	51	3.8 %
ACE	1058	43	4.0 %
WCNZE	1669	63	3.8 %

On the whole, then, the difference in the use of the *get*-passive is probably not so much regional as stylistic: most usage guides comment on the stylistic markedness of the *get*-passive, which is described as being informal or even colloquial. For a description of syntactic variation in national varieties of English it is important to distinguish genuine regional divergence from parallel diachronic developments.

#### 4. Non-standard patterns

In this section we will consider the use of some mainstream non-standard forms. This description is selective rather than exhaustive. Where possible, examples of forms discussed are given from the Canterbury Corpus of speakers born 1930–1980, collected by students at the University of Canterbury. All of the non-standard variants discussed are also attested in other varieties of English. Very little work has been conducted on non-standard patterns of syntax in New Zealand English, and so this section is relatively brief. This is not because there is a lack of morphosyntactic variation in NZE, but rather because there has been a lack of



scholarly attention to such variation. The study of non-standard patterns presents special challenges, as speakers are prone to switch to more standard variants when being tape-recorded.

Early educationalists complained about the use of non-standard forms by school pupils. In 1882, for example, the Wellington school inspector Robert Lee complained about pronunciation and syntax: “Another boy said, ‘Don’t never go no further ner (sic) the top of the ’ill.’ The language of the playground teams with such expressions. If all teachers were to join in the games with the express purpose of trying to make reformation in this matter, something might be done.” (from the *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives 1880–1930*, short *AJHR*). The school inspectors’ complaints were almost all about expressions such as *I seen it* and *He done it* and the use of *like* as a conjunction. Below is an example of a Wellington school inspector of 1915 complaining about ‘get’ and ‘got’:

the misuse of the unfortunate words *get* and *got*. The examples of this failing: ‘After dinner I got cleaned.’ ‘Charles 1 got executed.’ ‘I’ve got a shilling in my pocket.’ ‘I got to school late.’ ‘I’ve got to milk ten cows.’ ‘The children got tired of playing.’ ‘When we got to Auckland we got our luggage together and got off the train.’ (*AJHR* E2ApCxii)

Brosnahan (1971: 24) also points to non-standard grammatical forms in New Zealand English: “Sequences such as *I seen it*, *youse kids*, *he would of gone*, are all forms which can be heard in what I may here term a sub-ENZE (educated NZE) dialect. Let me stress that these are usual and even appropriate forms in that dialect.”

However, while it is clear that there are a range of non-standard forms in NZE, these have not been systematically studied. For most variants we are therefore able to state that they exist, but have much less evidence regarding the exact social conditioning involved.

#### 4.1. Deletion of auxiliary *have*

Jacob (1990) and Holmes, Bell and Boyce (1991) investigate the omission of the auxiliary *have* in a range of syntactic environments. Both find that Maori speakers omit the auxiliary at greater rates than Pakeha speakers. Holmes’, Bell’s and Boyce’s (1991) interview data show that working class speakers show more omission than middle class, and males more than females. Quinn’s (1995) survey results also show an effect of socio-economic class. She finds large variation in acceptance of *have-drop* according to linguistic environment, with a high rate of acceptance for *you gotta*, and a relatively low rate of acceptance for *we got*, and *I been*.

Since *have-drop* is clearly marked (as evidenced by its lack of appearance in written language) and the contracted form *gotta* seems equally marked, it is not particularly surprising that Quinn (1995: 125) observes a clear preference for *have-*

dropping with the marked form *gotta* and much lower acceptability rates for auxiliary omission with *got* and *been* in her study of grammatical variation among New Zealand teenagers. Several examples of *have*-drop from the Canterbury Corpus are given below.

- (18) *And so there's lots of potential for it to go wrong – yum – but **we gotta** make sure it goes right.* (2000WR)
- (19) ***We better** get some veges.* (1994DA)

The variation in preterite and past participle form of irregular verbs was regularly commented on by school inspectors. In Durkin's (1972) study of 75 West Coast school children aged 10–12 the children were asked to fill in the gap in the following sentences:

- (20) a. *Today I see the girl. Yesterday I \_\_\_\_ the girl.*  
 b. *Today I do my work. Yesterday I \_\_\_\_ my work.*

Her results show a high degree of lexical variation. For the first sentence, only 7% of the sample used *seen*, but 32% used *done* in the second sentence (1972: 112). Some twenty years later, Quinn also tested the acceptability of preterite *seen* and *come* in the sentences:

- (21) a. *I'm sure I **seen** her put her car in the garage.*  
 b. *He **come** all the way up from London, just to see the soccer match.*

Of the 176 14–15-year-old students who responded, 52 fully accepted *seen* and 70 fully accepted *come* (Quinn 1995: 40). The Canterbury corpus includes examples with a relatively wide variety of verbs, including *done*, *seen*, *brung*, *run*, *come*, *drunk*, *rung*.

- (22) *I basically **come** home from pony trek and I just had to take over. I **seen** what sort of state mum was in and I took over* (1995HB)
- (23) *I lived in Aussie for – what was it – two months til I **run** out a money and **come** home and got a job back at North's again.* (1994DA)

A speaker from an earlier corpus held at the University of Canterbury, born 1930, comments on this usage explicitly:

- (24) *we used to talk a little bit like the Maoris and we used to say "what do you think of that, eh" . um . I never . I never did say . "I seen this" I used to say "I saw this" e- and yet a lot of kids in in Rotorua did say "I seen this" and "I done that" um . and those were very common in Rotorua.*

4.2. *Yous*

Durkin (1972) reported that the plural form of *you* among West Coast school children was often *yous*. While it was corrected in school, it was regularly used outside school and by those who had left school. Bauer's (1987) questionnaire from 44 university linguistics students included the following sentence:

(25) *I asked the children, are **yous** ready yet.*

Only six students did not change the *yous* to *you*, but given the make up of the subject group, such a result is not unexpected. Examples from the Canterbury Corpus are given below.

(26) *um that team that beat **yous** by what was it five nil (1999AR)*

(27) *so **yous** had to rent or something? (2001GJ)*

There is a possibility that this is an age-graded feature. Despite the fact that the feature has been attested at least since the early seventies (Durkin 1972), it is only amongst the younger speakers in the Canterbury Corpus (recorded some 20 years after Durkin's study) that *yous* is attested.

In a survey of high school students conducted by Quinn (1995), more than half of the 179 respondents accepted *yous*, and many of those who did not accept it offered an alternative such as *you guys*. *You guys* is more frequent than *yous* in the Canterbury Corpus. Examples are given below.

(28) *so **you guys** gonna get another cat? (2002SB)*

(29) *I mean how much do they pay **you guys**? (2001MA)*

## 4.3. Negation

*Ain't* can be used by speakers of non-standard NZE, as illustrated by the examples below.

(30) *They were like skinny little runts . they ordered one each and you're just like it was like you took it out and it was like ha ha have fun boys you **ain't** gonna be able to finish it. (2002MJ)*

(31) *Which is what I suspect keeps a lot of people in Wellington cause it sure **ain't** the weather. (1998HC)*

Negative concord, also known as multiple negation, is not particularly common overall, although Jacob (1991) reports a fairly high rate of negative concord among Maori speakers, whereas there were none in her corpus of Pakeha speakers. Below we give one of the very few examples of negative concord in the Canterbury Corpus (which contains predominantly Pakeha speakers):

- (32) *it was good too . cos when you're everyone's off their faces in the cell and you're passing the joint along . an you just have a sing along and someone's singing the blues – got your tape deck blasting – choice . the screws come in and smell it . but most of the times **they don't do nothing** (1994BS)*

#### 4.4. *Would/could/should of*

Quinn's (1995) survey results show a high level of acceptance of *of* instead of *have* following modal verbs. Relevant examples from the Canterbury Corpus are given below.

- (33) *but I **would of** had I waited another six months I **would of** been just over the correct age but. because I was so sweet they wanted me there. (1999SM)*
- (34) *oh yeah that **would of** been fun (1994DB)*
- (35) *I couldn't go back to school . and . well I **could of** there's no there's no excuse not to (2000BK)*

#### 4.5. Co-ordinated pronouns

There is a considerable amount of variation with pronoun case, particularly with co-ordinated pairs including first person pronouns (Quinn 1995, 2002), such as those illustrated below. See Quinn (2002) for extended discussion.

- (36) *that was a hard case eh cos **me and my mate** were at the hospital (1994BS)*
- (37) *no wonder **her and I** look blurry eyed at school (1994HH)*
- (38) *we were playing drinking games one night and **me and her** were the only ones left . so instantly clicked from there. (1994DA)*

#### 4.6. Adjectives

Hundt (1998) reports that monosyllable adjectives do not occur with *more* in standard NZE, nor is there evidence for double comparatives. However, Quinn (1995) found that acceptance of double comparatives among high school students ranges from about 24%–40% (depending on the adjective). There is certainly no shortage of examples of double comparatives in the Canterbury Corpus, as shown below:

- (39) *I prefer the A.O.G. because it's **more ragier** (1994BS)*
- (40) *because . they ended up one class being **more brighter** than the other (1997DBR)*

(41) *well we were the **most luckiest** out of the lot* (1996MK)

There are also examples of adjectives which would be formed with *-er* in the standard being modified by *more*:

(42) *but your your work's **more close** than our work eh cos our work's bigger* (1994DA)

(43) *what are we. Like **more naughty*** (1998OM)

#### 4.7. Singular BE with plural subjects

Hay and Schreier (no date) examine the historical evolution of subject-verb-concord in NZE. They investigate the usage of singular agreement with plural NP subjects (existentials and non-existentials) over the last 150 years. The results demonstrate that the NZE subject verb concord system has undergone considerable reorganization during this time. In the dialect contact phase of the creation of NZE, there was a consistent force towards standardization, with singular concord in both existential (e.g. *there's dogs*) and non-existential environments (e.g. *we was happy*) showing a steady decrease. This decrease continued until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when singular concord in non-existentials bottomed out – the feature is close to non-existent in 20<sup>th</sup>-century NZE. At this time, existentials apparently became dissociated from the non-existentials, and, liberated from the standardizing force, the use of singular concord in existentials began to increase. In modern spoken NZE, we find high rates of singular concord in existentials (highest among non-professional speakers, and men). Male non-professionals use more than 80% singular concord, and all groups use more than 50%. Results reported by Bell (2000) also demonstrate that singular concord in existentials tends to be more frequent among Maori speakers than Pakeha speakers.

## 5. Regional variation

There is almost no work documenting regional variation in morphosyntax in New Zealand. However, Bartlett (1992) suggests some features which may be potentially unique to Southland, a part of New Zealand which was subject to more Scottish influence than elsewhere. These include:

- The use of the past participle following *needs* and *wants*, as in *the baby needs fed*.
- The use of *will* with first-person subjects in questions (*will I close the door*).
- Lack of contraction of not (e.g. *did you not?*).
- The deletion of prepositions in certain contexts (e.g. *he came out hospital*).

## 6. Conclusion

The distinction of regional variation from language change is an important requirement for the description of an emerging NZE standard. As it turns out, however, this distinction is a very difficult, if not an impossible one to make. Two examples illustrating this problem are the use of *proven* and the mandative subjunctive, which have commonly been described as conservatism typical of AmE. (Note how even these almost standard examples of synchronic regional differences in World English are closely related to diachronic aspects of language use.) Both ‘Americanisms’ have been gaining ground in other national varieties of English. Ongoing language change may thus lead to a dilution of previous regional differences. The difficulty in distinguishing between regional and diachronic variation is partly due to a general development within World English pointed out by Gordon and Deverson (1985: 53): the last fifty years have seen a convergence of regional varieties with the predominance of AmE variants leading to a levelling of differences. “We can refer to this trend as the *internationalisation* of English, as opposed to its (previous) *regionalisation*.” (This applies mainly to the internationalisation of standard grammar. Different accents and lexical regionalisms are likely to remain obvious markers of national varieties of English.) Often, AmE is leading World English in a number of converging trends (see Figure 5). Ultimately, however, it will remain difficult to prove whether changes in one national variety are actually due to influence from another variety or whether the development simply coincides with the variants preferred in another national standard.

The other reason why it is ultimately impossible to make a clear distinction between regional variation and language change is the underlying Saussurean dichotomy of the synchronic vs. the diachronic approach to the study of language. The distinction is too strict: synchronic regional variation is just as much part of ongoing linguistic change as social or stylistic variation. In this light, synchronic ‘snapshots’ focusing on regional differences can be interpreted as stages in the (regional) diffusion of a change. Figure 4 illustrates some possible synchronic rankings of national varieties with respect to ongoing language change.

As research on morphosyntactic variation in NZE advances, we will also need to pay careful attention to the nature of the data we have available. For example, a questionnaire administered by students enrolled in a sociolinguistics course at the University of Canterbury in 2002 highlights the need to distinguish between self-report data and corpus data. Despite the fact that singular concord with existentials is the norm in the Canterbury Corpus, written sentences containing singular concord rated as low as an average of 1.35 on a small scale of 1 to 3 (where 1 = “I would never use this”, and 3 = “I would use a sentence like this in both formal and informal contexts”). Despite the extremely frequent use of singular concord with *there* in spoken English, self-report data suggests that there is a certain level of

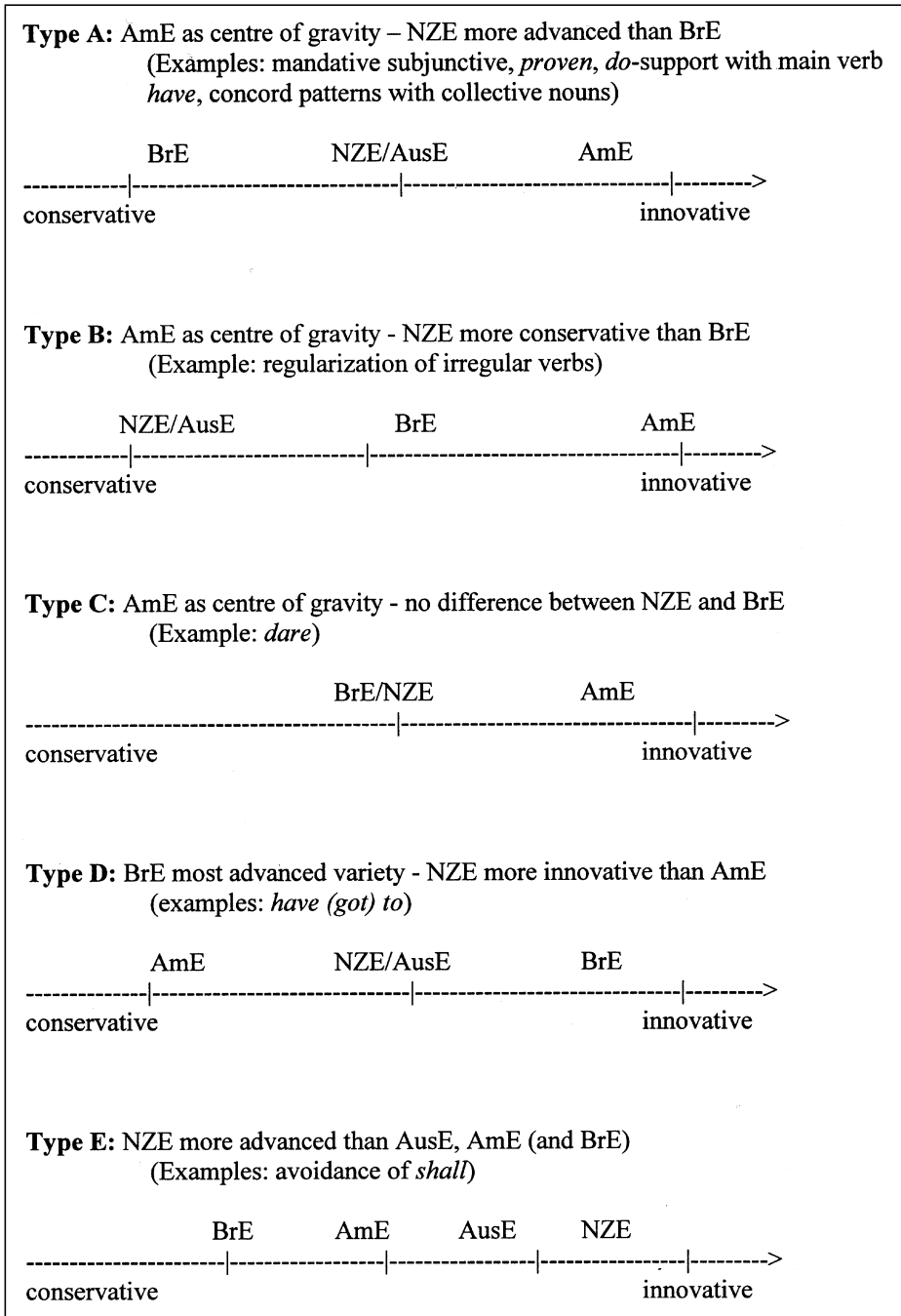


Figure 4. Locating NZE in relation to other varieties with respect to ongoing change

stigma associated with the construction. This indicates that, for some of the other constructions discussed above, the questionnaire data reported may systematically under-estimate the actual degree of use.

Elicitation tests may provide useful supplementary data to the analysis of corpora, not least because of the possibility of targeting phenomena. A good example would be question tags after *used to*, which are extremely infrequent in natural (written) language. But natural language use may be quite different from the results obtained in a relatively artificial test situation. It is therefore not surprising that we find some inconsistencies in the comparison of elicitation and corpus data. Some examples of contradictory evidence were discussed in section 2.1. Sometimes, corpus data may also confirm elicitation task findings. The high acceptability rates of *proven* observed by Bauer (1987), for example, do not seem to have been caused by the fact that his subjects were undergraduate students and thus relatively young. Corpus evidence shows that *proven* is definitely gaining ground in standard NZE. An important point on which corpus data have confirmed Bauer's elicitation task results is that NZE, while sharing some features with both BrE and AmE, is not identical with either of them.

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# Australian English: morphology and syntax

Peter Collins and Pam Peters

## 1. Introduction

Australian English (AusE) must be counted among the “settler” varieties of the English-speaking world, transported by convicts and immigrants, and quickly established as the official language of the under-inhabited “Great South Land”. It is one of the “major” varieties, in Svartvik’s (1997) overview, and may or may not be in some sense a regional standard. Görlach (1990) projected it within an Antipodean standard in his model of the world’s Englishes, but AusE has continued to evolve since then, and research on various fronts (lexical, morphological and syntactic) has documented many more distinctive features than had previously been recognized. The first question is whether such features make Australian English endonormative – consolidating its own norms as an independent national standard – and then whether it constitutes some kind of regional standard in the antipodes, with or without New Zealand English (NZE).

The endonormativity of Australian English is readily argued in terms of its lexicon, now documented in indigenous dictionaries (*Macquarie Dictionary* 1981; *Australian Concise Oxford* 1991) and several usage guides (*Penguin Working Words* 1993; *Modern Australian Usage* 1993; *Cambridge Australian English Style Guide* 1995). Distinctive aspects of its lexical morphology have also been documented (Dabke 1976; Simpson, this volume). But the case has still to be argued in relation to its inflectional morphology and syntax. Much of the research conducted to date has focused on elements of the verb phrase in AusE (aspect, voice, mood, modality), but it has also extended to the interface between grammar and lexis in different ways of expressing comparison and alternative case selections. The following discussion will review the findings on these and other research frontiers, in order to examine the case for the endonormativity of AusE grammar. The focus will be on whether its morphosyntactic norms are markedly different from those of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE). Our assumption will be that there is only a weak case, if it turns out that the Australian norms are simply positioned somewhere between the British and American on the same scale. Wherever possible, comparisons will also be made between Australian and New Zealand morphosyntactic norms, in order to see whether there is any support for the notion of an antipodean standard.

## 2. Sources

The research carried out on Australian and New Zealand English has been based primarily on two kinds of source material: written texts included in computer corpora and elicitation tests from smaller and larger groups of subjects.

The computer corpus most often referred to in what follows is the Australian Corpus of English (ACE) held at Macquarie University, consisting of 1 million words of published material from 1986. In structure, ACE matches the Brown (University) corpus of American English from 1961, and the LOB (Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen) corpus of British English material, also from 1961. Matching updates of these, the so-called Frown and FLOB corpora, were compiled with 1991 texts at the University of Freiburg. The Wellington corpus of New Zealand English (WC) consisting of texts from 1986, and the Indian Kohlhapur corpus, with texts from 1976, also referred to below, are structured in the same way. All these parallel corpora are heterogeneous in content, thus representing a variety of users and uses. Other corpora referred to in what follows are relatively homogeneous, e.g. archival material from a single newspaper, as indicated.

Data taken from published source material (as in corpora such as ACE) provides us with what might be called “standard” Australian usage – that which has been vetted by professional editors, and typically written by people in their middle or older years. It is thus somewhat limited in terms of the sociolinguistic spectrum, and not geared to provide evidence on usage which is primarily spoken, or more current among younger users of the language. It is nevertheless useful for the commoner morphosyntactic variables.

Other evidence to be discussed comes via elicitation, from population surveys undertaken in particular locations and settings, e.g. among tertiary students, or Australia-wide, through the magazine *Australian Style*. Data derived from these surveys help to widen the sociolinguistic base of information, and provide broader insights into usage at large (i.e. not just written). Elicited data thus complement data derived from text corpora, and helps to provide triangulation. It is also invaluable for the less frequent linguistic variants, which could only occur in sufficient numbers in a very large corpus.

Apart from these two kinds of primary source material, the research studies reviewed below make some use of secondary references such as dictionaries, usage guides and descriptive grammars, whose synthesis of particular variables adds further dimensions to the discussion.

### 3. The variables

#### 3.1. Irregular verb morphology: past tense and past participle

Past tense:

The conjugational patterns of English strong verbs have been breaking up since the Norman Conquest, with continuous reductions in every paradigm. In late 20<sup>th</sup> century English, none of the original strong verbs had more than three parts (*give/gave/given*), and the tendency to reduce to two parts (*bring/brought*), or just one (*hit*), shows the direction of the tide. The reduction to two (irregular) parts consolidates among the strong verbs what has long been the pattern of weak verbs (*talk/talked*). Other once strong verbs such as *mow, sow, stride, strive*, and *thrive* are moving towards complete regularity in AmE, though the trend is slower in BrE. The extent to which AusE matches the British or American variety may therefore be an index of its relative independence as a regional norm.

In AmE, the reduction of the third part in verbs such as *shrink, sing, sink, spring, stink* is well advanced, in terms of what up-to-date reference dictionaries such as Merriam-Webster (2000) present as standard forms. They include *shrunk* for the past tense of *shrink*, *sunk* for *sink*, none of which is indicated as acceptable in current British English, according to the *New Oxford Dictionary of English* (1998). The *Macquarie Dictionary* (1997) admits some, suggesting that Australian usage on this set of verbs is intermediate between the American and the British.

A large survey of verb morphology involving over 1100 respondents throughout Australia was conducted in 2002 through *Australian Style*. The survey presented a series of sentences in which the past tense had to be supplied, and the results show that Australians too are engaged in reducing these verb paradigms from three to two parts, especially younger members of the population. For more than two thirds of the under 25s, *shrunk, sunk, sprung* were the normal form for the past tense, and for about half of those under 45, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of *Australian Style* (2002) survey of irregular past tense forms

Age	10–24	25–44	45–64	65+
n =	347	149	336	256
<i>shrank</i>	31%	45%	69%	79%
<i>shrunk</i>	69%	55%	31%	21%
(in: <i>My old woolly jumper..... in the wash.</i> )				
<i>sank</i>	34%	53%	78%	87%
<i>sunk</i>	66%	47%	22%	13%
(in: <i>Their dog .....his teeth into the visitor's leg.</i> )				

Table 1. (continued) Results of *Australian Style* (2002) survey of irregular past tense forms

Age	10–24	25–44	45–64	65+
<i>sprang</i>	24%	48%	65%	76%
<i>sprung</i>	76%	52%	35%	24%
(in: <i>In heavy seas the ship ..... a leak.</i> )				

The table shows well-entrenched use of the *u*-forms as common Australian usage, and a trend like that of AmE on these verbs.

#### Past participle:

The *Australian Style* survey also returned results on the use of some irregular past participles, including *beaten*, *gotten*, *proven*, *sawn*, *shorn*, *sown*, *stridden*, *striven*, and *woven*. Most of these were supported by the majority (though not *stridden*), but the support from the under 45s was usually less than that of those 45 and over, in some cases very much less, as for *shorn* as past participle of *shear*, and *striven* for *strive*, both of them down 27% on the average for the population overall. The most remarkable exceptions to this pattern were the cases of *proven* and *gotten* (used intransitively), shown in the Table 2.

Table 2. Results of *Australian Style* survey of irregular past participles

Age		10–24	25–44	45–64	65+
	n =	347	149	336	256
<i>proved</i>		26%	27%	46%	68%
<i>proven</i>		74%	73%	54%	32%
(in: <i>The inquiry has not ..... that they were negligent.</i> )					
<i>got</i>	(intr.)	31%	42%	65%	83%
<i>gotten</i>	(intr.)	69%	58%	35%	17%
(in: <i>She had never ..... so angry before.</i> )					
<i>got</i>	(tr.)	87%	93%	97%	98%
<i>gotten</i>	(tr.)	13%	7%	3%	2%
(in: <i>I haven't ..... a hotel booking yet.</i> )					

The results for *proved/proven* and intransitive *got/gotten* show remarkable age stratification, with a majority of younger respondents (under 45 for *gotten*, under 65 for *proven*) favoring the *-en* form. These results tally interestingly with those extracted by Peters (1993: 156–157) from corpus data (ACE, LOB, Brown), where the Australian results for *beaten*, *drunken*, *proven* stand strong beside those from the British and American data. And though *gotten* did not emerge from the

corpus data as a feature of written AusE, it is certainly heard in everyday speech, and the data elicited in the *Australian Style* survey confirm this. Those antipathetic to AmE would deny its presence, but it is evidently there in the usage of younger and middle-aged persons.

The data elicited for *got/gotten* also point to the fact that AusE usage diverges from that associated with AmE, because the *Australian Style* data show that *gotten* is preferred for intransitive constructions. The overall results (all ages) for the two test sentences were quite divergent:

- (1) *She had never got (54%)/gotten (46%) so angry before.*
- (2) *I haven't got (93%)/gotten (7%) a hotel booking yet.*

The markedly different results for the transitive and intransitive constructions are quite unlike the older American pattern, in which *gotten* is used for something acquired, and *got* for something possessed; or indeed the newer pattern, in which *gotten* can be used for the acquisitive, causative and intransitive uses, but *got* is still reserved for having something in hand (Trudgill and Hannah 2002). The Australian transitive/intransitive dichotomy reconfigures the roles of *gotten/got* quite independently of AmE. The use of *gotten* may owe something to colonial lag (being also used by Scottish immigrants), as well as to more recent influence from the US. But it does suggest a difference in kind rather than degree, and therefore supports the strong case for endonormativity on this point of verb morphology. Data from spoken corpora would be needed to confirm it, but the evidence so far is drawn from a very large popular survey.

### 3.2. Aspect: progressive and perfect

The progressive aspect has undergone substantial growth in Late Modern English. Hundt (1998; Hundt, Hay and Gordon, this volume) provides further evidence of its expanding use in her four-way comparisons of AusE, BrE, AmE and NZE, using standard corpora from the 1960s (Brown, LOB), 1980s (ACE, WC) and 1990s (Frown, FLOB). Her findings show that the two southern hemisphere varieties make more frequent use of the progressive than the northern hemisphere varieties. AmE turns out to be the least advanced of the set. In this respect, AusE and NZE seem to be leading the fray, and clearly not reflecting a trend already established in AmE. There were no significant differences between AusE and NZE in Hundt's data, suggesting that this development may qualify as an element of an emerging antipodean standard, and broader endonormativity within the South Pacific.

Present perfect aspect:

The generalization of the present perfect to simple past contexts as in *Then he's hit her on the head* is a relatively new development which was being reported in

colloquial BrE as early as the 1970s (see for example Trudgill 1978: 13). The usage has been attested in various world Englishes, with Trudgill and Hannah (2002: 134) singling out Indian English (IndE) for special mention.

A recent study by Engel and Ritz (2000) suggests that this use of the present perfect is more advanced in AusE than in the other varieties. Its distribution, according to Engel and Ritz, is as follows: “(1) in combination with past temporal adverbials; (2) in sequences indicating narrative progression; (3) in alternation with the simple past and the present tense to express stylistic contrast” (2000: 119). Engel and Ritz found it used extensively in narratives on Australian radio chat shows, with tokens often alternating with both the simple past tense and the “historic present”:

- (3) a. *In the morning he's **stuck** an 'I love Redman' sticker on her back ...*  
 b. *Everyone's **looking** at her and she's really sort of paranoid.*  
 c. *She finally **got** home to her husband and kids and they've just **pissed** themselves laughing.* (Engel and Ritz 2000)

The material published so far by Engel and Ritz is symptomatic rather than quantitative, but a comprehensive comparative study is in preparation. Their survey of recent sociolinguistic literature on the use of the present perfect, and their finding of great flexibility of this usage in AusE suggests that the present perfect is “more widespread” in AusE than it is in BrE or AmE. If they are right, this development supports the strong claim for endonormativity in AusE.

### 3.3. Voice: the *get*-passive

The increasing popularity of the *get*-passive in all world Englishes is noted by Mair and Hundt (1997), among others, and attributed to the greater colloquialization of the written norm. An earlier paper by Sussex (1982: 90) suggested that the preference for *get*-passives over *be*-passives was stronger in AmE than in AusE and stronger in AusE than in BrE, and that any Australian increase in the use of *get*-passives could be seen as evidence of American influence. The likelihood of this has been called in question by Collins's (1996) research, based on more than five million words of written and spoken data from four standard corpora, and two of the ICE (International Corpus of English) corpora. His findings (1996: 53–54) showed the frequency of *get*-passives to be comparable in AmE and BrE, higher in AusE than in either of those, and higher still in IndE than in AusE. Its use in IndE is a remarkable development away from the “Babu English” (“flower English”) of the past, and seems to reflect increasing Indian exposure to more conversational forms of English.

Australian levels of use of the *get*-passive, in writing as well as speech, puts it at the extreme end of the scale of L1 varieties. But the use of *get*-passives in a (relatively) nearby L2 variety reduces the strength of the claim for its endonormativity in AusE.



### 3.4. Mood: the mandative subjunctive

Divergent regional trends in the use of the subjunctive have been noted by a number of modern English grammarians. Use of the mandative subjunctive, i.e. after expressions of demand, recommendation, intention, etc., seems to have varied considerably. AmE is strongly inclined to use the mandative subjunctive, as in *I recommend that he talk to a specialist*, while BrE prefers the periphrastic construction with the modal auxiliary *should*, as in *I recommend that he should talk to a specialist*.

Australian use of the mandative subjunctive presently lies somewhere between that of AmE and BrE, in comparative corpus data used by Peters (1998a). Elicitation data derived from an *Australian Style* survey (1993) on the use of the subjunctive also confirmed its currency for the mandative, in counterpoint to its decline in expressing hypothetical conditions and other traditional uses. NZE occupies a similar intermediate position between AmE and BrE in the use of the mandative, according to Hundt (1998). Her comparison of data from the Wellington Corpus and ACE led her to conclude that “while there is no statistically significant difference between the two Southern Hemisphere varieties in the use of the subjunctives, the two differ in their relation to the center of gravity for this change: AusE has come closer to the pattern observed in AmE of the 1960s than NZE” (1998: 97).

Both AusE and NZE are inside the scale that stretches towards American usage, and not at the extreme end for L1 varieties. Whether this is a matter of “colonial lag” (from 19<sup>th</sup> century British influence), or 20<sup>th</sup> century American influence across the Pacific, is debatable. It may be a combination of both. Either way the mandative subjunctive provides only weak support for any claim by Australia, or the antipodes, to endonormativity.

### 3.5. Modality 1: *shall/will, may/might*

*shall/will:*

The distinction between *shall* and *will* has been much discussed in usage handbooks and prescriptive grammars. Australian teachers from several different types of high school questioned by Watson (1978) gave *will* in *I will be twenty-one tomorrow* an acceptability rating of 94%, suggesting that Australians have little time for (or perhaps awareness of) the “rules” for *will* and *shall*.

Comparative data from a variety of Australian, British and American corpora, written and spoken (totalling 225,000 words) show that *shall* is more frequent in BrE than in AmE or AusE, and more frequent in AmE than in AusE (Collins 1991b). This suggests that “*shall* is obsolescent in Australian English and lingers on only in root meanings in formal genres” (1991b: 190). The figures in Table 3 below (based on Collins’s written data, representing tokens per 10,000 words), suggest that *shall* is in fact obsolescent in all three varieties, but most notably in AusE.

Table 3. The relative frequencies of *will* and *shall* in Australian, British and American data

	AusE	BrE	AmE
<i>will</i>	34.2	28.0	27.0
<i>shall</i>	1.2	3.5	2.7

The figures show that *shall* is more frequent in BrE than AmE, and more frequent in AmE than in AusE. By contrast the AusE figure for *will* is higher than in the other varieties, suggesting its compensatory role as the uses of *shall* decline. The conclusion has been underscored by Hundt (1998: 59), in a four-way comparison of AusE with AmE, NZE and BrE, based on newspaper reportage. Hundt noted Australian avoidance of *shall* in massive frequency differences for *shall* and *will* (6 : 656). Her figures show BrE standing apart in its tolerance of *shall*, and its decreasing popularity in AmE in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, visible in diachronic comparisons between Brown and Frown, but less marked in FLOB/LOB. The Australian disinclination to use *shall* is thus part of a larger world-wide trend. The claim for endonormativity here must be in terms of a difference in degree rather than in kind, though the fact that the Australian norms are set at one end of the scale makes them stronger rather than weaker.

*May/might:*

The use of *may/might* in Australia shows two unusual applications that seem to be on the margins of standard English grammar. These are the use of *may* to express past possibility and hypothetical possibility, as a viable alternative to *might* and *could*. The earliest Australian evidence for this comes from an elicitation test (Collins 1988) in which informants (186 undergraduates) were presented with a questionnaire involving stimulus sentences containing periphrastic modal expressions such as “be possible that”, “be obliged to” and “give X permission to”, and instructed to “Fill the slot with a word or words you think expresses the same meaning”. Two key items, and the proportional responses, were:

- (4) *He suggested that it was possible that the driver fell asleep at the controls*  
*He suggested that the driver \_\_\_\_\_ have fallen asleep*  
*might* 40%      *may* 31%      *could* 28%      other 1%
- (5) *It is possible that criminals would be advantaged by such a law.*  
*Criminals \_\_\_\_\_ be advantaged by such a law*  
*could* 43%      *may* 32%      *might* 18%      other 7%

The selection of *may* by almost one third of informants in both sentences may reflect a general disinclination among Australian speakers – more pronounced among some than others – to backshift in reported speech. An example discussed by Newbrook (2001: 121) is *Kim said she has a bad cold* (= Newbrook’s [24]), as opposed to *Kim said she had a bad cold* (= Newbrook’s [25]). He comments that:

In the native-English-speaking world generally, (25) is preferred wherever possible; it is always used unless ‘Kim’ still has her cold at the time of utterance, when (24) might – but still need not – be selected instead. In contrast, Australian students often report that they prefer (24) over (25) wherever the sense permits.

Newbrook also notes the Australian use of present tense *may* in the apodoses of remote conditional constructions (as in [5]) above, with its implicit protasis), with an example from ACE:

(6) *If we found out why these things happen, prevention **may** be possible.*

For many Australians, it would seem, *might* is not the past tense of *may* (as least as used epistemically), a tendency found in many varieties of English.

3.6. Modality 2: non-assertive forms of *must*, *ought (to)*, *have (to)*, *need (to)* and *dare (to)*

*must*:

Epistemic *must* has been claimed to lack (or “normally” lack) a negative form (Coates 1983: 46). In Australian research based on a corpus of four kinds of written/spoken material comprising 225,000 words, Collins (1991a) found epistemic *mustn’t* occurring – all tokens in conversation – with the same frequency as epistemic *can’t*, with which it is semantically parallel.

(7) *He **mustn’t** have wanted the coupons because he came up and give them to me.*

*ought (to)*:

A widespread tendency for *ought* to be avoided in questions and negatives has been noted (e.g. by Trudgill and Hannah 2002). Australian research, based on comparative corpus data as well as elicitation studies, suggests that this avoidance works strongly in favour of *should*. Table 4 below presents the data derived by Collins (1991a) from his 225,000-word written/spoken corpus. The figures for *ought* and *should* (normalized to tokens per 10,000 words) show that *ought* is not only considerably less popular than *should* in all three varieties, but also comparatively less popular in AusE than in AmE and BrE.

Table 4. Relative frequencies of *should* and *ought*

	AusE	BrE	AmE
<i>should</i>	7.5	12.9	9.2
<i>ought</i>	0.3	1.1	0.7

Evidence of the increasing unpopularity of *ought* in AusE comes, for example, from elicitation tests conducted by Collins in the 1970s. In Collins’s study (1979:

11), he noted the unpopularity of *ought* in non-assertive contexts. When asked to supply an interrogative tag for *He ought to see a psychiatrist*, 30% of his undergraduate informants supplied *shouldn't*; 35% did so for *They ought to visit us more often*; and 57% for *Mary ought to have warned us earlier*.

The decline of *ought* is also demonstrated by Hundt (1998: 66): her four-way comparison of *ought* in newspaper language reveals a dispreference that is marginally stronger in AusE than in BrE, AmE, or NZE. The case of non-assertive *ought* is thus negative evidence for endonormativity in AusE. The similar pattern in NZE would also make it an element of standard antipodean grammar.

*have (to)* and *need (to)*:

The use of *do*-periphrasis with *have (to)* and *need (to)* in negatives and interrogatives has variously been noted as a discriminator between American and British varieties of English. While AmE inclines strongly towards *do*-periphrasis, BrE maintains the auxiliary status of *have/need* by using them both as operators. Elicitation tests carried out by Collins (1989: 142–143) show that Australian usage leans heavily towards the American pattern for both items. When asked to supply an interrogative tag for *have to* in the sentence *They have to make a decision by Friday*, more than three quarters of Collins's undergraduate informants selected *don't they?* over *haven't they?*. Australian usage of *need* is likewise closer to the American than the British pattern. In Collins's "preference" test, 62% of informants opted for *They don't need to make an appointment* as against 38% for *They needn't make an appointment*. The behaviour of *have (to)* and *need (to)* in non-assertive contexts thus reveals a shift away from British norms; but to the extent that the patterns are as in AmE, they lend no support to the stronger case for endonormativity.

*dare (to)*:

The trend towards *do*-periphrasis with *dare*, as for *need*, is far more advanced in AmE than it is in BrE (Hundt 1998: 65). Not uncommon with *dare* are blends of the *do* and operator constructions (e.g. *They didn't dare complain*). Hundt's data, taken from CD-ROM archives of the *Guardian*, demonstrated British support for both *do*-periphrasis and the operator construction, with blends of the two being roughly half as popular as each of these options. By contrast, the American data from archives of the *Miami Herald*, showed that blends were as popular as *do*-periphrasis, with the operator construction receiving little support. Table 5 presents the figures:

Table 5. Non-assertive constructions with *dare* in AmE and BrE.

	<b>Do</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Blends (+do/-to)</b>
AmE	23	6	22
BrE	20	19	12

Collins's elicitation tests (1989: 143) based on undergraduate respondents suggest that the trends in AusE broadly reflect those of AmE. His informants were as disinclined to use the operator variant as the users of AmE, but favoured *do*-periphrasis with the bare infinitive far more strongly, as shown by the rankings of their responses on the selection test. Presented with the three sentences *We didn't dare tell jokes*, *We didn't dare to tell jokes*, and *We dared not tell jokes*, the first was given a positive rating by 73 informants, the second by 38 and the third by 32.

On this shifting feature of the English modal system, younger Australians are probably further ahead with the *do*-periphrasis than their counterparts elsewhere. If their usage is shared with the rest of the Australian community, it constitutes further evidence of endonormativity in the grammar of AusE.

### 3.6. Comparative structures: some lexicogrammatical patterns with *different from/to/ than*, *less/fewer* and *like/as*

The expression of comparison is subject to a good deal of lexicogrammatical variation across the national varieties. Each of the items below has been intensively discussed in the prescriptive handbooks, concerned as to the propriety or otherwise of the variants. The judgments of these handbooks vary considerably, those concerned with AmE presenting a broader spectrum of opinion than the BrE (Peters and Young 1996: 321–322). Some Australian preferences may be explained in terms of the influence of AmE, others by the less conservative nature of AusE (by comparison with, say, BrE).

#### *different from/to/than:*

Most usage guides recommend *from* as the “correct” preposition following *different*(ly). Even though historically *to* is older than *from* and *than*, purists object to its use on the grounds that it contradicts the sense of separation or dissociation conveyed by the (etymological) prefix constituting the first syllable of *different*.

Despite the preference for *different from* over *different to* expressed in some Australian usage books (e.g. *Modern Australian Usage* 1993), Australians seem to prefer *different to* – at least in informal registers. According to Walshe (1972: 259–260): “the most popular usage is *different to*, though *different from* is by no means uncommon, and *different than* is sometimes heard”. In Collins's (1979) elicitation test, the context of use emerged as a very important factor. When *different to* was the focus of attention in test sentences, undergraduate respondents viewed it with considerable distaste, but not in all contexts. The sentence *Is bicycle riding very different to motor bike riding?* was judged acceptable by the vast majority of informants in informal speech, but accepted by less than half of the informants for formal writing. Data from the ACE corpus suggests the relative unacceptability of *different to* in written texts. There *different from* outnumbers *different to* in the ratio of 6 : 1 (Peters 1995: 203–204), while the

representation of *than* is smaller still, suggesting that it has yet to make inroads into standard AusE. AusE, it can be said in conclusion, is nevertheless its own remarkable blend of BrE and AmE, in its use of all three variants, with some claim to endonormativity therein.

*Less/fewer:*

The use of *less* rather than *fewer* with the plurals of count nouns has been censured in many usage handbooks on both BrE and AmE (Peters and Young 1996: 328–330). Elicitation studies in the UK and Australia suggest that British speakers are more conservative on this than Australians. Consider especially the acceptability of *less* + plural noun at 47% for Australian teachers (Watson 1978), and at (72%) for Australian undergraduates (Collins 1979: 43). A nationwide survey through *Australian Style* reports an overall acceptance rate of 50%, and 58% for under 25s. Hudson (1993: 149–150) notes that the use of *less* may sometimes be semantically motivated: one might distinguish between *We want less taxes* (meaning ‘We want the total amount collected to be less’) and *We want fewer taxes* (meaning ‘There should be fewer channels of collection’). The growing acceptance of *less* with plural nouns (Peters 1995: 276) can be seen in the more informal prose in ACE, in narratives and dialogue. Though *less* in this role is less frequent than *fewer*, its very presence in edited material suggests the direction of AusE with this usage. The dearth of usage commentators in the US or the UK who accept it means that AusE is taking the lead in this regard.

*like/as:*

Despite the furore created in the United States in the 1960s by the advertising slogan “Winston tastes good, like a cigarette should”, conjunctive *like* is widely used in AmE. It appears with no restrictive label in the major contemporary American dictionaries, as noted by Peters (1995: 447). In BrE conjunctive *like* is still held at arm’s length by the warning “unacceptable in formal English” (*New Oxford English Dictionary* 1998). Current Australian practice is more like the American than British, where conjunctive *like* is rare outside colloquial contexts. Collins’s Australian informants (1979: 37) were tolerant of conjunctive *like*, giving it a rating of 65%, although it was judged a good deal more acceptable in informal than formal genres. Australian high school students and teachers are even more inclined to accept it. Comparative data on AusE, AmE and BrE from the parallel corpora (e.g. Peters and Delbridge 1997: 310) show that while British tolerance of conjunctive *like* extends only to fiction, in American and Australian sources it appears both in fiction and a variety of nonfictional writing – from newspapers and magazines to *belles lettres* – in all but the most formal categories such as academic and bureaucratic prose. The AusE position is thus much like AmE.

3.7. Case selection: after *than*; with gerunds; *who/whom**Than* + pronoun:

Enshrined in many usage manuals is a pedantic preference for nominative pronouns after *than*, designed to confirm the status of *than* as a conjunction introducing an elliptical clause, rather than operating as a preposition. Compare:

- (8) a. *He had drunk far more than I and he was at least forty years older*  
(ACE, G23)  
b. *The statue had become a boy some years older than me*  
(ACE, L13)

In Australian elicitation studies based on undergraduate subjects, the average figure for prepositional *than* is higher than in the UK. *Than me* etc. is strongly associated with informal spoken contexts, and *than I* with formal writing. This differentiation is confirmed by the dearth of prepositional *than* in nonfiction writing in ACE, and its presence in fictional and interpersonal writing.

The tendency to prefer the accusative personal pronoun over the nominative in speech is part of a more general trend towards a common case (Wales 1996: 107). She finds it in both L1 and L2 varieties of English, and so its endorsement among younger Australians is consistent with world-wide trends rather than a distinctive local feature.

## Pronoun + gerund-participle:

The choice of personal pronoun to precede *-ing* forms of the verb has challenged grammarians for centuries: whether to use the genitive forms *my, your, his* etc., to emphasize the nominal character of the gerund-participle, or to use the accusative forms *me, you, him* etc., which reflect its underlying verbal character. Compare:

- (9) a. *...mad as she was at his going away* (Brown, K25)  
b. *No one was allowed to climb it on account of it being rotten* (ACE, G12)

There seem to be some constraints on the second construction (the “fused participle”), most notably that the construction is largely avoided in subject position (Peters 1995: 309). Data on post-verbal use of the construction show that while AmE and BrE prefer the genitive form over the accusative, AusE goes the other way: The differences emerge in data from the parallel corpora, including all combinations of personal pronouns with the gerund-participle except those where there was no possibility of selecting the pronoun’s case, as in *kept it running*.

Table 6. Instances of the use of genitive and accusative pronouns with gerund-particles

	Brown		LOB		ACE		
	gen	accus	gen	accus	gen	accus	
Non-fiction (Categories A–J)	18	0	29	6	12	12	
Fiction (Categories K+)	19	8	22	13	4	10	
Totals:		37	8	51	19	16	22

The Australian data reverse the relationship between the two constructions in fiction, and show no preference for the genitive in non-fiction. This might be a reflection of the relative recency of ACE (1986) as opposed to LOB/Brown with data from 1961, except that the results seem to tally with established usage in both the UK and the US.

The table presents a marked contrast between the results for Brown and LOB on the one hand, and those from ACE on the other. While AmE and BrE prefer the genitive construction, AusE goes the opposite way, with the accusative preferred overall and especially in fiction. This Australian use of the accusative with gerund-participles is a feature in which AusE is setting its own pace, and clearly endonormative. It is a further context in which the object pronoun takes the place of another member of the paradigm.

*whom*:

The decline of *whom* has been commented on since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the details of its continuing use still make it a point of regional divergence. Its relatively stronger use in BrE than either AmE or AusE is demonstrated by comparative frequencies from LOB, Brown and ACE. The use of *whom* in AmE and AusE is still strongly associated with its use with prepositions, especially *of*, *to*, *for* and *with*. In such cases it cannot be substituted by *which* (it lacks the feature human/animate), nor by *that* (because *that* cannot be governed by a preposition). Table 7 shows all instances of *whom* that occur following prepositions in the British, American and Australian data, as well as those which occur clause-initially as objects of a following verb. Cases of *whom* with a stranded preposition (two in Brown and one in LOB) have been excluded.

Table 7. Occurrences of *whom* after prepositions, and clause-initially

	Brown	LOB	ACE
after prep	96	138	84
clause initial	48	67	32
total	144	205	116



The data in Table 7 shows that a higher percentage of *whom* occurs in prepositional constructions in AusE (72%) than in AmE (67%) or BrE (67%).

Closer inspection of the corpus data by category suggests that clause-initial *whom* (interrogative or relative) is stylistically marked in both AmE and AusE, but more or less standard in BrE. Table 8 presents raw and normalized figures relative to the number of words in those categories expressed as percentages.

Table 8. Occurrences of clause-initial *whom* in fiction and nonfiction writing

	Brown	LOB	ACE
in nonfiction (corpus categories A–J)	40 (.0053)	54 (.0072)	28 (.0036)
in fiction (corpus categories K +)	9 (.0032)	14 (.0052)	5 (.0020)

Almost all of the examples of *whom* were in relative constructions: very few examples of the interrogative appeared in the data, apart from a cluster of biblical quotations in Brown, using *Whom shall ye fear?* The British use of relative *whom* is higher altogether than the American or the Australian, and strongly maintained in fiction. The Brown data evidences a distinctly lower use of clause-initial *whom* in fiction and in the ACE data its use is strongly associated with nonfiction.

In AusE, *whom* is associated more with the formal end of the scale. The frequencies from the various ACE categories line up with the results of elicitation tests carried out by Collins (1979) on undergraduates: *whom* was rejected by 75% of them in informal contexts, while up to 51% accepted *who* in formal contexts. Australians thus seem to be more generally inclined than the British to avoid clause-initial *whom*, though standard American usage advanced in this direction earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this element of morphosyntax, the Australian position is therefore not endonormative.

#### 4. Conclusion: Australian endonormativity in grammar

Some of the variables discussed above provide arguments for the endonormativity of Australian grammar, such as the applications of *gotten* and *got*, the use of *less* with countable nouns, and of accusative pronouns with gerund-participles. In its dispreference for *shall* and for the operator use of *dare*, Australian grammar is at the frontiers of English world-wide. But many of the cases discussed illustrate more intensive use of what are evidently the norms of BrE or AmE. Even so they can be seen as “new configurations” in AusE (Peters and Fee 1989) of the raw material of BrE and AmE. Access to AmE, particularly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has provided additional variants for the users of AusE, and prompted some adjustments to

the British base of grammar brought through continuous immigration from Britain, and continuous administrative, social and cultural connections. The interplay between the colonial and post-colonial inheritance has catalyzed a number of small but distinctive developments in AusE.

At various points in this discussion, comparisons have been made with NZE, raising the question as to whether AusE and NZE between them form some kind of southern hemisphere standard, distinct from that of the two supervarieties in the northern hemisphere. In some aspects of grammar, AusE and NZE show identical trends. In their increasing use of the progressive and dispreference for *oughtn't*, both seem to be in the vanguard. Yet for many of the issues discussed, comparative data from New Zealand are not yet available to show the parity of developments on both sides of the Tasman. Since NZE is usually thought of as more closely associated with BrE than is AusE (partly because of its less diverse immigration history), it seems less likely that the two varieties could constitute a common standard.

AusE grammar does seem to be evolving elements of its own, reconfiguring the patterns of alternative constructions, and recalibrating the stylistic status of elements of some, so that *fewer* and *whom* rate as more formal and *like* less informal. It has absorbed elements of AmE grammar to complement its BrE foundations, but these have effectively been “Australianized” (Peters 1998b), rather than resulting in a totally “Americanized” variety in the South Pacific. The distinctive elements of the Australian lexicon add their weight to any claim for the existence of an Australian standard. AusE seems indeed to have evolved to Stage 5 in Schneider’s (2003) scale of New Englishes: one that is endonormatively stabilized, and able to support its own internal kinds of differentiation. The divergent patterns of usage found for younger and older Australians are clear evidence of this. They are also elements out of which AusE may distinguish itself further from BrE and AmE in the future.

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# Australian Vernacular English: some grammatical characteristics\*

Andrew Pawley

## 1. Introduction

Australian Vernacular English (AusVE) is a variety which can be heard in the informal speech of some Australians, especially working-class and country men. It is characterised by the frequent occurrence of certain phonological and grammatical features that are rare or absent in more standard varieties. Table 1 gives commonly-occurring AusVE variants of some grammatical and quasi-grammatical variables.

Table 1. AusVE variants of some grammatical variables

Variable	AusVE value
1. (Gender assignment) pronoun for inanimate referents	<i>he/she</i> for inanimates
2. ( <i>were</i> subject-verb agreement) <i>were</i> after <i>you</i> or plural subject	<i>was</i> , 's /wəz/, /əz/, /ɪz/
3. (Past tense of strong verbs) ( <i>came, did, ran, saw</i> , etc.)	<i>come, done, run, seen</i> , etc.
4. (Past participle of strong verbs) <i>gone, lain, seen, taken, thrown</i> , etc.	<i>went, laid, saw, took, threw</i> , etc.
5. (Negative concord with indeterminate) NEG + V + <i>a/any/ever/either</i>	NEG + verb + <i>no/none/never/neither</i>
6. (Past tense negation) <i>did</i> + NEG + infinitive verb	<i>never</i> + past-tense verb
7. (Non-standard <i>don't</i> ) <i>doesn't</i>	<i>don't</i>
8. (Present perfect) <i>have</i> + past participle	past participle
9. (Narrative tense) past tense	historic present tense
10. (Adjective/adverb merger) V + ADV ( <i>quickly/well/proper/etc.</i> )	V + ADJ ( <i>quick/good/nice/etc.</i> )

Table 1. (continued) AusVE variants of some grammatical variables

Variable	AusVE value
12. (First singular object pronoun in requests) verb of transfer/obtaining + <i>me</i>	verb of transfer/obtaining + <i>us</i>
13. (Third singular generic pronoun) <i>he or she</i>	<i>they</i>
14. (Subject relative pronoun ellipsis) subject + <i>that/which</i> + relative clause	subject + rel. clause
15. (Subject ellipsis) SUBJ.PRO + V	Vtr + NP
16. (Subject auxiliary ellipsis before transitive verb) (SUBJ.PRO + AUX + Vtr + NP)	Vtr + NP)
17. (Subject <i>be</i> ellipsis before adjective or noun) (NP + <i>be</i> + ADJ or ART + N)	ADJ or ART + N
18. ( <i>as...as</i> ellipsis) SUBJ.PRO + <i>be</i> + <i>as</i> + ADJ + N + <i>as</i> + S	ADJ + <i>as</i> + S
19. (There/ <i>it be</i> ellipsis before negated NP) <i>there/it</i> + <i>be</i> + NEG + NP + (LOC)	NEG + NP + (LOC)
20. (Subject verb ellipsis before preposition) SUBJ + V + PREP (+ LOC)	PREP (+ LOC)
21. (Salient definite NP) Proper NP or DET + NP	<i>old</i> + Proper.NP DET + <i>old</i> + NP
22. ( <i>those</i> )	<i>them</i>
23. (NP <i>and the others</i> )	NP <i>and them</i>
24. ( <i>this one, that one, etc.</i> )	<i>this fella, that fella, etc.</i>
25. (S, <i>though</i> )	S, <i>but</i>

In AusVE there is also frequent use of informal values of a wide range of lexically-specific phonological variables, e.g. *h*-dropping, *-in* instead of *-ing*, *'ey* and *'em* for *they* and *them*, *me* and *meself/miself* for *my* and *myself* or *m'self*, *be* for *by*, *a* for *an* and *thuh* rather than *thee* before a vowel, *a* for unstressed *have* or *'ve*, and such other casual pronunciations as *fella*, *Mondy*, *Tuesdy*, *gimme*, *gonna*, *wanna* and *dunno*. Three samples of AusVE speech follow, with features of particular interest in bold type.

- (1) (Tasmania: Harv, farmer and businessman, in his sixties)  
*and on the corner was this **ol'** mountain duck with some little **fellas**, y'*

*know, an' you'd 've **swore** a wing was **broke**, y' know.*  
*'E – 'e – 'e **run** away across the paddock with ...this broken wing.*

(1) contains the non-standard participle forms *swore* and *broke*, the non-standard past form *run*, *fellas* for *fellows* and the adjective *old*, used before definite common nouns and personal names to refer to a salient character in the narrative.

Examples (2) and (3), and a good many later examples are from a conversation recorded in 1974 in Scottsdale, Tasmania, in which two friends, Harv (Harvey) and Chas (Charles), tell stories about local characters to one another and to Harv's wife and sister.

(2) Harv: *e 'd **a et** – the Dagwood [eaten the large sandwich] if 'e'd **a** caught it, if 'e could **a** got it off the dog.*  
*He wouldn't **a** seen anything wrong with that. Talk about **eatin** it after the dog went under the house...*

Chas: ***Yiz** would **a** took it off 'im.*

(3) Chas: *I thought to **meself** "Possession's nine points of the bloody law."*  
 Harv: *And when 'e came up to you you **never** 'AD 'er [the bottle of beer].*

Chas: *No, I **never** 'AD 'er.*  
*...I put 'er down. I 'AD to. I put 'er down THAT BLOODY QUICK that I blew the TOP off 'er.*

Example (2) has the non-standard second person plural pronoun *yiz*, the participle *took* for standard *taken* and the regular (five out of five) use of *a* for unstressed auxiliary 've. In (3) the bottle of beer is consistently feminine (five out of five pronouns), non-standard *never* occurs for *didn't*, and *meself* occurs for *myself* or *m'self*.

Speech that shows the full range of AusVE grammatical features listed in Table 1 may be called 'basilectal', the basilect being the style most removed from the most formal prestige or 'acrolectal' style. Some Australians consistently use basilectal AusVE in conversation while others use only a part of the range of AusVE features, tending to excluding those features that are stigmatised as typical of 'uneducated' speech. AusVE may be contrasted with two other mainstream varieties of Australian English, each also covering a fairly broad zone on the stylistic scale. *Standard Australian Colloquial English* (StAusColE) is the dominant variety of many Australians, and is strongly linked to middle class upbringings, occupations and aspirations. Its grammar is closer to that of standard colloquial English in the UK and North America than to that of basilectal AusVE (but see Collins 1989; Collins and Peters, this volume). *Standard Australian Formal English* (StAusFE) is a self-conscious variety, largely restricted to formal contexts. Its grammar differs little from the formal spoken English of the UK or North America. Insofar as StAusFE departs from colloquial speech, it is a writing-based variety and is nobody's mother tongue. Of course, this three-way distinction greatly simplifies

the full complexities of the situation – one can argue for a stylistic continuum – but it is a useful simplification. In our Tasmanian corpus, for instance, one can easily distinguish paradigmatic AusVE speakers from paradigmatic StAusColE speakers according to the frequencies with which they use diagnostic variants of grammatical and phonological variables.

While individuals vary in their stylistic range and flexibility most speakers of AusVE are polylectal, able to shift up and down the stylistic scale according to their linguistic purpose and the company they are in. Socially, the use of non-standard values of linguistic variables marks informality, and sometimes solidarity and intimacy. When men in the countryside or working-class men in the cities meet informally to work or to socialise, frequent use of a wide range of AusVE features is *de rigueur*. The more informal and relaxed the situation the higher the incidence of non-standard features.

In historical terms, basilectal AusVE is noteworthy in that it strongly preserves certain variants which were widely used in the English spoken in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and earlier, but which have now largely dropped out of use in more standard varieties. Many of the characteristics distinguishing AusVE from StAusColE and StAusFE are retained in certain other non-standard varieties of English spoken in other parts of the world, a testament to the power of peer-group transmission of speech norms.

The emergent Australian working-class vernacular had probably stabilised by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, some two generations after the British colonisation of Australia. The strongest input into this speech tradition appears to have come from the dialects of southeast England, especially London Cockney (Horvath 1985; Ward 1958). From 1788 to 1851 Australia served as a penal colony of Great Britain and the convicts formed a virtual slave-labour class for the small middle and upper class of military officers, merchants and large landowners. While the 168,000 convicts who arrived in this period came from all parts of Britain and Ireland, the enterprising Londoners, described as garrulous, articulate and quick-witted, were said to dominate the lower strata of Australian society. During its first few generations the colony was characterised by sharp class antagonisms and equally sharp differences in speech between this small elite class and a large lower class made up primarily of convicts and their children (known as the ‘currency lads and lasses’). The convicts and their children made up the majority of the colony’s population until about 1860. Urban wage labourers, clerks and tradesmen formed a growing intermediate class, who in their speech largely followed the demographically dominant group. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Australian working men tended to be highly mobile, seeking work in various regions, with movement peaking during periodic gold rushes, and this mobility ensured that regional differences in working-class speech remained small.

The remainder of the paper discusses a selection of the most salient grammatical features of AusVE and briefly comments on their history. There have been rela-



tively few systematic studies of grammatical features that are socially significant in the Australian English speech community. Among the exceptions are Anna Shnukal's work on Cessnock speech (Shnukal 1978, 1982, 1989) and Edina Eisikovits' study of the speech of Inner-Sydney working-class adolescents (Eisikovits 1981, 1987, 1989a,b). The discussion will also draw quite heavily on data from Tasmania because this is the one region for which the writer has a sizeable corpus of transcripts, consisting mainly of conversations tape-recorded and transcribed by Frances Syder and myself between 1974 and 1987. The transcripts represent about 15 different speakers, almost all from northern Tasmania, and total around 80,000 words (of which about half consists mainly of AusVE speech). The sample of AusVE speakers in the AusVE material is heavily biased towards males. I also draw on analyses of several variables in this data by students in graduate courses I taught at the University Auckland in the late 1980s. Other sources include the author's notes on overheard conversations and spontaneous speech on radio and TV, a doctoral thesis on auctions (Harris 1992), the *Australian National Dictionary* (Ramson 1988), and dialogue from several regionally-based works of fiction by Australian authors: *Bonanza* and *Mo Burdekin*, novels set in the Queensland outback around 1900 (Campion 1941, 1942), stories set in southern rural Queensland in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Rudd 1954), and *The Sentimental Bloke*, verse tales by an author raised in South Australia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, told in 'robust vernacular' through the voice of a rough Melbourne city lad in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Dennis 1950), and *They're a Weird Mob*, a novel set in Sydney in the 1950s (Culotta 1957).

Of course, fictional dialogue needs to be treated with caution as data, and none of our conclusions about contemporary patterns of usage rests primarily on evidence from this source. The chief values of the fictional material are that it (i) extends regional coverage, providing evidence that certain features recorded in natural speech from a few parts of Australia are/were also present elsewhere, (ii) extends our temporal range, giving data from 100 years ago, and (iii) indicates which features of AusVE were most salient to the authors of the fictional works.

The following is a key to abbreviations used in the transcript passages cited here:

ADJ = adjective, ADV = adverb, AUX = auxiliary verb, ART = article, CAPITALS = peak or main stress in a tone group, DET = determiner, INDEF = indefinite, LOC = locative phrase, N = noun, NEG = Negative, NP = noun phrase, PREP = preposition, PRO = pronoun, S = sentence, SUBJ = grammatical subject, V = verb, [bracketed words] = editorial comment, “,” = non-final intonation juncture, “.” = final intonation juncture, “/” = cutoff in mid tone group, either by the speaker or another party, “-” = pause of less than half a second in mid-construction, “-” = pause of more than half a second in mid-construction.

## 2. Pronominal gender assignment to inanimates and animals

### 2.1. Animating inanimate referents

A striking feature of AusVE is the frequency with which an animate pronoun, *he* or *she* (or an accusative or genitive variant), is used instead of neuter *it* to refer to inanimate things such as trees, axes, houses, roads, rain, jobs and situations, and to living creatures of unknown sex, such as birds, fish and mosquitoes. The use of a masculine or feminine pronoun for an inanimate referent will be referred to here as *animation*. Animation of specific referents only occurs some of the time in AusVE, as the following example shows:

- (4) (Tasmania: Chas is telling a story to Harv and others.)  
*... and I was leadin', pullin' this **hay** up with one o' them -- what they call a grabstacker...  
 and Tim...he mighta been building the stack, I think, Tim, prob'ly with loose hay...  
 They'd sweep '**er** in/...sweep '**er** in, and then...they 'ad a pole up in the air, and **they was** pulling **it** [the hay] over a block, y' see. Gettin' **it** up.  
 That's how they got **it** up on top of the stack, this hay.*

Before we consider what makes a speaker choose to animate a referent it will be convenient to examine the rules for deciding when a referent will be *he* and when it will be *she*. The assignment of a particular animate gender to a referent will be termed (*animate*) *gender assignment*. Gender assignment in AusVE differs in at least two fundamental respects from the gender systems of languages such as Italian and German. In the latter, gender is (a) assigned to nouns and (b) the gender of particular nouns is (mostly) arbitrary, i.e. the connection is a grammatical one, not motivated by inherent features of the referent. In AusVE, by contrast, gender is (a) assigned to referents rather than nouns (this is also the case in Standard English) and (b) animate gender assignment to inanimate referents is based on logical principles, to be defined below. Different animate genders may be assigned to the same noun when it refers to a male or female being, or to different senses of a polysemous noun, or to the same noun. For example, a particular fish or a kangaroo will *he*, except when it is known that it is a female, when it is *she*. Gender assignment is never to the nouns *fish* or *kangaroo* as nouns. And any noun, or at least any concrete noun, such as *river*, *house*, *car*, or *leg*, may be used to refer to a model of the prototypical referent, as in miniature figures, or to a piece or position in a game or puzzle. Such models may be treated as portable objects (see 2.4.), which are subject to rules of gender assignment that differ from those associated with 'real' rivers, houses, cars and legs (see 2.2. and 2.3.). In much the same way, literal and metaphorical uses of the same word can have different gender assignments. One can loosely speak of gender as being assigned to a particular noun in discourse, so long as we keep in mind that the noun represents the referent.

AusVE has two separate systems of gender assignment, which apply to mutually exclusive classes of referents. There is a class whose members may be either masculine or feminine. This class consists roughly of portable goods, specifically goods that are represented by count nouns as opposed to mass nouns. Gender assignment in this class is based on pragmatic principles. The other class has fixed gender, i.e. some members are consistently masculine, the rest are consistently feminine. This class consists of all remaining things (including animals, plants, features of the inanimate natural environment, abstract entities, non-portable inanimate objects and things that form a mass). Gender assignment is based on inherent attributes of the referent.

## 2.2. Things that are consistently masculine

Referents that are consistently masculine consist chiefly of (i) plants, and (ii) animals of unknown sex. It also includes (iii) vehicle-driver combinations when the driver's gender is unknown and (iv) male private parts. Animals and plants can be unified as a natural semantic class, namely, living things.

Trees and other plants:

In (5) Mark comments on the plants as he walks around his 40 acre patch of Tasmanian bushland with his cousin Ken, visiting from Canberra. Trees, and other plants, living and dead, upright and fallen, are consistently *he* – 19 out of 19 in this extract.

- (5) *There's a **tree** up here died for no apparent REASON. 'E was healthy – 'n there 'e is, DEAD! ... I felled 'im [another dead tree]. 'E was DANGEROUS. That one there, **he's** a stringybark. [points] 'E's a blackwood. That one there, 'e's a wild cherry. Has little cherries on 'im and they're good to eat TOO, them cherries. [points] an' 'e's a peppermint. See the leaves, they're DIFFERENT. ...That stringybark [points], 'e's got a left-handed twist [in the grain of the wood and bark] They reckon 'e'll still split if 'e's got a left-handed twist, but that'd be testin 'em. See, **he** don't start twistin till 'e gets above that limb, does 'e? Hard as a bull's forehead, that bloody wood is. ...The **snottygobble** [parasitic creeper] is into this one, but 'e's not goin to kill 'im. ... See **that log** lyin there Got a load of wood in 'im, 'asn't 'e?*

In (6) Bill, a bushman from New South Wales, is talking to another man about cutting timber for slab housing, for a film made by the Australian Parks Services:

- (6) *What we'll be looking for is **a tree** with a straight barrel on 'im. You can tell after you've hit 'im if 'e's sound. The tree 'll talk to you when 'e's startin to crack.*

In (7) Rex, a Tasmanian businessman, recalls how his nephew Ken and his son Mark, as small boys, tried to pull out a large turnip:

(7) Rex: *I was ploughing there and I'd 'ad some turnips in... and there was a big **turnip** there, **E** was like that, y'know, nearly as big as a kerosene tin, and you two fellas **was** down there tryin to get **it** out... you'd...twisted '**im**, and pulled the thing,*

Ken: *an' we couldn't get '**im***

Rex: *Couldn't get '**im**. ...yiz ha/ you had '**im** loose and you didn't realize ...y' had '**im** broke off at the/*

Ken: *root.*

Rex: *At the root. But '**e** was a big turnip. Yiz'd worked on it!*

(8) (Tasmania: Ken has called on his Uncle Bill, a man in his 80s, who has just started a small vegetable patch next to the lawn.)

Ken: *What's that growing in the lawn there? Are you cultivating that?*

Bill: *That's a **carrot!** I've been watering '**im**, lookin after '**im**.*

(9) (Tasmania: Mark is talking to his wife, Jill.)

Mark: *What are y' lookin at?*

Jill: *I'm lookin at **that tree**.*

Mark: *How's '**e** doin'?*

Jill: *Looks sad. The grubs are not doin much for '**im**.*

(10) (Tasmania: Ken's cousin, Pauline, is describing one of her garden plants.)

*I had a **Golden Snail** and **he** climbed all over the place.*

(11) (Middle-aged man, Coff's Harbour, NSW)

a. [Of a **pawpaw** tree] '**E**'s only small but '**e** bears a lot of fruit

b. This **passion fruit**, **he** used to scramble all over the place. But '**e** died.

c. This one here, this **avocado**, – **he** ran wild and I cut the top off '**im**.

(12) ('The Gardening Program', ABC television: Comment by one of two middle-aged men, both gardeners, who are looking at a small shrubby flowering plant.)

***He's** been cut, by the look of it.*

Animals of unknown sex:

In formal English an animal of unknown sex, e.g. a wild mammal or bird, or a fish, snake or mosquito, usually takes a neuter animate pronoun. AusVE differs in strongly preferring use of an animate pronoun. The animate pronoun is invariably masculine. In (13) Harv is talking about men in Tasmania poaching sheep during the Depression years.

- (13) Harv: *But what they used to like to do about the day before they came back, was to get **one of Von Breddow's sheep** y' see, as close to home as they could there, and they'd kill **'im** and hang **'im** up in the – in the scrub you see,*

Chas: *Yes.*

Harv: *...sometimes they'd hang **'im** up tonight y' see, and go to pick **'im** up tomorrow night, **he**'d be gone. Some of the other fellas seen **'im**.*

- (14) (Tasmania: Mark is telling Ken about a wild goat that he shot.)

Ken: *You didn't eat **'im**?*

Mark: *Well, **'e** wasn't no teenager.*

Ken: ***'E**'d a been pretty tough.*

- (15) (Tasmania: Electrolux salesman is talking about a blocked vacuum cleaner he was asked to fix. The machine turned out to be inhabited by a colony of mice.)

*I took the hose off the front... 'n there was a blimmin **mouse** sitting... lookin... so I stood the machine up 'n gave it a shake... so **he** couldn't see which way **he** was goin... 'n emptied the bag, 'n the mouse took off. But when I first opened the vacuum cleaner **he** looked at me...*

Vehicle + controller:

There is one category of referents that, at first appearance, seems to run counter to a general convention (see 2.3.) that vehicles, when animated, are feminine. This is when a vehicle (car, truck, small boat or plane) is named or indicated, and assigned masculine gender, as in (16).

- (16) (Middle-aged woman from Tumut, a country town in NSW.)
- a. *There's a **BMW** right behind you. **He**'s impatient to pass.*
  - b. *Watch out for that big **truck** there. **'E**'s all over the road.*

In such cases, however, the vehicle is a metonym standing for the controlling agent (driver, skipper, pilot), or for a unit consisting of a vehicle and its controller, which is seen to be 'doing something'. When the driver is known to be female the use of *he* is no longer acceptable. Thus, this use of *he* for vehicle + driver can be regarded as another case of masculine as the unmarked gender, when applied to living things.

### 2.3. Things that are consistently feminine

Apart from portable count nouns, the rest of the biologically inanimate universe – the inanimate environment, situations, vehicles, buildings, and so on – is feminine in animated style.

## Abstract referents:

For abstract entities and events, such as a principle, a time or season, law, job, situation, action, utterance, emotions, the neuter pronoun is generally preferred, but when such a referent is animated, the pronoun is always feminine.

- (17) (Malcolm Johnston, jockey, *The Weekend Australian* 23, 24/10/1999)  
*But the **Cox Plate** is a test of endurance and character for horse and rider...and I'll tell you what, **she** is a deadset pressure cooker.*
- (18) (Pat Rafter, tennis player from Queensland, talking about whether his **retirement** will be decisive. *The Australian*, 21/1/2001)  
***She**'ll be clean, mate, don't worry about that.*
- (19) (Tasmanian man, Noel, reporting an exchange during a closely-contested **game** of Australian Rules football, on which Wing had placed a bet.)  
*"What do you think about the **game**, Wing?" 'E said, "**She**'s tight!"*
- (20) (Tasmania: Harv is talking about a tense situation associated with the snaring of game.)  
*I bet **she** was on out there, when they was snarin', them fellas... nobody could go near another bloke's snares, could they? Or they'd get shot.*
- (21) (Tasmania: Real estate agent refers first to his **job** and second to a **delicate situation** at work.)  
*When **she**'s your livelihood **she**'s a bit awkward.*
- (22) (Tasmania: Ken's cousin, Nigel, is a man in his 30s who had been working at two jobs.)  
Nigel: *I've given up me **morning job**.*  
Ken: *Have you?*  
Nigel: *Yeah, I gave 'er away. I'm a new man.*
- (23) (Sydney: A builder is talking to friends, *They're a Weird Mob*, 81)  
*But this time I'm tell'yez about we was **buildin' a garage**. **She** was an excavation job.*
- (24) (Ken is talking by phone to his cousin Mark, who is in Tasmania.)  
Ken: *I thought m' **birthday** was still a long way off.*  
Max: *No, **she**'s just around the corner.*
- (25) (Victoria: Farmer from Lightning Ridge, referring to prospects for the end of a drought, on ABC radio, 11/11/2002)  
*I'd sooner it didn't rain till March, then we'd have the bad year over and done with, and hopefully, from then on **she**'ll be good.*

Inanimate elements of the natural physical world:

Land, mountains, rivers, soil, grass, minerals, fire, rain, sun, moon, the cold, wind, etc. are consistently feminine when animated.

- (26) (Northern Territory: John Joshua, quoted in *The Canberra Times*, 9/8/1998)  
*...that river, she is dangerous with all them crocodiles.*
- (27) (Coff's Harbour, NSW: Local resident, a middle-aged man, is looking out to sea for a whale.)  
*She's a rough sea today.*
- (28) (Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. Man speaking of the wind.)  
*She's a bit keen today. Should've brung me fur coat.*
- (29) (Queensland: Farmer referring to a storm.)  
*She made a mess of that crop.*

The next two examples are from two novels by Sarah Campion, set in the Queensland countryside around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the following passages the speakers are talking about drilling for **artesian water**, and a **goldmine**, respectively.

- (30) "Garn, y'old crow, stop croaking and look at the **water**. Howzit goin', mates?" ... "**She's** come at last, blast **her** pretty eyes. Gawd, we wos long enough gittin' downta **it**. But **she's** comin' up nice, now,..." (*Bonanza*, 206–207)
- (31) "They've started stoping wi' four men on No. 2 winze, west 'o the shaft, in two foot o' stone. **She** ain't eggsackly bonzer, but **she's** good enough. Stopes between 3 and 4 winzes 'll 'ave ter lie till sich time as they gits mullock room at No. 3." "Wot, you talkin' o the **Bull Frog** that's let on tribute. Cor, **she** ain't no blunny good, **she's** a bad 'un **she** is, a fair cow." (*Mo Burdekin*, 246)

Constructions and their fixed parts:

Man-made elements in the landscape, such as roads, dams, bridges and houses, and their parts, are consistently feminine.

- (32) (Tasmania: Real estate agent, showing off a hill-side house.)  
*She's certainly got a view, this one.*
- (33) (Sydney: Builders talking about a cottage, *They're a Weird Mob*, 90)  
*We're gunna put a new front on 'er. ...Yeah. We're gunna wreck 'er terday.*
- (34) (Tasmania: Men talking about a rural community hall.)  
 Ken: *We couldn't find the ol' Forester Hall.*  
 Noel: *No, she's gone.*

- (35) (Tasmania: Speaker is Harv, conversing with Chas and others.)  
*He hoed 'is boot into the **door**, and of course **she**'s got a cross-piece in  
 – them old-fashioned **doors**, y'know.*
- (36) (Tasmania: Harv, talking to friends)  
*He...shut 'im [a sheep] up in the **shed**...But **she** was only one o' them old  
 – built out of studs and...round spars.*

Body-parts:

All body-parts other than male genitals are feminine.

- (37) (Queensland man, in reply to an inquiry about his **knee**.)  
***She**'s a lot better than **she** was, I can tell you that.*
- (38) (Tasmanian man, of a wisdom tooth.)  
***She** was no use to me anyway, so I 'ad **her** out.*

Vehicles:

Vehicles show a very high frequency of animation. Except for the special case noted above, the animate pronoun is invariably feminine. The referents in (39) and (40) are a truck and a bulldozer, respectively.

- (39) (Tasmania: Chas)  
*Alec 'ad this old **D30 International** and they're cartin wood [short gap in  
 recording] and by jees **she** went down, this **truck**! I'm not sure they didn't  
 unload the wood and still couldn't get '**er** out.*
- (40) (Tasmania: Harv)  
*But when 'e first bought the **bulldozer** 'e told me he took '**er** out in the  
 bush and he'd be taking '**er** up all them big stringy gums... and the old  
 bulldozer's got one claw up on this 'ere, on a green root y' see, and **she**'s  
 just skidding on '**er**... Well, 'e don't know what to do about it, Alec, 'e  
 just opened up and left '**er** there. Just swears at '**er**.*

#### 2.4. Things that may be either masculine or feminine

Referents that can take either masculine or feminine pronouns consist roughly of individuated portable goods, e.g. tools, small machines, and items of food, furniture and clothes. In the next two examples each speaker is talking about timber that has been cut.

- (41) (A bushman from country New South Wales, is talking about cutting timber for slab housing. The timber is masculine. Note the shift from *he* to *she* here when the topic moves from the cutting of a post to the removal of a wedge.) *Mostly the slab you cut in the bush, you loaded '**im***



on to your transport and took **'im** home to work on **'im** at the homestead itself... The first post you've got to make fairly even, make **'im** 10 inches or 8 inches wide. You lay **'im** flat and you square **'im** half way down, you square **'im** fairly even, then you turn **'im** over... Mostly you can leave **'er** [the wedge] up on the [timber]

- (42) (Tasmania: Harv is talking about the block of wood in a chopping contest and the block is feminine.)

... 'e was off say three or five or whatever. When they said "FIVE!" 'e's no sooner [unclear] than 'e HIT **'er** [the block], y' know, and 'e chopped two or three six-inch nails CLEAN off...

What makes a speaker assign a particular animate gender in a particular case? There has been lively debate over this matter, though the debaters agree that speakers are using pragmatic principles of some sort. One possibility is that feminine gender is the unmarked gender for all portable goods, as it is for features of the inanimate environment, and that it is only the choice of masculine gender that we have to explain. Another hypothesis (Pawley 2002) is that a crucial factor in gender assignment is whether the speaker's attitude to the referent is one of attachment or detachment. If the object is seen as something of personal value it will be *she*. Thus, someone's hat, axe, knife, pen, table or fridge will be *she* (see [45–48] for supporting examples). By contrast, if an item is seen merely as an 'object', something towards which the speaker feels indifferent, it will be *he* (in animated style, otherwise *it*). Using the masculine pronoun is appropriate, for example, when a salesman is talking about the goods he is selling or a tradesman is talking about objects he is working with. A qualifier is in order here. The bulk of the evidence on animate gender assignment comes from male speech. There is some evidence that certain speakers of Standard Colloquial English, particularly middle class women, follow somewhat different conventions from paradigmatic AusVE speakers when assigning animate gender to portable goods (Jane Simpson, personal communication).

Wierzbicka (2002) argues, with some justification, that the attachment/detachment hypothesis cannot explain all cases of gender assignment to referents of variable gender. There are cases where *she* is used where no 'attachment' is discernable, but there is emotional involvement, e.g. interest, satisfaction, irritation. Wierzbicka offers an additional explanation. Because animate gender assignment is a stylistic feature that originates in men's speech (though it is imitated by women), she says, we cannot fully understand how it works without reference to male attitudes to men and women in Australian society. Use of *she* implies that the speaker is thinking of the object as like a woman, for example, as having characteristics that fit male stereotypes of women, e.g. being beautiful, pleasing, temperamental or incompetent, or as being something that a man can do things to. Thus, Wierzbicka suggests that the shift from a masculine to a feminine object pronoun in (43)

is motivated by the reference to full force being applied to the object. Example (44) might be explained the same way.

- (43) (Tasmania: Max is talking to Ken, who is using a screwdriver to tighten a tricky screw.)  
 Max: *Bloody oath! You're getting 'im tight! Tighten 'im. --- OK, 'e's tight. [a bit later] Give it to 'er!*
- (44) (Sydney: A builder is explaining things to a novice. *They're a Weird Mob*, 79)  
*"Show yer how to work the lever. Pull 'er out like this, then let 'er swing down. But 'old 'er."* [The **concrete** ran into the barrow.] *"Not a bad mix, bit boney. Then yer swing 'er [the lever] over ter Pat again, an' 'ave a bludge while 'e's fillin' 'er [the concrete mixer] up. Okay?"*

By contrast, when a man uses *he* to refer to a portable object, Wierzbicka suggests, it is to convey an attitude of emotional neutrality or objectivity towards it, as a man thinks of other men. This is an attitude subtly different from 'detachment' insofar as 'objectivity' signals professional competence or expertise. Thus, one might explain the bushman's use of *he* in (42) for the slabs of timber he is shaping and auctioneer's use of *he* in (51) for the electric floor polisher as cases of speakers showing a professional attitude towards the goods being made or sold.

These hypotheses offering a semantic-pragmatic explanation of variable gender assignment are difficult to test. One needs to look at a sizeable sample of cases where one or the other animate gender is assigned to portable objects and see whether statistically significant distributional patterns emerge. Thus, while the shift from *him* to *her* in (43) is consistent with Wierzbicka's 'doing something to a thing with force' explanation, this is a single example and could be due to chance. There are cases where a feminine pronoun is assigned to a portable object participant (actor or undergoer) in a context where it has no obvious 'feminine' associations.

#### Machines and tools:

Whatever the reason may be, the fact is that some kinds of portable goods have a more consistent association with feminine gender than other kinds. Machines and tools – radios, TVs, power saws, vacuum cleaners, hammers and axes, for instance – are more likely to be feminine when animated than, say, a pen or a cup, or a screw or a nail.

- (45) (Harv describes an incident in a wood-chopping competition in Tasmania, where an axeman damages a valuable axe he has borrowed.)  
*Ol' Kit... 'e 'ad the only **choppin axe** John Behan 'ad, Nobody 'ad TWO them days y' know, in the bad old days, and John 'ad a pretty good axe... they got Kit entered in this Chop y' know...and 'e fetches 'er [the axe] and*

'e looks at 'er, y' see, ...and 'e holds 'er round to John, and 'e's got a great big gap CLEAN through the FACE of 'er.

- (46) (Tasmania: Mark is looking at a **timber gun** that is his personal property.)  
*That timber gun, she splits the log open.*
- (47) (Sydney: A man thanks his workmates for some gifts. *They're a Weird Mob*, 120)  
*'she's a good tape measure. Er...thanks for oilin 'er. This trowel. She's ...er...she's a good trowel.'*
- (48) (A man from Queensland is talking to another about a **computer**, over morning tea.)  
*You'll be doing this the old-fashioned way, Bill. The modern way is to take your computer 'nd set 'er up in the village.*
- (49) (Farmer talking about an electric fence, in advertisement on TV.)  
*Try nature's test, piece of grass on the fence. Feel a tingle? She's workin!*

However, an individual machine or tool that is not someone's personal possession is sometimes masculine. The following examples are consistent with either the detachment or the professional objectivity interpretations.

- (50) (Electrician, from Canberra, trying different **switches** on a switch board.)  
*Let's try him. No, well it must be this fella.*
- (51) (Melbourne auctioneer, talking about a floor polisher [Harris 1992: 235])  
*Lot 4 A once again electric floor polisher... quick 20 bucks for 'im ... 2 and a half dollars who wants 'im first up can 'ave 'im floor polisher 2 and a half ooh not very impressive crowd today Laurie and Christmas is coming up too nobody want 'im 2 and a half bucks quick I'll put 'im with lot 5 Laurie. Can't say we don't try*

Implements used in games:

Implements used in games are *she* when animated, at least in cases when the referent is being used in a game. For example the ball and the stumps used in cricket are *she*, as is the pitch on which the game is played. In (52a) a cricket commentator on Channel 9 is referring to one of the stumps as a batsman is bowled out and in (52b) the same commentator is referring to the cricket ball, which has been snicked and flies to a slip fielder.

- (52) a. *Look at that middle stump! Back she goes! ...And the West Indies are one for 60.*  
 b. *He nearly dropped 'er. That was a near thing!*

The detachment and objectivity ('like a man') hypotheses correctly predict that occasionally there will also be circumstances under which implements used in games will take a masculine pronoun, e.g. bats and balls being placed as objects for display in a shop.

Furniture, carpets:

There are examples of furniture with both masculine and feminine pronouns:

- (54) (A salesman in the town of Launceston, Tasmania, is showing carpets to two customers. He made roughly 50 pronominal references to carpets. All were masculine.)

*That **fella** he's a poly [polyester blend], **he's** two fifty [two hundred and fifty dollars] **He's** a blend, **that bloke**. I've had '**im** for a while, it'd be nice to turn '**im** over. I'll give '**im** to you for four hundred.*

- (55) (Tasmanian woman, to a man shifting a **table** in her house.)

*Put '**er** down here.*

Food and drink:

Items of food and drink are usually feminine but occasionally masculine.

- (56) (Tasmania: Same conversation as [2] above.)

Harv: *...when the dog took the i-, the/ the **leg of mutton** under the house?... Bill's just coming in, I s'pose when the dog, when 'e sees 'im come out with '**er**.*

Chas: *...Bill went in to carve the meat up and out come the bloody dog.*

Harv: *With the meat!...*

Chas: *"No," 'e said "**She**'ll be blamed well all right." ...a bit of blamed dirt on **it** won't 'urt you*

Harv: *And took '**er** in and put '**er** on the plate!*

Chas: *Yeah. Carved 'er up. Yeah.*

Massed materials:

Mass materials, e.g. hay (see [4]), water (30), gold (31), and cement are nearly always feminine, as in (57) and (58).

- (57) (Men talking on a Sydney building site. *They're a Weird Mob*, 102)

a. [of a **load of loam**] *"There **she** is," said Dennis.*

b. *"Bloody black **mortar**. **She's** a bastard."*

- (58) (Australian chef from Melbourne, ABC Television, 9/8/2002)

*Let's have a look at the **oil** [heating in a pan]. Wah! **She's** hot!*

Just one example has been noted where a mass noun is masculine.

- (59) (Tasmania: Harv recalls how men illegally would shoot possums out of season and dry and hide the skins until the restricted season ended.)  
*...they used to be terrible careful where they planted **it** [their collection of dried skins]... wherever they'd secreted **their catch**, like ... As they built **'im** up, y' see, from week to week, and then... [when the season ended] they could bring **'im** out and take **'im** home*

## 2.5. Concluding remarks about animation

Let us return to the question of when a speaker chooses to animate a particular referent. There seems to be a number of factors that correlate with animation.

- (i) Speech style and social context:  
The higher the incidence of informal variants in the discourse the more likely it is the speaker will animate. The incidence of informal variants in turn correlates with formality of social context.
- (ii) Inherent salience:  
Inherent salience is important in the case of plants and animals. When referring to animals of unknown sex, animation is most frequent with relatively large animals, such as mammals, reptiles, birds and fish, and least frequent with small creatures such as insects and snails. Similarly, large plants are more likely to be animated than small ones. Large vehicles – cars, trucks, bulldozers, ships, planes – are very often animated and smaller vehicles – bicycles, carts, wheelbarrows – less often.
- (iii) Individuation:  
In his comparative studies of English dialects which use animate pronouns for inanimate referents Peter Siemund (2002, forthcoming) argues that this feature is strongly associated with individuation of referents. Concrete nouns are more likely to be animated than abstract nouns and count nouns more likely than mass nouns. There is some truth in these generalisations but they need qualifying with regard to AusVE.
- (iv) Salience or topicality in the discourse:  
Any referent can be made a focus of interest, a topic, and in that event, it is likely to be animated. Once a speaker has chosen to refer to a particular referent by an animate or inanimate pronoun, he or she is likely to keep to that choice in immediately following references within the same discourse unit (narrative, joke etc.), as long as it remains a prominent participant in the discourse. This is nicely illustrated in (60), where Chas tells a story about being accused of poaching timber, and Harv collaborates with him in constructing a coda to the episode.

(60) (Tasmania: same conversation as example [2] above.)

Chas: ...*but Frazer an – we ‘ad a bloody row over some WOOD... We was up there cuttin and Frazer come onto us y’see,... “oh well”, he said, “I suppose you can ‘ave ‘im [a tree] but we already ‘AD ‘im, all bar a few pieces, cut up and loaded, and Frazer said “I s’pose you can ‘ave ‘im,” ‘e said, “Yeah, but don’t touch that one over THERE”. But we’d been passing ‘im with the AXE, and ‘e was only a bit of – bloody – papery -SHELL. ‘E wasn’t/*

Harv: *‘E wasn’t WORTH it.*

Chas: *No. That’s why we LEFT ‘im. We’d ‘AD ‘im.*

Harv: *You left ‘im for FRAZER, wi- with PLEASURE.*

Chas: *Yes.*

Harv: *Not ENOUGH of ‘im.*

Chas: *No! ‘e was/*

Harv: *Too ROTTen’.*

Chas: *Yeah. ‘e was DRY enough but ‘e was on’y about an inch or an inch and a ‘alf THICK...*

## 2.6. Historical and comparative note

Historical and comparative data show that central features of the AusVE system of gender assignment go back some centuries in the history of English. Historical records indicate that a pattern of gender assignment quite like the AusVE system was part of middle class speech in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century England (Pawley 2002). The same system occurs in New Zealand Vernacular English and it appears that there are close parallels in parts of North America (Mathiot and Roberts 1978; Siemund 2002, forthcoming; Wagner forthcoming).

## 3. Non-standard verb forms

### 3.1. *were*: subject-verb agreement

The variable *were*: subject verb agreement refers to the alternation between *was* and *were* in three contexts: (i) when the subject of a verb is a plural pronoun or plural count noun, as in *we were talking*, (ii) when the subject is singular *you*, and (iii) after an existential *there* subject with a plural count noun in predicate position, as in *There were about 50 people there*.

Standard Formal English requires *were* in contexts (i)–(iii). In Colloquial English *were* occurs in (i) and (ii) while either *was* or *were* are acceptable in (iii). Paradigmatic AusVE speakers prefer *was* in all three contexts. And whereas some non-stan-

ard varieties of English in Britain and the USA show *was*-generalisation only in affirmative sentences, AusVE speakers also use it in negatives, as in e.g. (61j, k).

Wyld (1953) observes that *was* was commonly used by speakers of English of all classes during the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Sir Thomas Seymour writes in 1544: "Such sowders and maryners as *was* shept at Harwyche". Alexander Pope (1718) writes to Lady Mary Montagu Wortley: "I shall look upon you as many years younger than you *was*." In the same century Henry Fielding, in *Love in Several Masques*, has Vermella say: "pray sir, how *was* you cured of your love?"

Context 1: Subject is a plural pronoun (*we, you, they*):

- (61) (All Tasmanian: one woman, Tamar: a, and four men: Chas: b–d, Rex: e–f, Noel: g, Harv: h–k.)
- a. ***we was*** *apparently, having an argument...when we was milking*
  - b. *they 'ad a pole up in the air, and they was pulling it [the hay] over a block...*
  - c. *...and they was taking pigs to the sale...and they was helping catch 'em.*
  - d. ***We was*** *up there cuttin and Frazer come onto us y' see,...*
  - e. *and you two fellas was down there tryin to get it out...*
  - f. *I remember us two boys was workin in the paddock,...*
  - g. ***We was*** *winning easily*
  - h. *and they – o' course 'e drops the axe and away 'e goes, and the last Percy seen of 'im was they was goin over the brow o' the hill...*
  - i. *...lots of fellas that was fairly close to home*
  - j. ***the cows wasn't*** *milked.*
  - k. ***they*** [pieces of a skiff holding seeds for broadcasting] *wasn't a bad apparatus.*
  - l. *an' here's these possums, they was all skinned.*
- (62) (Queensland: Drilling for artesian water. *Bonanza*, 206–207)  
*Gawd, we was long enough gittin' downta it. But she's comin' up nice, now,...*
- (63) (Sydney: Two builders arguing the point while drinking in a hotel.  
*They're a Weird Mob*, 73)  
 'Course ***they was***. ' *Mightna been.* ' *I got two quid to say they was.*'
- (64) (Sydney: Builders on holiday. *They're a Weird Mob*, 73)  
*Wondered wot yez was doin' with the guns.*

Context 2: subject is singular *you*:

- (65) (Tasmania: speakers are Harv: a–c, his brother Rex: d, Rex's wife, Tamar: e and Harv's wife, D: f.)

- a. *You soon convinced him **you was** entitled to the timber that was on it?*  
 b. *...until they found out what sort of a fella **you was**, and whether **you was** really trying.*  
 c. *But **you 'us** [was] goin along pretty well, Chas.*  
 d. ***You was** late again.*  
 e. ***Was you?** mm.*  
 f. ***You was** too cunning for that, Chas.*

(66) (Sydney: Builders conversing. *They're a Weird Mob*, 133)  
***You was** a jackeroo once, **wasn't you** Den?*

Table 2 compares two groups of Tasmanians, one consisting of nine whose colloquial style is predominantly AusVE speakers and three who are StAusColE speakers. The total number of occurrences of *was* and *were* for each of four grammatical contexts (subject of the verb distinguished as *we*, *you*, *they* or plural NP and *there* with plural NP) appear in the columns to the left and the percentages showing overall frequency on the right.

Table 2. *were*: subject agreement

AusVE speakers (N = 9)			
	<i>was</i>	<i>were</i>	% <i>was</i>
we	29	29	50
you	17	19	46
they/NP	53	86	39
there	19	3	86
	132	123	52
StAusColE speakers (N = 3)			
	<i>was</i>	<i>were</i>	% <i>was</i>
we	2	14	14
you	0	9	0
they/NP	0	27	0
there	4	1	80
	6	51	11

It can be seen that the *there*-context is non-diagnostic: for both groups of speakers *was* is the normal form after *there*. In each of the other contexts, however, there is a sharp difference between AusVE and StAusColE speakers: the AusVE group used *was* about 40 percent of the time in each environment while the StAusColE group varied between zero (with *we* and *you*) and 14 percent (with *they*/NP).



The distributional pattern is different for present tense forms. Non-standard *is* for standard *are* occurs about 15 percent of the time in our sample of AusVE speakers and almost as often among StAusColE speakers. All these uses of *is* are with a plural subject or predicate nominal, none with singular *you*, and most link existential *there* with a plural noun phrase. However, many examples of *is* with plural subjects were found in Australian works of fiction dating from about a century ago.

- (67) (Melbourne: *The Sentimental Bloke*)
- a. *when **things is** goin' crook* (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 30)
  - b. ***them words...is** singin' in me 'ead the 'ole day long.* (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 34)
  - c. *Me **days an' nights is** full of schemes and plans* (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 32)
  - d. ***These is** 'appy days* (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 15)
  - a. *"A boy!" she sez, "An' **bofe is** doin' well"* (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 35)
- (68) (Queensland: *On Our Selection*)
- a. *Dave, the **hens is** all off the roost.* (*On Our Selection*, 95)
  - b. *"Well, you know," said Mother quietly, "**the boys is** men now"* (*On Our Selection*, 155)

This material suggests that *is*-generalisation may have been more common in AusVE speech 100 years ago than now.

### 3.2. Non-standard past tense and participial forms of strong verbs

The past and participial forms of strong verbs have been notoriously unstable in English since at least the 12<sup>th</sup> century, because the various patterns of the inflectional paradigms provide diverse models for change by analogy. Today's standard past and participial forms were in many cases not yesterday's standard forms. Thus, the modern preterite *broke* is an innovation replacing earlier *brake*. The participle *helped* has replaced *holpen*. Lady Mary Wortley in a letter in 1513 asserts that "all the verses were *wrote* by me". In *Sense and Sensibility*, Jane Austen has Lucy Steele say "he has never *gave* me a moment's alarm".

In AusVE speech several strong verbs show non-standard past and past participle forms, with the same form being used for both. In a study of working-class adolescent speech in inner-city Sydney, Eisikovits (1987) reports merger of the simple past and past participle form in at least some instances for the following: *become*, *brang*, *come*, *broke*, *done*, *give*, *rung*, *seen*, *sung*, *swum*, and *took*. She also found (Eisikovits 1989a) that female speakers tend to decrease their use of non-standard forms with age while males, if anything, tend to increase their use of such forms.

- (69) (Inner-Sydney adolescents, reported in Eisikovits 1987)
- a. *Someone might '**a took** 'em.*

- b. *I know a kid who **got bit** by a horse.*
- c. *I got a letter sent home an me mum **seen** it.*
- d. *His mate took a photo and **give** it to him.*
- e. *We were talking about when she **run** away from home.*

The data from Tasmania exhibit the same pattern of merger of past tense and past participle forms. Irregular past tense forms in the Tasmanian material include *become*, *brung*, *come*, *done*, *give*, *run* and *swum* and *seen*. Participle forms include *bit*, *broke*, *et*, *fell*, *give*, *knowed*, *laid*, *swore*, *took* and *went*.

- (70) (Tasmania, Noel tells his cousins about Uncle Bill's return from New Zealand.)

*'E **come** into the shop after 'e **come** back, y'see, and 'e **come** into the door ... so they went an' 'e **come** in, and 'e said "I'm BACK, y'know"*

- (71) (Tasmania:)

- a. *an' 'ere's Claude, he'd **laid** down under the pine hedge, y'see, ... I don't know how he **come** to get this name. [Harv, reminiscing about a local character]*
- b. *I should '**ve threw** the buggers over the fence there. [Chas, referring to bottles of beer]*
- c. *I couldn't '**ve went** home. [Chas]*
- d. *'You bloody well oughtn't to," 'e said, "I **give** you away tonight!" [Chas, quoting his father-in-law, Mick, tell Mick's daughter that he had given her hand in marriage]*

- (71) (Queensland: *On Our Selection*)

- a. *Dave's **got bit** by a adder. (Joe, *On Our Selection*, 51)*
- b. *I never said I **was bit**. (Dave, *On Our Selection*, 54)*
- c. *He's **bit** me. (Joe, *On Our Selection*, 93)*

- (72) (Melbourne: *The Sentimental Bloke*)

- a. *I'd **a give** a quid To 'ad it on the quite wivout this fuss (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 26)*
- b. *I dunno 'ow I **done** it in the end (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 14)*
- c. *Wot in the 'ell's 'e think I **come** there for? (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 27)*
- d. *I **seen** 'er in the markit first uv all (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 12)*
- e. *Some of the other fellas **seen** 'im (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 27)*
- f. *We '**ave trod** around Egypt's burnin's sand (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 49)*

Other Tasmanian examples appear in examples (1–2), (5), (7–8), (28) and (61) above.

In the Tasmanian corpus there is a clear distinction between the AusVE and StAusCoIE speakers in the treatment of these four strong verbs. Nine speakers of AusVE speakers averaged 65.4 percent for non-standard past forms of *come, do, give, see*. Three StAusCoIE speakers in Tasmania, in the same conversational corpus, averaged 6.3 percent non-standard forms. There was considerable variation among the AusVE speakers, with basilectal speakers averaging 80 to 100 percent non-standard forms and some others showing much lower percentages.

Other strong verbs occur less often with non-standard past forms but there is still a marked difference between AusVE and StAusCoIE speakers in the Tasmanian corpus. A count of past tense and participial forms for the 10 most frequent strong forms showed a fairly consistent pattern. The highest six scores for non-standard forms were all between 30 and 39 percent for AusVE speakers, with an average of 31 percent. This compares with only 3.3 percent for the three StAusCoIE speakers.

Given that many of the non-standard forms used in AusVE are found in many other non-standard varieties of English around the world, varieties that have been separate from AusVE for at least two centuries, we can conclude that AusVE has in these cases retained usages that were current in varieties of British English in 1800 or earlier.

### 3.3. Non-standard *don't*

AusVE shows another usage retained from standard colloquial speech of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: *don't* for standard *doesn't*.

(73) (Tasmanian men)

- a. Mark: *See, he **don't** start twistin till 'e gets above that limb, does 'e?*
- b. Harv: *...and Shep' -/ o' course 'e's a cunning old fella, 'e **don't** run away with it, y' see, 'e just walks off with it, ...*
- c. Harv: *Well, 'e **don't** know what to do about it, Alec.*

(74) (Sydney: Builders, *They're a Weird Mob*)

- a. *If 'e **don't** work 'e **don't** eat.* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 98)
- b. *'E **don't** like dirt in 'is backyard.* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 37)

(75) (Melbourne: *The Sentimental Bloke*, 48)

*It **don't** fit in our plan*

### 3.4. Merger of simple past and present perfect

Eisikovits (1989b) found evidence for some weakening of the opposition between simple past and present perfective in working-class Sydney adolescent speech. The auxiliary *have* was often omitted before past participles, as in:

- (76) a. *I only **been** there a coupla times.*  
 b. *We haven't started this year but we **done** it before.*

The dropping of *have* was more frequent and more acceptable before the participle *got* than before *been*, and more common and acceptable before *been* than before other participles. Engels and Ritz (2000) present evidence that the present perfect is generally used for a wider range of functions in Australian English than in either British or American English.

#### 4. Negation

##### 4.1. Negative concord with indeterminates

Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century double negatives were the norm in English speech in constructions containing a negated verb followed by one or more NPs introduced by an indeterminate element: *a, any, anything, ever* or *either*. That is, a negative occurred not only before the main verb (or its auxiliary), but also on at least the first indeterminate element, a pattern known as negative concord. Negative concord is found in many contemporary non-standard English varieties, always as an optional rule which is applied more commonly to indeterminates inside the clause than outside it.

Double negatives are frequent in AusVE. All the recorded examples are limited to one indeterminate, there being no cases in the data of two indeterminates in the same negative sentence.

- (77) (Tasmanian men.)  
 a. *We wouldn't go **no** further (Chas)*  
 b. *Unless he's got you signed up he can't do **nothing** (Harv)*  
 c. *She wouldn't want **no** tractor (Harv)*  
 d. *I couldn't see **no** snake (Harv)*  
 e. *I **never** said **nothing** for a while (Chas)*  
 f. *No, definitely, he **never** had **nothing** to do with it (Chas)*  
 g. *an 'I **never** caught nothing (Scottie)*
- (78) (Sydney: Builders. *They're a Weird Mob*)  
 a. *I didn't see **nothing**.*  
 b. *They don't want **none** of his money.*
- (79) (Melbourne: *The Sentimental Bloke*)  
 a. *It weren't **no** guyver neither (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 13)*  
 b. *'Ere's me, 'oo **never** took **no** 'eed 'o life (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 24)*  
 c. *there ain't **no** certs (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 25)*  
 d. *I ain't got **nothin'** worth the fightin' for (*The Sentimental Bloke*, 44)*

#### 4.2. Non-standard *never*

In constructions where a past tense verb is negated, AusVE speakers generally use *never* for the auxiliary plus negative, i.e. *did not*, or *didn't*, is replaced by *never*. All the following cases are semantically equivalent to standard punctual *didn't* + infinitive verb, not to *never* + past tense verb.

- (80) (Tasmanian men: Chas: a–c, Harv: d–e)
- a. *He never had the timber.*
  - b. *I never said nothing for a while.*
  - c. *He never done anything.*
  - d. *He never woke up to it then?*
  - e. *You never opened the bar...*
- (81) (Melbourne: *The Sentimental Bloke*)
- a. *'Ere's me, 'oo never took no 'eed 'o life (The Sentimental Bloke, 24)*
  - b. *A squarer tom, I swear, I never seen (The Sentimental Bloke, 13)*

### 5. Personal pronouns

#### 5.1. General remarks

The personal pronoun system used in AusVE conforms to that of StAusColE, and Standard English, in most respects. However, AusVE has some optional pronominal usages that depart from Standard Formal English, some of which it shares with StAusColE. These include the use of:

- (a) first person plural accusative *us*, for first person singular *me*, when the speaker makes a request for something to be given to or obtained for him/her, e.g. *Give us a light for me pipe, Give us him, Dig us out a pudlick (They're a Weird Mob, 53, 56, 92)*
- (b) first person plural accusative *us*, for nominative *we*, in NPs of form *us* (ADJ) N, e.g. *us two boys* (see [61 e])
- (c) a distinctive second person plural pronoun (*viz, youse*)
- (d) masculine and feminine pronouns for inanimates (see section 2)
- (e) third person singular generic *they*, for standard *he*, or *he or she*

Features (a)–(b) are shared with StAusColE, although the frequency of (b) is higher in AusVE. (c) is stigmatised and its claims to a position in StAusColE are borderline. When the Prime Minister of Australia said *I love yiz all*, on a radio talkback show in 2002, it was front page news. Letters to the newspapers expressed surprise, pleasure or amusement at the unexpected informality. Feature (d) is equally common in StAusColE and some people have recently come to use it in formal spoken and written contexts. The following section elaborates on (c).

5.2. Second person plural *yiz*

Speakers of Tasmanian Vernacular English optionally distinguish between second person singular *you* (subject and object) and second person plural, usually pronounced /jəz, jɪz/, sometimes spelt *yez*, *yiz* or *y's*, with an emphatic variant [yʉwz], usually spelt *youse* or *you's*. These forms of the plural pronoun are paralleled in Ireland (see Filppula, this volume) and are sometimes attributed to the Irish component of Australia's early colonists.

- (82) (Tasmania: Rex is talking to his nephew Ken.)  
*...yiz ha/you had 'im loose and you didn't realize*  
*...y'had 'im broke off...at the root...*  
*But 'e was a big turnip. Yiz 'd worked on it!*
- (83) (Tasmania: same conversation as [2])  
 Harv: *Talk about eatin it after the dog went under the house,...*  
 Chas: *Yiz woulda took it off 'im.*
- (84) (NSW: *They're a Weird Mob*; a–c are men, d is a woman.)  
 a. *Wondered wot yez was doin' with the guns. (They're a Weird Mob, 43)*  
 b. *But this time I'm tell' yez about we was buildin' a garage. (They're a Weird Mob, 42)*  
 c. *Do yez want a ride down in the truck or don't yez? (They're a Weird Mob, 41)*  
 d. *Where were youse this mornin? (They're a Weird Mob, 147)*
- (85) (Queensland: *On Our Selection*, 88)  
*A circus!" Sal put in, "A pretty circus you's 'd have!"*

## 6. Ellipsis

## 6.1. Ellipsis of relative marker after subjects

When forming restrictive relative clauses, Standard Formal English allows a choice between the relative markers *which*, *that*, and no marker (zero) with one exception: ellipsis of the relative marker (zero marking) is not acceptable when the relative pronoun is the subject of the relative clause. AusVE speakers seldom use *which* as a relative marker. In a sample of four Tasmanian speakers the choices of relative clause marker had the following frequencies: *that* 48.8 percent, zero 46.5 percent, *which* 4.7 percent.

In AusVE zero-marking is also possible for subjects. In a study of Cessnock speech, a small country town in New South Wales, Shnukal (1989) found that working-class informants on average used zero 50 percent of the time for relativised subjects and middle class speakers only 17 percent. Some 'careful' middle class speakers showed no use of zero-marking. Zero marking is most common

when the relativised subject is also the subject of the matrix clause. Matrix clauses that permit zero-marking typically postulate the existence of an entity (*there be* + NP, NP + *have* + NP). Examples of zero-marking of relativised subjects follow, with the position of the zero indicated by '#':

- (86) (Cessnock, NSW [Shnukal 1989: 71])
- a. *Then I have my youngest son # lives in Cessnock.*
  - b. *I knew a girl # worked in an office down the street there.*
  - c. *Edwards was the only one v # used to be out there.*
  - d. *I think it was only one out of about ten of us # did the finals.*
  - e. *I would say that anybody #'d be earning over 12,000 dollars a year would probably be policemen...*
- (87) (Tasmanian men)
- a. *'Ere [There] w's one # used to charge through a hole in the fence. (Chas)*
  - b. *There's a tree up there # died for no apparent reason. (Mark)*

Each of the examples in (88) shows a relative clause within a relative clause, with the relative marker left out in both cases. The speaker is a man from Tennant Creek, Northern Territory.

- (88) a. *There's a bloke # works for them # goes bull-catching in the Gulf.*  
 b. *There's a fellow # came from Canberra # owns it.*

## 6.2. Ellipsis of clause-initial constituents

AusVE dialogue and narrative are characterised by a wider variety of ellipses in clause-initial position than is acceptable in more standard styles. In narratives and in first-speaker or initiating position in dialogue interchanges, for example, speakers often omit a subject pronoun before a verb phrase and sometimes leave out both subject pronoun and auxiliary verb before a main verb, or subject pronoun with existential verb before a predicate nominal, or a main verb before a prepositional phrase.

Six kinds of ellipses were singled out for mention in Table 1 (variables 15–20) and five of these are shown below. The contextual conditions constraining these ellipses cannot be discussed in detail here but the examples should give a general indication. In the examples that follow the omitted material is reconstructed and added in square brackets. In some cases what is left out is not a particular lexical unit but a broader category of material, whose meaning is recoverable up to a point.

Subject ellipsis:

SUBJ.PRO + VP => VP

Examples (89–95) are all from Tasmania:

- (89) Chas: *No, I picked him up.* [I] *Picked him up on the road.*  
Harv: *Oh.* [You] *Gave him a ride?*
- (90) (Chas is describing how a bushman slipped on a piece of bark.)  
Harv: *Ha! ha!*  
Chas: [He] *Nearly bit the end off 'is PIPE.*  
Harv: *Ha! ha! ha!* [He] *Went down on the greasy bark.*
- (91) Chas: *No, I got in. I was in bed.* [I] *Got in.* [I] *Got home.*
- (92) Harv: *'E just opened up and left 'er there.* [He] *Just swears at 'er.*
- (93) Harv: *And [he] took 'er [the leg of lamb] in and put 'er on the plate!*  
Chas: *Yeah.* [He] *Carved 'er up. Yeah.*
- (95) Mark: *'E's a wild cherry.* [He] *Has little cherries on 'im and they're good to eat too, them cherries.*

Subject + auxiliary ellipsis before a transitive verb:

(SUBJ.PRO + AUX + Vtr + OBJECT) => Vtr + OBJECT

- (96) a. [I will] *See yez in the mornin'.* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 75)  
b. [I would] *Sooner 'ave a beer* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 49)  
c. [Do you] *Get the idea?* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 49)  
d. [Do you] *Reckon 'e pulled 'im?* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 73)  
e. '[It would] *Take too long 'aving' a bath before tea', said Joe* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 49)  
f. [Would you] *Care for a swig mate?* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 143)

Subject + *be* + article ellipsis before an adjectival phrase:

NP + *be*-TENSE + ART + (ADJ) + N => ADJ + N

Examples (97) and (98) are from a Tasmanian conversation and a Melbourne auction call, respectively.

- (97) Chas: *By jeez, [it was a] hell of a bloody performance.*
- (98) Auctioneer: *ooh [It's a] not very impressive crowd today Laurie*
- (99) a. [He's the] *Best hoop [jockey] in the country, the old Darb.* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 72)  
b. [He's a] *Shrewd 'ead the old Cooky.* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 72)  
c. [Is he a] *Friend of yours?* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 56)  
d. [It's a] *Wonder the stewards didn't 'ave 'im up.* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 72)  
d. [You're a] *Funny bugger, aren't yer?* (*They're a Weird Mob*, 65)



*There + be* ellipsis before a negative:

*There + be* -TENSE + NEG + N + (LOC) => NEG + N + (LOC)

Examples (100–102) are from Tasmania:

(100) Chas: *I went up to the old road y'know 'nd [there was] no bugger home*

(101) Harv: *'nd one of them [the police] charged straight through...into the parlour, y'know and – [there was] no one there.*

(102) Harv: *You left 'im for FRAzer, wi- with PLEASURE.*

Chas: *Yes.*

Harv: *[There was] Not ENOUGH of 'im.*

*as...as* ellipsis:

SUBJ.PRO + *be*-TENSE + *as* + ADJ + N + *as* + S => (*as*) ADJ + N + *as* + S

Comparative constructions like *X is as quiet as a mouse* and *X is as straight as you'll ever get it*, can be reduced by (a) omitting the subject (always a definite NP) and the verb, or, (b) by omitting these plus the first *as*.

(103) a. *[He's as] Good as anybody you'd get.* (Sydney: *They're a Weird Mob*, 50)

b. *[She was as] Fast as any horse over a mile.* (Tasmania: Ken)

subject + verb ellipsis before preposition:

SUBJ + V + PP => PP

A prepositional phrase is sometimes used sentence-initially without a supporting subject or verb. Although most such phrases occur as part of imperative constructions, as in (103), it we also find declaratives of this form, as in (104).

(104) Harv: *Off with you in the bar, Rev! In the bar. Quick." I said, "In the bar!"*

(105) Chas: *...and the old horse got a bit sick of it. Backwards and bloody forwards all the time.*

The varieties and uses of ellipses in conversational and narrative speech have not been extensively studied. Systematic use of clause-initial elisions is a characteristic of certain other spoken genres of English, such as play-by-play sporting commentaries and auction-calling (Kuiper 1996). There such elisions have a dual function, contributing to economy of speech and heightening dramatic effect.

## 9. Conclusion

AusVE is arguably an endangered language. It is true that the absolute number of AusVE speakers has risen over the past century as the Australian population

has increased from about 3.7 million to 20 million. However, AusVE speakers make up a diminishing proportion of the total population, as more people stay at school longer and move into white collar jobs where non-standard speech styles are marginalised. All the indications are that upwardly mobile Australians adopt StAusCoLE as their public, mainstream style. Will AusVE fade away completely in the next generation or two, or survive only in a few remote corners of the community?

AusVE is bound to change, bound to lose a few of its distinctive elements and to add others. But it is likely to remain strong on its home ground. This home ground is in those places where people, especially men, gather to do manual work, to play sports or to socialise with their mates. In these contexts AusVE has much covert prestige, even among men who by occupation and income rank as decidedly middle class. Even its more hackneyed clichés and formulae encompass values that are deep-rooted in Australian society, such as giving everyone ‘a fair go’ (roughly, an equal opportunity) and those that Wierzbicka (1991: 3, 165–182) labels “mate-ship”, “masculine toughness”, “antiverbosity” and “antisentimentality”, disrespect for authority, a dislike of “whingers” (constant complainers), “bludgers” (those who sponge on mates) and “dobbers” (those who betray a mate by reporting his wrongdoing to authority) and an enjoyment of “chiacking” (rough teasing, giving cheek), “shouting” (buying rounds of drinks for friends and even for the house) and “yarning” (unhurried, relaxed conversation). And the best AusVE speech has a marvellous economy of expression, lively imagery and droll humour and an earthiness that more standard speech seldom matches.

Be that as it may, AusVE is a variety of English whose grammar and discourse conventions remain little-studied. There is room for systematic research on many individual variables that have so been only casually investigated, on how variants cluster, and on women’s use of AusVE variants, and on differences between age groups and across regions.

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# Hypocoristics in Australian English\*

Jane Simpson

## 1. Introduction

A characteristic of English is the existence of alternative forms of words or names (*mozzie*, *mosquito*; *Mountie*, *Mountford* [surname]), which share part of the same form, have the same denotation, but have different connotations and different levels of formality. The use of such alternative forms is widespread in Australia:

Aren't we reaching the inane, when we Australians start accepting *beddie*, *cardie* (cardigan), *Chrissie pressie*, *ciggie*, *habbie* (haberdashery), *leckie* (lecture), *prossie* (prostitute), *sandie* (sandwich), *tabbie* (tablet), *weepie*, and *yewie* (U-turn)? Of course, these and other habits are not restricted to Australia, but the increase in their popularity here is phenomenal. (Gunn 1972: 60)

While Australian English does employ similar forms in babytalk, these forms are used by adults in everyday speech and writing. They are mentioned in popular works on Australian English (Keesing 1982), and many examples are to be found in word-lists of Australian English. They are also common in New Zealand.

Alternative forms of words are often given labels based on meaning such as "hypocoristic" or "diminutive", or labels according to form, such as "abbreviation", "clipping", "shortening". The latter are inadequate because alternative forms of words with similar connotations may also be created by adding endings to monosyllabic words. Thus *connie/conductor* (shortening plus suffixation) and *blockie* 'person who has a farm/orchard on a block' (suffixation), and *dieso/diesel mechanic* (shortening plus suffixation) and *birdo/bird-watcher* (suffixation) all provide an informal way of talking about a person's occupation and do not seem to differ in connotation, regardless of whether shortening or suffixation is used. Likewise *gifty/gift* (suffixation) and *prezzie/present* (shortening plus suffixation) do not differ in connotation. There also seems no difference in connotation between these methods of forming hypocoristics, and forming hypocoristics by shortening words which naturally end in a sound like one of the suffixes. *Dermo/dermatitis* (shortening plus suffix), and *gastro/gastro-enteritis* (shortening) do not differ in connotation.

In this paper I propose that shortening, shortening plus suffix, and suffixation can all be seen as deriving words by matching forms to templates. I call words derived in this way *hypocoristics* for want of a better label. The data derives from 1740 hypocoristics collected by David Nash and me from Australian speakers and

written sources, other authors' works (Dabke 1976; Dermody 1980; Wierzbicka 1984; Taylor 1992; McAndrew 1992), talk-back radio, and our observations over the last sixteen years. Most of the collection is incorporated into a dictionary (Sussex forthcoming). Babytalk (Mühlhäusler 1983) and personal names (Poynton 1984; Taylor 1992) will not be discussed. I consider first the phonological and morphological properties of hypocoristic formation, and then comment briefly on the uses and meanings of hypocoristics.

## 2. Templates for hypocoristic formation

To capture the similarity in meaning between the three ways of creating alternative names (shortening, shortening plus suffixation, and suffixation), we can adopt the proposal of Weeda (1992), building on work by John McCarthy and Alan Prince, that such relations are best generalised as the aligning of the original form with a "template". The meaning can then be associated with the template, thus explaining the similarity in meaning of the forms created by shortening and those created by suffixation. Thus *connie* is formed by aligning the three-syllable form *conductor* with a two-syllable template, the second syllable of which ends in /i/. *Blockie* is formed by aligning the one-syllable form *block* with the same two-syllable template.

(a) reduction to the first syllable (or part thereof) and adding an ending:

σ		σ	
Δ			
<i>con</i>	<i>ductor</i>	<i>i</i>	→ <i>connie</i>

(b) adding one of the endings to a monosyllabic word:

σ		σ	
Δ			
<i>block</i>	<i>?farmer?</i>	<i>i</i>	→ <i>blockie</i>

If the first two syllables of a word happen to match the template, then there is shortening without suffixation (the final vowel may change form due to being stressed).

(c) keeping the first two syllables of a word whose second syllable matches one of the endings:

σ		σ	
Δ			
<i>card</i>	<i>igan</i>	→	<i>cardie</i>
	[ə]		[i:]

There is also a monosyllabic template for shortening.

(d) reduction to the first syllable (or part thereof):

σ  
 Δ  
 ump | ire            →    ump

These templates accommodate more than just alternative forms of words, they also allow derivation of new words which are not alternatives to the base. Australians may refer to an alcoholic as an *alko*, *alkie*, *wino*, *plonko*, *dipso*, or a *goomie* if they drink methylated spirits. *Alko/alkie* are formed by aligning the four-syllable source *alcoholic* with a two-syllable template, the second syllable of which ends in /i/ or /o/, and *dipso* has a similar origin from *dipsomaniac*. But there is no obvious source meaning ‘alcoholic’ involving the word *wine* or *plonk* (alcohol), or *goom* (methylated spirits). While *alcoholic* and *alko* share their denotation, *wino*, *plonko* and *goomie* do not have the same denotation as the words from which they are derived.

Thus the main strategies for forming hypocoristic words (proper names or common nouns) in Australian English involve the creation of one or two-syllable words which fit certain templates. These can be categorised into nine classes, which include seven of Taylor’s (1992) eight morpho-phonological classes of alternative names for first names and surnames. (I exclude the extensions used in babytalk and lover’s talk: *Suzykins*, *Mikeypoodles*, *Brendy Poos* [Mühlhäusler 1983; Poynton 1984], as well as the jocular *-aroo* in the *Soccaroos*, a soccer team). Seven of the eight classes also apply to alternative words for common nouns. I list these below in order of commonness in our data-set, adding two smaller classes. Taylor’s eighth class consists of renditions of names including foreign name particles, but his examples can all be subsumed under existing templates: *Deek/(Robert) Di Castella* fits the monosyllabic template; *Hacca/(Robert) Holmes à Court*, fits the syllable plus /a/ template, via the acronym, and has the added pun; *the Von/(Norman) Von Nida* fits the “the” pattern. The forms in “the” are restricted to proper names (including place names), and are discussed in Simpson (2001). The forms in /s/ and two syllables are also mostly restricted to proper names.

Table 1. Major templates for forming hypocoristic words in Australian English

	Template	Number of forms in data	Percentage	Hypocoristic	Base form
/i/	syllable plus /i(s)/ (Taylor’s class 2)	824	47%	<i>coldie</i> <i>gladdie</i>	<i>a cold beer</i> <i>gladiolus</i>
/o/	syllable plus /o/ (Taylor’s class 4)	333	19%	<i>prawno</i> <i>journo</i>	<i>prawn seller</i> <i>journalist</i>

Table 1. (continued) Major templates for forming hypocoristic words in Australian English

	Template	Number of forms in data	Percentage	Hypocoristic	Base form
1 syl	one syllable (Taylor's class 1)	200	11%	<i>pav</i>	<i>pavlova</i> (me- ringue pudding)
/a/*	syllable plus /a/ ([ə]) (Taylor's class 3)	145	8%	<i>boozier</i> <i>ekka</i> <i>Mazza</i>	<i>pub</i> (from 'booze' alcohol) <i>ecstasy tablet</i> <i>Marian</i>
the	'the' followed by one or two syllables (Taylor's class 6)	125	7%	<i>The Don</i> <i>The Weal</i> <i>The Brindies</i>	<i>Donald</i> <i>Bradman</i> <i>Camooweal</i> <i>The Brindabella</i> <i>Mountains</i>
/as/	syllable plus /as/ ([əz]) (Taylor's class 5)	48	3%	<i>chocker(s)</i> <i>Tuggers</i>	<i>chock-full</i> <i>Tuggeranong</i> (Canberra sub- urb)
/s/	syllable plus /s/ (Taylor's class 5)	34	2%	<i>scrotes</i> <i>Jules</i>	<i>scrotum</i> <i>Julie, Julia</i>
2 syl	two syllables	17	1%	<i>chrysanth</i> <i>Mullum</i>	<i>chrysanthemum</i> <i>Mullumbimby</i>
Acr	acronyms (Taylor's class 7)	14	1%	<i>E</i> <i>KI</i>	<i>ecstasy tablet</i> <i>Kangaroo</i> <i>Island</i>
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	1740			

\* I use /a/ to refer to the ending usually spelled <-er>, which is pronounced as a mid central vowel in Australian English, or as a syllabic /r/ in Irish or American English.

### 3. Phonological and morphological properties

The major phonological problems in forming English hypocoristics are discussed in Weeda (1992), and for Australian English in Simpson (2001). They arise in re-analysis of morpheme boundaries, and in determining the number and size of the syllables to be kept in polysyllabic reductions.

Obvious morpheme boundaries are usually respected so that words are broken up at the putative morpheme boundary: *towie/towtruck driver*, rather than \**tow-tie*. Rare exceptions are *strawbs/strawberries*. Forms like *reno/renovation* contain old morpheme boundaries (compare *innovation*) as do composite names: *Lapa/La Perouse* (place in New South Wales).



Normally only one syllable of the base word is kept in a hypocoristic, although a few exceptions do exist, mostly words with short initial syllables, *anotherie*, *dilutie* ('worker with diluted skills', McAndrew 1992), *colourie* 'marble', *sophisto/sophisticated*, *dissolvo/dissolving stitches*, or Graeco-Latin prefixes ending in /o/, *physio/physiotherapist*. Others include *enduro/endurance bike track*, *fantazzo/fantastic*.

The first part of the template is usually the maximal initial part of the base word which can be a word-final syllable *insto/institutional share-holder*, unless the original matches both syllables of the template, *anthro/anthropologist*. /o/ forms generally take more consonants than /i/ forms: compare *aggro/aggressive* with *aggie/agricultural student* (the *agri* of *agribusiness* is a different kind of blend). However this is not always so: *cappo/capstan cigarette* rather than \**capsto*.

The major modifications involve:

- The alteration of /fricativeC/ clusters in reductions of polysyllabic forms, either by deleting the /s/: *lakky band/elastic band*, *plakky bag/plastic bag* or by deleting the second consonant and voicing the fricative: *arvo/afternoon*, *Aus-sie* (pronounced [z])/Australian, *fantazzo/fantastic*, *mozzie/mosquito*, and even *Kazi people/Kastelorizo denizens*, a Greek island off Turkey;
- the substitution of liquids by /z/ on personal names (*Shazza/Shaz/Sharon*, *Ez/Ellen*). This is another solution to the longstanding English problem of how to make pet names of personal names starting (C)(C)V(V)RV (Taylor 1992). However this solution has not yet been applied to common nouns: *paro/paralytic* (drunk), *warry/war story*;
- the substitution of short vowels for long vowels or diphthongs: *Rizza/Ryan*, *Razza/Rachel*, *Chaz/Charles*;
- the occasional insertion of /b/: *freebie/free thing*, *Kimbo/Kim*.

Hypocoristics created by these templates can undergo further compounding: *ex-banky/ex-bank-worker*, *no-schoolie/child that does not go to school*, *non-rezzie/non-residential student*, *hot crossie/hot cross bun* (Dermody 1980). Another notable feature is the maintenance of plural in plural or pluralia tantum forms: *boardies/board-shorts*, *The Goldies/The Goldfields hotel*, and the addition of plural when forms are reanalysed as pluralia tantum forms: *cozzies=bathers/bathing-costume*.

### 3.1. One syllable plus /i/

This is the most common hypocoristic form in our data. In both general and Australian English it is often associated with babytalk and adult play babytalk (*doggie* 'dog', *tummy* 'stomach'). In Australian English it has been used for derived words, and in normal adult conversation and writing, since the nineteenth century. Thus

Morris (1898) has *beardie*, ‘a kind of codfish’, *gummy* ‘shark species’, *roughy* ‘Victorian fish’. The alternative form was used in casual writing by the early twentieth century – a letter written by a South Australian soldier in World War I contains: “There were chrysanthemum curtains to the windows and withal real *crysies* and marigolds arranged on the tables.” (Jacob 1919: 38).

Proper names often have hypocoristics in /i/, whether first names (*Mushy/Mush-taq Abdullah*, a sportsman [*The Australian*, 5/8/2002: 29]), or surnames: (*Warnie/Shane Warne* [a well-known cricketer]). Taylor (1992) suggests that /i/ is more common as a suffix to monosyllabic surnames than on truncated surnames, but /i/ does occur on truncations: *the Woodies* (the sportsmen Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge), *Mountie* (the anthropologist Charles Mountford – form recorded in private letter in 1934).

/i/ is also suffixed to brandnames: *Lykie* (*Lycoming* aeroplane engine); place-names *Palmie/Palm Beach*, religions *Prezzie/Presbyterian*, denizens of a place: *Bankie* ‘inhabitant of *Bankstown*, a suburb of Sydney’, and sportsteams, *the Swannies/the Sydney Swans*.

/i/ appears on a wide range of nouns (Dabke 1976; McAndrew 1992), including monosyllabic common nouns forming names of occupations: *speechie/speech pathologist*, *kelpie/kelp-harvester*, and reductions of polysyllabic words: *pollie/politician*, *devvie/developer*. /i/ is also found on a range of other alternative words: *serries* (*serepax* tranquillisers).

While some polysyllabic adjectives have alternative shortened forms using /i/: *plakky/plastic*, *marvey/marvellous*, the effect of adding /i/ to a monosyllabic adjective is often to create a noun: an *oldie*, *toughy*, *quickie*, *coldie*. The denotations of the derived nouns vary widely: a *bluey* may be a blue swimmer crab, a bedroll, a blue woollen cloth (all from the *Macquarie Dictionary*), a summons, a bill, the name of several Australian lizards, a policeman, a singlet, or a blue plastic sheet put on bed for incontinence.

Some verbs have alternative forms in /i/: *spitty/to spit-polish*. As with adjectives, /i/ is occasionally added to verbs to create nouns: *clippie* ‘ticket examiner’, *twisty/twist* (a brand of savoury snack). But the stressed suffix *-ee* which forms verbs from nouns is probably a different suffix (*escapee*, *refugee*, *absentee*; Dabke 1976). These forms are not alternative words, and are often more than two syllables long. However, the two syllable forms are only distinguished by stress (*grantee*), and some forms have two interpretations, thus both *blockee* and *blockie* appear for ‘someone farming a block of land’.

Some appear with /is/ [iz], where the /s/ may be the possessive found in business names: *Pennies* (*Penfolds* a business name), the pluralia tantum of ‘works’: *steelies/steelworks*, in the brandnames of babies’ nappies *Huggies/hug*, and in pseudo-babytalk words for food, drink and events involving them, *drinkies*, *nibblies*, *Weeties* (cereal brandname), and in the phrase formation *I’ve got the munchies* (= ‘I feel hungry’).

### 3.2. One syllable plus /o/

In many English varieties forms with /o/ are used for words of three or more syllables whose second syllable is open and spelled with an /o/: *limo/limousine*, *mayo/mayonnaise*, *porno/pornography*. The same is true in Australian English: *speedo/speedometer*, *geo/geologist*, including occasionally more than two syllables, *medico/medical practitioner* (cf. *medico-legal work*). /o/ is also found on brandnames in many English varieties: *creamo* (non-dairy creamer) is an American example, and the British cartoonist Giles used /o/ for invented brandnames in his cartoons: *Cracko*, *Brecko*, *Laxo* (all breakfast foods). Australian English has *Sealo/seal* (brandname of sealed silo), *Speedos/speed* (brandname of swimming costume).

Irish English has /o/ on first names and surnames (e.g. *Jayo/Jason*), and this use is quite widespread in Australia, particularly on men's names (Dabke 1976): first names: *Davo/David*, and surnames: *Demo/Dempster*. /o/ on proper names occurs more commonly with shortenings, rather than additions of /o/ to a monosyllabic name (Taylor 1992). /o/ is also used for followers of a religion: the *Salvoes/the Salvation Army*. It is used on placenames: *Rotto/Rottnest Island* (Simpson 2001).

In Irish English /o/ is also found on some common nouns denoting occupations or types of people: *journo/journalist*. Australian English has many such forms: *misho/missionary*, *misso/Miscellaneous Workers' Union member*, *reffo/refugee*. New words for types of people are derived from adding /o/ to one syllable words: *pisso/piss* 'sewerage worker' (Dabke 1976). The punning blends *aspro* 'male prostitute' and 'associate professor' also fit this pattern.

/o/ appears on a range of other common nouns: *greaso/grease*, *greasy* 'fish shop', *compo/compensation*, *bizzo/business*. /o/ also occurs on adjectives *snazzo/snazzy* 'stylishly attractive', *obno/obnoxious*, *tropo/tropical* = 'mad', *techo/technical*. /o/ also occasionally occurs on participles: *recoed* ['ri:koud]/*reconditioned* (engine). Occasionally a verb can be created: *gutto/* < *gutless* 'to do something cowardly', as in: "I'm supposed to have these tests, but I keep *guttoing* out." (private e-mail to J. Simpson 1/9/1995).

### 3.3. First syllable only

This strategy is common in other English varieties. In Australian English it is found on both proper names and common words. Proper names include first names (*Sophe/Sophie*), surnames (*Newk/John Newcombe*), placenames (*Oz/Australia*), denizens of places (*the Vics/denizens of Victoria*), business names (*Tatts Lotto/Tattersdalls lottery*), or sports teams (*the Tiges/the Balmain Tigers Rugby League team*). Unusual examples taking the final syllable include several Australian Rules football team names: *the Pies/the Magpies* (Collingwood team) (compare *maggie*, the usual hypocoristic for 'magpie').

Common nouns include names for types of person (*crim/criminal*), names for things (*daff/daffodil* or *daphne*), names for attributes (*beaut/beauty*). This strategy is sometimes used on verbs: *to veg out/to vegetate*.

### 3.4. One syllable plus /a/

The hypocoristic use of /a/ was recorded in England from Oxford students' slang on placenames: *Padder/Paddington Station* (Jespersen 1942: 233). In Australian English it often appears on placenames as a result of just taking the first two syllables of the name: *Coona/Coonabarabran* (NSW). It is found on a few placenames: *Macker/Macquarie University*, and from an acronym: *the Wacka/the Western Australian Cricket Ground*.

/a/ is also found on proper names, usually with a change of liquid to /z/: *Mazza/Marilyn; Wozza/Wally, Warren, Warwick*. This change has been extended to other consonants: *Brezza/Brett*.

It is hard to tease out the hypocoristic use of /a/ from quasi-agentive *-er* attached to nouns. The /er/ of *broomer* 'person who sweeps the shearing floor' (Dabke 1976) could be the quasi-agentive *-er*. Reductions of polysyllabic words such as *acca/acker* 'academic staff member' seem to fit the same pattern. It is possible that *gutser* etc. in *come a gutser/cropper/greaser* 'fall off' could also be quasi-agentive. However, others do not have even quasi-agentive meanings: *bummer/bum* 'bad thing' (cf. *what a bummer/whopper*), *sanger* 'sandwich', *boozer* 'pub', from *booze* 'alcohol', *rubber* 'pub' from rhyming slang *rubberdy-dub*. A prearranged parliamentary question is a *Dorothy Dix* or a *Dorothy Dixer*, suggesting that the *-er* does not have much agentive meaning. The well-known *cuppa/cup of tea or coffee* fits the same form.

There are occasional examples of adjectives: *imma/immature, para/paralytic* 'drunk'. On verbs the use of /a/ is hard to distinguish from agentive *-er*. While *killer* 'cow to be killed' and *chopper* as 'cow sold for pet food' are derived from the verbs *kill* and *chop*, *chopper* as 'helicopter' has several sources: onomatopoeia (the noise of the helicopter) and evocative of 'copter' as well, perhaps of the blades *chopping* the air.

### 3.5. One syllable plus /as/

The ending is pronounced [əz]. It has been common in British English slang also used in Australia (*champers/champagne, Honkers/Hong Kong, starkers/stark naked, chockers/chock-full*), and Taylor (1992) suggests that they are seen as British English. However in the last twenty-five years the use of /as/ has increased in Australia, e.g. *ackers/acne, spackers/spastic* 'drunk'. It is common in Australia on proper names: surnames *Knappers/Tim Knapstein*, a well-known wine-maker (*Sydney Morning Herald Good Weekend*, 24/10/1998: 85), first names *Anders/An-*

drew, and place names *Lajas/Lajamanu*. There are some ambiguous forms: *Mac-cas/McDonalds* fast food could be /a/+plural/possessive -s, or /as/.

### 3.6. The *s*-ending

This ending /s/ ([s], [z], [əz]) is rarely found on common nouns in normal speech; it is mostly found on proper names, and in babytalk and lovers' pet names: *Hi sweetums/ducks/cuddles/possums. Time for dindins/milkies/beddie-byes now.* (Mühlhäusler 1983; Taylor 1992). As such it has fewer constraints on the number of syllables of the stem to which it attaches. On common nouns the same form appears in the ill-health/bad feeling constructions: *He's got/he gives me the shits/runs/irrits/creeps/heebeejeebies*, but the meaning appears to relate to other plural form diseases like measles and mumps. Whether endings such as /as/ or short forms such as *Baz* (*Barry/Bazza*) should be analysed as containing the *s*-ending is a matter for investigation.

## 4. History and users of hypocoristics

Most studies of Australian English have been based on written sources and on the researchers' intuitions about spoken English. *The Macquarie Dictionary* and the *Australian National Dictionary (AND)* are the products of lexicographers working in Sydney or Canberra. While the lexicographers have made considerable efforts to overcome their regional bias, existing claims about Australian speech are generally based on information from a limited set of dialects and registers, mostly from New South Wales (e.g. McAndrew 1992; Taylor 1992), and Victoria (e.g. Dabke 1976 and Dermody 1980 rely chiefly on Victorian informants). A bigger collection of diminutives (Sussex forthcoming) is in preparation. So far, no quantitative study has been done of who uses which hypocoristics when, and of the history of hypocoristic use in Australia. The area is wide open for a thorough socio-historical investigation. In what follows, I sketch some starting-points for further work.

Morris (1898) is an early collection of new words (including some slang) and new uses of old words found in Australia and New Zealand. He read widely, but notes that his collection is biased toward Victorian forms. There are only a few examples of the strategies discussed here: /i/ and /a/ predominate. Dabke (1976) notes the competition between /i/ and /a/ as ways of deriving words for people or things associated with what the noun base denotes. /i/ is found early: *bullocky/bullock team driver* (earliest *AND* citation 1869). However, Morris has slightly more /a/ words derived from nouns than /i/ words: *long-sleever* 'big drink', *pin-er* 'person cutting huon pine', *sundowner* 'swagman', *Waler* 'New South Wales horse', *scrubber* 'wild horse or bullock', *Derwenter* 'released convict from Ho-

bart'. He also has a couple of /a~i/ variants: *slusher/slushy* 'cook's assistant at shearing-time', *swaggie* as 'humorous variation on swagman' comparable with *swagger* in New Zealand. Dabke adds more variants between /a/ and /i/: *surfer/surfy*, *bullocky/bullocker*, *broomey/broomer*, and suggests that /i/ has taken over the derivational use from /a/ on nouns.

Morris also has one example of an alternative word: *Tassy* 'a pet name for Tasmania' used by Victorian cricketers. Dabke (1976), observing the lack of /o/ final words in Morris, suggests that /o/ was not yet established in the language (although *mado* 'shark species' is a possible example). Taylor (1992) notes that in 1905 /a/ appears on hypocoristics of personal names in a Sydney school: *Knocker/Knox*, *Jonah/Jones*, *Modger/Maurice*, and suggests that it may have been more common than /o/. This all suggests that in the 1890s, in general Australian writing and in Melbourne speech, /a/ and /i/ were the most common ways of forming new words, that /i/ was in use for hypocoristics and not just in babytalk, that /o/ and /as/ were not yet established in Melbourne speech.

The development of /o/ probably resulted from a confluence of sources (McAndrew 1992). One is calls and street cries: *smoke oh/smoke ho!* 'work-break' (earliest AND citation 1865, from a Melbourne magazine), "Milk oh!" *milk-oh* 'milk-seller' (earliest AND citation 1907) and *bottle-oh* 'person who sells bottles' (earliest AND citation 1898 from a Sydney magazine). McAndrew (1992) observes that the /o/ suffix is strongest in the former penal colonies in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and Queensland, and less strong in South Australia, which was a colony of free settlers. This is in part born out by the distribution of place-names with hypocoristics ending in /o/, which is strongest in New South Wales – I have recorded 27 there compared with three in Queensland and eight in Victoria. Only two forms have been recorded in South Australia, in 2002 from teenagers, *Coro/Coromandel Valley* and *Mazzo/Maslins Beach* (more commonly *Maslins*). Neither form was recognised by older consultants. However the prevalence of "deflationary -o forms" may stem not from the "anti-authoritarian, larrikin societies of former penal settlements" as McAndrew (1992: 180) proposes, but rather from the fact that the penal colonies of New South Wales and Queensland had many people of Irish origin who may have been using the /o/ hypocoristic of Irish English. Since the Irish were, by and large, in the underclasses, their speech would have taken a while to enter into written language and thus into dictionaries. The suggestion that /o/ was used by the underclasses accords with Taylor's assertion that most of these templates "were originally – indeed still were as recently as my boyhood [in Sydney] in the 1940s – only encountered in the language of working-class Australian men" (Taylor 1992: 520).

Like Taylor, other sources also comment on the use of /o/ and /i/ forms by men (Dabke 1976: 36; McAndrew 1992), and to a lesser extent, the use of /i/ forms by women (Gunn 1972: 60). Keesing (1985) notes the comparative absence in earlier

discussions of alternative forms in /i/ used by women (*cardie/cardigan*). Some authors express a distaste for these, which may reflect a greater use by women of certain /i/ hypocoristics such as *lippie/lipstick* that are more readily seen as babytalk than are /i/ hypocoristics used as names of occupations such as *shitty/sanitation cart worker*.

## 5. Meaning and uses of hypocoristics

One of the difficulties assigning meanings to the templates described here is that there is no hard and fast line between new words and alternative words. At one extreme are forms like *blockie* which, as Dabke (1976: 41) notes, has no obvious full form, *smoko* and *stackie/stack* ‘library officer who takes books to and from the library stacks’. At the other are forms like *lippie* which, presumably, are always seen as alternative words, and so are likely to contrast in connotation with the full form. In between, there is much speaker variation. Some people might always use the word *wharfy* for *wharfside worker*, and so for them the word probably lacks the connotations of *lippie*. Others might alternate, and so for them *wharfy* probably has different connotations from *wharfside worker*.

Taylor (1992) argues that for proper names the difference between /i/ and /o/ is mostly morphologically determined, rather than semantically determined. However, both McAndrew (1992) and Wierzbicka (1984) find differences in the meaning and use of the /i/ hypocoristic and /o/ hypocoristic on alternative words. McAndrew (1992: 174) writes: “If the Aussie diminutives seem mostly elegant, affectionate and familiar, the contractions ending in /o/ are more coarse, vigorous, excessive [...] Far from diminutives, they are pejoratives denoting clumsiness, roughness, ugliness, contempt, laziness, carelessness and excess.” Wierzbicka (1984: 128–129) suggests that the /i/ hypocoristic on common nouns is a “depreciative”, which expresses informality and solidarity. She describes its meaning:

We sent you a prezzie (we are having a barbie)  
 I don't think of it as a big thing  
 I assume you think of it in the same way  
 talking about it I am in a good mood  
 (as people are when talking about small things towards which they feel good feelings)

While McAndrew's pejorative /o/ fits with the American use of the ending *creeper/creeper person*, *weirdo/weird person* etc., Wierzbicka (1984: 129) describes the use of the /o/ hypocoristic (on examples like *journo/journalist*, *demo/demonstration*), as something which conveys “toughness, informality, good humour and anti-intellectualism”. She describes its meaning:

I don't think of it as anything special  
 I am used to it  
 I assume that you think of it in the same way  
 talking about it I don't want to use long words  
 (as people who think of it as something special do)

If the differences between the endings is purely semantic, then variation in uses of form would be expected, both between base forms and hypocoristics, and between types of hypocoristics. That is, we might expect *journalist* to appear as both *journo* and *journalie* with different meanings. But they do not. *Journo* is the favoured form. Occasionally there are pairs. Sometimes one form, usually an /i/ form, is seen as babytalk: Dabke (1976) notes *goody/goodoh*, *kiddy/kiddo*, and compare *jarmies~PJs/pyjamas*, and *kanga* (babytalk)~*roo/kangaroo*. However, sometimes different hypocoristics have different denotations, with the /o/ form more likely to denote a person: *herp* 'reptile', *herpo* 'herpetologist'; *chockie* 'chocolate', *chocko* 'chocolate soldier' (Army reserve); *sickie* 'sick leave', *sicko* 'psychologically sick person'; *plazzo* 'plastic nappy', *plakky* 'plastic' (adjective). But often there are no clear differences: *milky~milko/milkman*, *commy~commo/communist*, *weirdy~weirdo/weird person*, *garbie ~garbo/garbage collector*, *kindie~kinder/ kindergarten*; *bottlie~bottlo/bottle merchant*, *sammie~sandie~sangie~sanger~sambo/sandwich*, *preggie~preggo~preggers/pregnant*, *Proddo~Proddy/Protestant*, *pro~prozzo~prostie~prozzie/prostitute*. Speakers who use more than one hypocoristic may assign to them the meanings proposed by Wierzbicka. But if a speaker uses only one of the possible hypocoristics, for them the hypocoristic may have a general meaning of informality, and not the proposed fine-grained differences. This remains to be explored.

- \* This paper is derived from work David Nash and I have been doing on hypocoristics in Australian English, originally inspired by Anna Wierzbicka's work, and now also in collaboration with Roland Sussex. The data is available at:

<http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/linguistics/research/hypocoristic/>

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# **Australian creoles and Aboriginal English: morphology and syntax**

Ian G. Malcolm

## **1. Introduction**

This chapter is concerned with the three major varieties of “restructured English” (Holm 1988–1989: 538) which are currently spoken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians: Kriol, Torres Strait Creole and Aboriginal English. A brief overview of the contact experience leading to the development of these varieties is provided in Malcolm (other volume) and will not be repeated here. These English-derived forms of communication constitute the home languages of the majority of Indigenous Australians, having supplanted more than half of the estimated original 250 Indigenous languages spoken in Australia in 1788 when it was claimed and occupied by the British. Kriol is spoken in an area extending from the far north of Western Australia, across the Northern Territory and into western Queensland. Torres Strait Creole is spoken in the Torres Strait Islands between Cape York and Papua New Guinea, and along the north coast of the Queensland mainland. Aboriginal English, with some regional variation, is spoken in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Australia.

The restructuring of the English superstrate which has led to the development of Australian creoles has involved, initially, the appropriation for cross-cultural communicative purposes of a basically English lexicon, often in association with the relexification of Indigenous conceptualizations, concurrent with the radical simplification of the English morphology and syntax. Under ongoing Indigenous substrate influence, as the simplified code has functioned increasingly for communication among Indigenous speakers, it has gone through a “developmental continuum” (Mühlhäusler 1997) towards a stabilized form as a new contact language. Further stabilization and elaboration, under specific sociolinguistic conditions, led, in the Northern Territory, to the development of Kriol on the basis of one pidgin foundation and, in the Torres Strait Islands, to the development of Torres Strait Creole on the basis of another pidgin foundation. Aboriginal English developed in different parts of the country from pre-existing pidgins of which one, New South Wales Pidgin, was dominant. It also underwent ongoing influence from standard and non-standard varieties of English spoken in Australia and in some places from creoles, whether stable or going through a “restructuring continuum” (Mühlhäusler 1997) back towards the superstrate language. In Kriol and Torres Strait Creole it is possible to observe in the morphology and syntax innovative

processes which are a part of the developmental continuum away from English. In Aboriginal English there are traces of these processes but also evidences of the restructuring continuum under the influence of Standard English.

## 2. Morphology and syntax of Australian creoles

The morphology and syntax of Australian creoles will be traced here using, where possible, the categories developed by Holm (1988–1989) for the description of Atlantic creoles, and will thus facilitate comparison across hemispheres. Features and speech samples cited come from more detailed descriptions. For Kriol there are Hudson (1981), Sandefur (1979, 1991a,b), Sharpe and Sandefur (1976, 1977), Fraser (1977) and Steffensen (1977), and for Torres Strait Creole Crowley and Rigsby (1979), Dutton (1970) and Shnukal (1988, 1991). To avoid interrupting the flow of the text, these sources will not always be individually referenced.

### 2.1. Verb phrase

#### 2.1.1. *Subject-verb agreement*

Subject-verb agreement is not normally an issue, since there is little or no inflectional morphology and words tend to be monomorphemic (Shnukal 1991: 187). Where the creole is restructuring towards English, inflected and uninflected forms of the verb may be used interchangeably without regard to subject agreement. Sandefur (1979: 138) has pointed out that, although it does not have concord between the subject and verb in terms of number, Kriol may observe concord between verb and object, in that continuative aspect in the verb co-occurs with a plural, but not a singular, object.

#### 2.1.2. *The unmarked verb*

Holm (1988–1989: 150) observes that in Atlantic creoles the unmarked verb may refer “to whatever time is in focus, which is either clear from the context or specified at the beginning of the discourse.” This may also be the case with Australian creoles. Kriol verbs carry no tense inflection. In Torres Strait Creole, the verb is usually used with the simplest indicative form and the tense needs to be inferred, as in *Me go* ‘I went’.

#### 2.1.3. *Tense*

Although the unmarked verb may imply tense, there is also an optional pre-verbal past tense marker, *bin* (or *imin*), as in *dog i bin kambek* ‘the dog has returned’ or

*im bin gilim me* 'he hit me'. *Bin* is derived from *been* and, under the influence of restructuring towards English, may be replaced by *been*. In Torres Strait Creole, another form of *bin* is *bi*, as in *we bi gou* 'we went'.

Future tense may be expressed in Kriol with the pre-verbal future tense marker *gon* (or *na*), with *andi*, as in *Im andi jilib jaya* 'He will sleep there', or (at least in child speech) with *gotta* (*garra*) (Fraser 1977: 154). Alternatively, the future meaning may be expressed through the adverb *tumaro*. In Torres Strait Creole, future is optionally signalled by the pre-verbal marker *go*.

#### 2.1.4. Aspect

Perfect aspect, in Kriol, may be expressed with the adverbial *na* at the end of the clause. Continuous aspect may be expressed with the suffix *-bad* (or *-obad*), as in *im bin megimbad ginu* 'he was making a canoe'. Alternatively, with intransitive verbs, continuous aspect may be expressed through reduplication, as in *im bin gray gray* 'he was crying'. Kriol expresses progressive aspect with the marker *-in*, as in *jing-in-at* 'singing out, calling'. Durative or iterative aspect may be expressed in Kriol with *-bat*, as in *silip-in-bat-silip-in-a-bat* 'sleeping'. Habitual state may be expressed by the reduplication of adjectives (Steffensen 1977).

In Torres Strait Creole, Shnukal (1991: 189) identifies six core aspect markers: *kip* (iterative), *nomo* (cessative), *oltaim* (habitual), *pinis* (completive), *stat* (inceptive) and *stil* (continuative).

#### 2.1.5. Negation

In Kriol, the verb may be negated by a preposed modal *gan* 'cannot' or *nomo*, as in *Yu nomo bin albim mi* 'You didn't help me'. *No* and *nomo* operate similarly in Torres Strait Creole, except that in this creole *nomo* may be placed at the end of the sentence. When using past tense, Torres Strait Creole speakers may negate the verb by preceding it with *neba*.

#### 2.1.6. Forms of be

There are few traces of the Standard English verb *be* in Australian creoles. Equational sentences do not require the copula in the present tense in Kriol, hence *Olabat bigbala yem* 'They are big yams' (Sandefur 1979: 123), or in Torres Strait Creole, hence *Mislam i boi blo Kemuel* 'Mislam is Kemuel's son' (Shnukal 1991: 189–190). However, a copula is required where the past tense is salient, as in *Olabat bin bigbala yem* 'They were big yams'. The same principle applies to descriptive sentences, as in the following examples from Torres Strait Creole: *Kaikai i redi nau* 'The meal is ready now' (Shnukal 1991: 190) and *Ai bi fored* 'I was in the bows' (Dutton 1970: 147). Another variant current in the Kimberley is *bin bi*,

as in *I bin bi nugudwan* ‘He was unwell’. Existential sentences (in Kriol and in Torres Strait Creole) do not use ‘be’ but ‘got’, as in *I gad kap ya* ‘There is a cup here’ (Shnukal 1991: 190). ‘Be’ does not function as an auxiliary, except in the form of the pre-verbal past tense marker *bin*, sometimes contracted to *imin*, as in *Imin gaman* ‘He came’.

### 2.1.7. Parataxis

In Atlantic creoles Holm (1988–1989: 183) has observed the occurrence of serial verbs, which he describes as follows: “a series of two (or more) verbs; they both have the same subject and are not joined by a conjunction (‘and’) or a complementizer (‘to’) as they would be in European languages.” A similar (though not identical) feature was observed by Dutton (1970: 145) in Torres Strait Creole, where he found a tendency to place a large number of short sentences side by side without conjunctions. His transcription into “informal English” reads “me fellow go down take spear me two go fishing go that way me two go now come front point and looked that all the same thread there...” Shnukal (1988: 81–82) refers to this phenomenon as “verb chaining”, as in *Da bot i kam anka ya* ‘The boat came and anchored here’ and *Em i ledaun de krai* ‘He was lying there weeping.’

### 2.1.8. Passive

The passive, where it occurs (and it has been rarely recorded in the literature) is formed with *git*, as in *Olabat andi* (‘will’) *git kil* ‘They will be/get killed’ (Sandefur 1979: 137). Hudson (1981: 115) identifies *git* with an inchoative derivational affix (‘become’) found in most traditional Aboriginal languages.

### 2.1.9. Transitive

Verbs used transitively may be marked with a suffix, most commonly *-im*, as in *Im gilim gegarru* ‘He is hitting a kangaroo’ (Sharpe and Sandefur 1976) or *Im bin chak-im spia* ‘He threw the spear’ (Crowley and Rigsby 1979). There are a number of other variants of the suffix, including *-am*, *-em*, *-um*, *-i* and *-it* in Kriol and *-em*, *-e*, *-i* in Torres Strait Creole. In Kriol, there is vowel harmony between the final vowel of the verb stem and the vowel of the suffix, although the unstressed vowel may be neutralized (Hudson 1981: 37). When a transitive suffix is used, it is possible for the object to be deleted (Sandefur 1979: 116). Although it is normal for verbs used transitively to be marked, the suffix may be omitted where there are no other verb suffixes and the object is overtly stated (Hudson 1981: 37).

### 2.1.10. *The adverb*

The adverbial element in the verb phrase in Australian creoles is commonly expressed through suffixing. Sandefur (1979: 117–118) has identified nine adverbial suffixes in Kriol: *-an* ‘on’, *-ap* ‘up’, *-at* ‘out’, *-bek* ‘back’, *dan* ‘down’, *-in* ‘in’, *op* ‘off’, *-ran* ‘around’ and *-wei* ‘away’. Shnukal (1991: 187) has referred to “four adjective and adverb suffixes, *-kain*, *-said*, *-taim* and *-wei*, which express approximation, location, time and manner, respectively.” Fraser (1977) observed in Fitzroy Crossing Children’s Pidgin the common use of the free adverb morphemes *epritime* ‘always’, *longtime* ‘a long time ago’ and *longway*.

## 2.2. Noun phrase

In Kriol, the noun phrase consists of a noun, optionally modified by adjectives and pronouns (Sandefur 1979: 77). In Torres Strait Creole, it consists of “an obligatory noun or pronoun and four optional elements. The order of these elements is: determiner, quantifier, adjective, noun/pronoun, preposition phrase” (Shnukal 1991: 188).

### 2.2.1. *Determiners*

Steffensen (1977) has observed that in Kriol the demonstrative system (*jad-dad*, *dij*) takes over part of the function performed by articles in Standard English, and that the determiner is often omitted. This corresponds to the process observed by Holm (1988–1989) with respect to Atlantic creoles. In Fitzroy Crossing Children’s Pidgin /tat/ or /ta/ may occur in the place of a determiner (Fraser 1977: 199). Another variant, /dædæ/, has been observed in a post-creole context in Halls Creek. Torres Strait Creole has four articles, all of which are optional: *da* ‘the’ (singular, definite), *dem* ‘the’ (plural, definite), *wan* ‘a, an’ (singular, indefinite) and *ol* ‘in general’ (plural, generic) (Shnukal 1988: 24). The use of *wan*, derived from Standard English *one*, as an indefinite article is not peculiar to Australian creoles. It is attested, for example, in Miskito Coast Creole English by Holm (1988–1989: 192). Dutton (1970: 148) observes that Torres Strait Creole speakers may add *the* or *a* where they would not be required in Standard English, as in *the las Sunday* ‘last Sunday’ and *come in a two dinghi* ‘came in two dinghies’. This could be seen as evidence of decreolization in process.

### 2.2.2. *Number*

Australian creoles do not inflect the noun for plural number. The only exception to this is the reduplicated plural used in *olmenolmen* ‘old men’ and *olgolgamen* ‘old women’ (Sharpe and Sandefur 1977: 54). Plural may be indicated by a collective

nominal such as *mab* or *lad*, as in *dad lad men* ‘those men’ or a quantifier such as *bigmab*, *lada* ‘much, many’, *oldə* ‘all the’ or *sambala* ‘some’. The general plural quantifier *alla* is used in Fitzroy Crossing (Fraser 1977). Torres Strait Creole employs six general quantifiers: *lelbet* ‘a few’, *olgeda* ‘all’, *plenti* ‘many’, *pulap* ‘plenty of’ and *tumas* ‘too many’ (Shnukal 1991: 188).

### 2.2.3. Gender

Australian creole nouns do not inflect for gender. In Torres Strait Creole it is possible (though not obligatory) to mark gender by the use of the adjectives *man* ‘male’ and *oman* ‘female’, as in *man ata* ‘grandfather’ and *oman ata* ‘grandmother’ (Shnukal 1991: 188).

### 2.2.4. Possession

Possession is not marked on the noun but is expressed by a derivative of Standard English *belong*, namely *bla* or *blanga* in Kriol, as in *Dad san bla mai sista im lib la Sydney* ‘My sister’s son lives in Sydney’, or /bəloŋ/ in Torres Strait Creole, as in /neim bəloŋ kenu/ ‘canoe’s name’. Another form, common in the Kimberley, is *fo* (<*for*), as in *Tharran bla Trisa fo dedi* ‘That is Teresa’s father’s’.

### 2.2.5. Pronouns

The personal pronoun morphology of Australian creoles is distinctive and incorporates a number of discriminations not common to Standard English. In addition to singular and plural, dual number is marked, and first person dual and plural pronouns have alternative forms to make explicit the inclusion or exclusion of the person spoken to. On the other hand, neither the subject/object distinction nor the third person singular gender distinction is strongly maintained (as is the case with many other creoles [Holm 1988–1989]). The recognition of the semantic categories of dual and inclusive is something Kriol and Torres Strait Creole share with many of Australia’s Indigenous languages (Koch 2000: 38). In Kriol, most personal pronouns have several variants. In some cases the variation is on a regional basis (see e.g. Sandefur 1979: 89) and in other cases on a stylistic (i.e. acrolectal vs. basilectal) basis. Table 1 shows the main variant forms which have been reported on the basis of research carried out in the Northern Territory (Steffensen 1977; Sharpe and Sandefur 1976; Sandefur 1979) and Western Australia. Forms reported from Western Australia are shown in bold. In order to standardize the orthography, the conventions of Hudson (1981) are used in all cases. It should be noted that Koch (2000: 38) has provided a description of what he calls Aboriginal Pidgin, spoken in Central Australia. The forms he lists (though not shown here) are among the variants listed for Kriol in Table 1



and, in particular, those recorded from Western Australia. Koch sees Aboriginal Pidgin, on the basis of its maintenance of dual number and the inclusive/exclusive distinction, as related both to Melanesian Pidgin English and to Australian Indigenous languages.

Table 1. Personal pronouns of Kriol

	Singular	Dual	Plural
first person inclusive		<i>yunmi</i> <b><i>minyū</i></b> <i>wi</i> (subj) <b><i>as</i></b> (obj)	<i>yunmalabat</i> <i>minalabat</i> <i>yunminalabat</i> <b><i>wi</i></b> <b><i>wilat</i></b> <b><i>wi</i></b> <b><i>as</i></b> (obj)
exclusive	<b><i>ai</i></b> (subj) <i>mi</i> (subj or obj) <b><i>ai</i></b> (subj) <b><i>a</i></b> (subj) <b><i>mi</i></b> (obj)	<i>mindupla</i> <i>mindapala</i> <b><i>mindupala</i></b> <b><i>wi</i></b> <b><i>as</i></b> (obj)	<i>melabat</i> <i>mipala</i> <i>wi</i> <b><i>mela</i></b> <b><i>mipala</i></b> <b><i>wi</i></b> <b><i>as</i></b> (obj)
second person	<i>yu</i> <b><i>yu</i></b>	<i>yundapala</i> <i>yundupala</i> <i>yunpala</i> <b><i>yundupala</i></b>	<i>yupala</i> <i>yunab</i> <i>yuwalabat</i> <i>yumpala</i> <i>yu</i> <b><i>yupala</i></b>
third person	<i>i</i> <i>im</i> <i>i</i> (fem or masc)* <b><i>im</i></b> (masc, S or O)* <b><i>it</i></b> (fem, S or O)*	<i>dupala</i> <i>indupala</i> <b><i>dupala</i></b>	<i>alabat</i> <i>olabat</i> <i>olobat</i> <i>al</i> <i>dei</i> (subj) <i>dem</i> (obj) <i>je</i> <b><i>dei</i></b> (subj) <b><i>dem</i></b> (obj) <b><i>olabat</i></b> <b><i>ol</i></b> <b><i>olap</i></b> <b><i>tat lat</i></b>

\* These distinctions have been reported for Fitzroy Crossing Children's Pidgin by Fraser (1977).

Table 2. Personal pronouns of Torres Strait Creole (Broken)

	Singular	Dual	Plural
first person inclusive	<i>ai</i> (subj) <i>mi</i> (obj)	<i>yumi/wi</i> (subj or obj) <i>mitu/wi</i> (subj or obj)	<b><i>yumi</i></b> <i>yumpla/wi</i> (subj or obj)
exclusive			<i>mippla/wi</i> (subj or obj)
second person	<i>yu, yə</i>	<i>yutu</i> (subj or obj)	<i>yupla</i> (subj, obj)
third person	<i>em, i</i> ('he, she, it')	<i>demtu</i> (subj or obj)	<i>demplaa/ol</i> (subj) <i>demplaa/em</i> (obj)

(Data based on Shnukal 1988, supplemented by Dutton 1970. Forms reported only by Dutton are shown in bold.)

The Torres Strait Creole personal pronoun system contrasts with the Standard English system in similar ways to the Kriol system. However, it differs from Kriol in some of its distinctive pronoun forms as well as in exhibiting less variation. As Shnukal (1991: 187) has shown, its morphology is unified by consistent use of bound personal pronoun suffixes, *-tu* (dual) and *-pla* (plural).

Both Kriol and Torres Strait Creole have distinctive possessive pronouns/determiners. These are shown in Table 3, which reproduces data for Kriol (in bold) from Hudson (1981: 46) and for Torres Strait Creole from Shnukal (1988: 26). The Kriol examples shown here could be added too, in that “basically the personal pronouns are simply placed before a noun to indicate possession” (Sandefur 1979: 89).

Table 3. Possessive pronouns/determiners of Kriol and Torres Strait Creole (Broken)

	Singular	Dual	Plural
first person inclusive	<i>mai</i>	<i>yumi</i>	<i>yumpla</i>
exclusive	<b><i>main</i></b> ~ <i>mainwan</i>	<i>mitu</i>	<i>mippla</i>
second person	<i>yu, yuswan</i>	<i>yutu</i>	<i>yupla, yuswan</i>
third person	<i>em, is</i>	<i>demtu</i>	<i>demplaa, deya</i>

Kriol has a reflexive pronoun *mijalb*, *mijelb* or, in the Kimberley, *jelp* which is invariant for all persons. In addition, there are in Kriol reciprocal pronouns *mijamed* ‘together’ and *gija* ‘each other’. Torres Strait Creole has a set of reflexive pronouns formed by suffixing *-selp* to the above possessive forms, as shown in Table 4, derived from Shnukal (1988: 33).

Table 4. Reflexive personal pronouns of Torres Strait Creole (Broken)

	Singular	Dual	Plural
first person inclusive	<i>maiselp/miselp</i>	<i>yumiselp</i>	<i>yumplaselp</i>
exclusive		<i>mituselp</i>	<i>miplaselp</i>
second person	<i>yuselp</i>	<i>yutuselp</i>	<i>yuplaselp</i>
third person	<i>emselp</i>	<i>demtuselp</i>	<i>demplaselp</i>

### 2.2.6. Adjectives

As Sandefur (1979: 100) has noted, it is not always easy to distinguish adjectives from nouns in Kriol, as they frequently occur with nominalising suffixes *-bala*, *-wan* (as in *longpala* ‘long one’, *kukwan* ‘ripe’ and *nukutwan* ‘bad one’ [Fraser 1977]) and, occasionally, *-baga*. It is noted by Steffensen (1977) that the suffixes are used with numerals, as in *dubala boi* ‘two boys’, and are omitted in the prenominal position. The same author also notes that the adjective may be reduplicated to indicate plurality in the noun. Torres Strait Creole has a somewhat different pattern of suffixing and reduplication. Shnukal (1991: 187), as already noted in 2.1.10., lists four suffixes which may be used with adjectives or adverbs: *-kain* (approximation), *-said* (location), *-taim* (time) and *-wei* (manner). She also notes that reduplication may be used to intensify the meaning of the adjective, as in *kalakala* ‘multi-coloured’ and *spotsplot* ‘spotted.’

### 2.2.7. Prepositions and enclitics

With respect to Atlantic creoles, Holm (1988–1989: 207) has noted the tendency to use a generalized locative such as *na* to embrace ‘in’, ‘at’ and ‘to’, and the close linking of such prepositions to the verbs they accompany. These tendencies are present in Australian creoles. With respect to Kriol, Steffensen (1977) observed four prepositions: *la~langa* (locative), *bla~blanga* (possessive), *bram* (ablative) and *garrim* (associative). To these, Sharpe and Sandefur (1976, 1977) add *fo* (purposive). Shnukal (1991: 189) identifies four basic prepositions in Torres Strait Creole which may have been the only prepositions in the pidgin from which it is derived: *lo* (location, from ‘along’), *go* (goal, from ‘go’), *kam* (source, from ‘come’) and *blo* (possession, from ‘belong’).

There are also a number of enclitics or “second order suffixes” (Sandefur 1991a: 207), derived from English prepositions, which modify the meaning of verbs to which they are attached, as in *Im bin buldan* ‘He fell down’. Other examples include *-ap* ‘up’, *-bek* ‘back’, *-ad* ‘out’, *-in* ‘in’, *-an* ‘on’ and *-we* ‘away’ (Sharpe

and Sandefur 1976). A partly overlapping set of bound suffixes occurs in Torres Strait Creole, i.e., *-ap* ‘up’, *-aut* ‘out’, *-baut* ‘about’, *-daun* ‘down’, *-op* ‘off’, *-raun* ‘around’ and *-wei* ‘away’ (Shnukal 1991: 187).

### 2.3. Structure of sentences

#### 2.3.1. Statements

As is most common in Atlantic creoles (Holm 1988–1989: 211), the basic word order in Australian creoles is SVO. The subject is always the noun phrase coming before the verb, as in *Det olgaman silip* ‘The woman is asleep’, and the object follows the transitive verb, as in *Det olgaman kukumbat daga* ‘The woman is cooking food’, although the object can be brought to the beginning for purposes of topicalization, as in *Ola daga, deibin binijimap* ‘They ate all the food’ (Sandefur 1991a: 208).

#### 2.3.2. Questions

Questions may be formed in Kriol by intonation, as in *I shut-im up?* ‘Will I stop it?’ *I can go?* ‘Can I go?’, *You like-im?* ‘Do you like it?’ (Fraser 1977). Alternatively, they can be formed with the interrogative pronouns *hu* ‘who’, *blau/blanga hu/hu blanga* ‘whose’, *wanim* ‘what’, *wijan* ‘which’ as in *Hu bin dagat?* ‘Who has eaten?’, *Waijan mikibul bin binij?* ‘Which young bull died?’ (Sandefur 1979: 96–98), or *weya* (or its variant /wɛ:dət/), as in *weya dijan iya?* ‘whereabouts’ (Sharpe and Sandefur 1977: 60). A third option is the use of the tag question markers *ngi* or *intit*, accompanied by rising pitch (Sharpe and Sandefur 1977: 57). Torres Strait Creole also forms questions by intonation, or with the use of interrogative pronouns *hau* ‘how’, *haumach* ‘how much, how many’, *wee* ‘where’, *wen* ‘when’, *hu bla* ‘whose’ and *wanim* ‘what’ (Crowley and Rigsby 1979). The question tag *eh* also occurs regularly in Torres Strait Creole (Dutton 1970).

#### 2.3.3. Conjunctions

In Kriol, simple sentences are coordinated with *an* ‘and’, though, according to Steffensen (1977), this may also express subordination. Sharpe and Sandefur (1977: 57) list seven conjunctions: *an* ‘and’, *bat* ‘but’, *buji/bunji* ‘if’, *anles* ‘unless’, *dumaji* ‘because’, *wen* ‘when’ and *weya* ‘where’. Torres Strait Creole, as described by Shnukal (1988, 1991), may express coordination with *ane* or *an* or *ene* ‘and’, *bat* ‘but’, *insted* or *matha* ‘instead’, and *o* ‘or’ and may express subordination with *apta* ‘after’, *bipo* ‘before’, *sun* ‘as soon as’, *til* ‘until’, *wen* ‘when,

after, as', or with causal complementizers *bikos*, *daswai* and *prom*, conditional complementizers *ip* and *orels* and purpose complementizers *po* and *slong*.

#### 2.3.4. *Embedding*

There are a number of different ways of marking relative clauses in Kriol. These include the use of prepositional phrases, as in *Main andi gadim modiga andi kaman* 'My auntie with a car is coming' or *Wanbala olmen waya imin we:k langa Elsi bin dalim me* 'A certain man who worked at Elsey Station told me' (Sandefur 1979: 107). Alternatively, it is possible simply to incorporate one clause into another, as in *Jadan olmen ai bin luk, im sibbala* 'That man I saw is sick' (Sandefur 1979: 172). Relative clauses may also be formed with *wan*, as in *Dij buk wan ai bin gibit yu im olwan* (Steffensen 1977). In Torres Strait Creole, embedded clauses may be introduced with conjunctions (see 2.3.3.) as in *Apta we kam baik prom sos, wi go greibiyad* 'After we get back from church, we'll go to the cemetery' (Shnukal 1988: 77). Relative clauses may be introduced with *we*, as in *Dat stori we yu bi spik i prapa paniwan* 'That story you told was very funny', or (as in Kriol) may have no relative pronoun, as in *Ai lukraun mai klos ai bin luzim* 'I looked for my dress (that) I had lost' (Shnukal 1988: 81).

#### 2.3.5. *Verb repetition*

Iterative aspect may be expressed in both Kriol and Torres Strait Creole by repeating the verb, with the number of repetitions reflecting the intended emphasis, as in *Yu ran ran go!* 'Keep running!' *Em i go go go* 'He kept on going and going and going...' (Shnukal 1988: 51); *Ay ben wed wed wed wed wed wed najing* 'I waited for ages but nothing (came)' (Sharpe and Sandefur 1977: 53).

#### 2.3.6. *Predicate marking*

A pronoun, or pronoun-derived form, may be used in both Kriol and Torres Strait Creole to mark the division between the subject and predicate, as in *sambala boi de bin go* 'some boys went', *dad gel im getin fat* 'that girl is getting fat' (Steffensen 1977), and *Dog i dig-im graun fa kaikai boun* 'The dog is digging the ground to eat the bone' (Crowley and Rigsby 1979).

#### 2.3.7. *Object deletion*

In Kriol, the direct object may be deleted if it is recoverable from the context, as in *Imbin kukumbat* 'She cooked (the food)' (Sandefur 1991a: 208). This is associated with the practice of transitive suffixing of the verb (see 2.1.9.).

### 2.3.8. Pre-sentence modification

Crowley and Rigsby (1979) have reported that a small number of words in Torres Strait Creole may operate as 'pre-sentence modifiers', being placed at the beginning of a sentence to provide aspectual and/or tense extension to the meaning of the verb, as in *Klosap me go luk yu* 'I'll see you soon'. The words which operate this way are: *klosap* (immediate future), *baimbai* (distant future), *stil* (continuative), *oredi* (completive) and *mait* (dubitive) (see also 2.1.4.).

### 2.3.9. Post-sentence modification

Another set of words have been identified by Crowley and Rigsby (1979) as occurring at the end of a sentence to give aspectual modification to the verb, as in *Ol kaikai wanwan* 'They ate one after the other'. These words are: *pinis* (completive), *gen* (repetitive), *traï* (attemptive), *nau* (inceptive), *wanwan* (sequentive) and *yet* (continuative) (see also 2.1.4.).

## 3. Morphology and syntax of Aboriginal English

Unlike the creoles, Aboriginal English is distributed across communities in all areas of Australia. In some places there is contemporary influence from creoles which may result in transfer and interlanguage features. In most places the influence from pidgin/creole is less direct. The discussion here will focus on features which would seem to be systematically a part of Aboriginal English, though their occurrence may be variable.

### 3.1. Verb phrase

#### 3.1.1. Subject-verb agreement

Aboriginal English is much less regular than Standard English in marking agreement of the third person present tense verb with a singular subject. Hence, *he get wild* 'he gets/got wild'; *this go on top* 'this goes on top'; *he don't* 'he doesn't'. This is a widespread finding from all States/Territories studied, and from both rural and urban areas (Alexander 1965; Flint 1968; Eagleson 1977; Koch 1991: 98; Harkins 1994: 74; Elwell 1977; Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982: 91; Malcolm 1995: 135). The (frequent) non-observance of subject-verb agreement leads to the regularization of the morphology of the verb *to be* for all persons in the past tense, hence *We was awake; me and Tommy was awake; they was comin to Wagin*. This, with elision of the initial consonant and vowel of the verb, leads to /aiz/ for 'I was' as in *I-z goin'* (Sharpe 1977: 47; cf. Readdy 1961: 94).

### 3.1.2. *The unmarked verb*

The unmarked verb may often carry past tense meaning, as in *He hook him* 'He hooked him'; *one time we go there* 'went there once'. The past sense, if relevant, is retrievable from the context or from the co-text, as in *Last night me and my big brother fight*. The unmarked verb may occasionally function as an auxiliary or copula as in *I be cold* 'I am cold'.

### 3.1.3. *Tense*

Past tense marking is (as noted in 3.1.2.) optional in Aboriginal English although it is not completely absent. Past tense verbs are more frequently marked than unmarked and if past tense meaning is salient, there are cues other than verb inflection by which the listener can infer it. In narrative, the past tense may be marked early in the narrative and assumed thereafter. Where the past tense is marked, there are several common variants apart from that which corresponds to the Standard English form. With certain verbs (such as *see*, *do*, *come* and *run*) the form which corresponds to the past participle in Standard English (*seen*, *done*, *come*, *run*) may be used to express simple past tense. Some verbs have past tense forms which do not exist in Standard English, such as *brang*, *brung*. Some verbs which require vowel change for past tense in Standard English are liable to be inflected with the regular past tense morpheme, as in *shined* 'shone'. In some cases, in both remote and urban areas, the past tense may be doubly marked, as in *came* 'came' or *didn't stayed*. The creole past tense marker *bin*, sometimes phonetically altered to *been* in accordance with restructuring towards Standard English (as in *We never been la court* 'We did not go to court' [Eades 1996: 134]), is strongly present in most less urbanized areas, though Harkins (1994: 74) saw it as on decline in Alice Springs. The sense of *bin* is past, but not necessarily with the non-continuous sense of the simple past in Standard English.

The perfect tense is rarely expressed in Aboriginal English, and, where it is, the auxiliary is not present (Readdy 1961: 100; Eagleson 1977: 537–538).

Future tense is (as in informal Standard English) often unmarked and is not shown in the modal auxiliary nearly as often as in Standard English. It is most commonly expressed with a form, or derivative, of the verb *go* or (less commonly) *get*, e.g. *going to*, *gonna*, *got to*, *gotta*.

### 3.1.4. *Aspect*

On the basis of data from North-West Queensland, it has been claimed that the *bin* preverbal past tense marker may signify perfective aspect, as in *You bin come from Calvert* 'You come (or, have come) from Calvert' (Flint 1971: 3). However, *bin* in other areas may co-occur with the Kriol continuous aspect marker *-bat*, as

in *M... 'e bin tellimbat R to go in that place E bin drown* 'M...kept telling R to go to the place where E went under' (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982: 91). We have observed that *bin* does not signify perfective aspect in Kriol. It may, then, be that Flint's example represents a relexification of the Standard English perfect form 'you have come' in a variety where restructuring towards Standard English is taking place.

Progressive aspect is marked in Aboriginal English by the use of the present participle, normally without the auxiliary, as in *I sitting down, he laughing, I sneakin*. The auxiliary may be added where past tense marking is relevant, as in [*they*] *was playin* (Readdy 1961: 100).

### 3.1.5. Negation

The auxiliary verb, where there is one, may be negated by *not* (often reduced to *n* [Sharpe 1977: 45]), e.g. *You caan eatim raw*. Otherwise, a negator (*not, never* and, in Central Australia, *nomore* [Koch 1991]) may precede the verb, as in *Nail not float* 'The nail does not float' or *I ad no shirt on and bees never sting me* 'I had no shirt on and the bees didn't sting me'. Double negatives are not uncommon, e.g. *They didn't have no shirt*.

### 3.1.6. Forms of *be*

The copula is very often absent in stative clauses, as in *That a pretty snake* 'That's a pretty snake,' though sometimes *bin* may be used where the tense is relevant, as in *I bin young fella den* (Flint 1971: 3). The copula is not required to link a subject with its adjective complement, hence *He blind* 'He's blind'. The preferred way of forming existential clauses is also to avoid *be* in favour of *got*, as in *E got some sand there* 'There is some sand'. Alternatively, such clauses may be verbless (*Some sand there*). As has been noted above, Aboriginal English does not characteristically use *be* to form progressive verb forms except in the past tense (see 3.1.4.) or to form negative statements (see 3.1.5.). The morphology of *be* is simplified, in that, in the past tense, *was* serves for all persons (see 3.1.1.; note also 3.1.8. below).

### 3.1.7. Parataxis

The pattern observed in 2.1.7. is reflected to some extent in Aboriginal English, which does not make use of conjunctions as extensively as Standard English to link successive clauses. A Western Australian example is *I try to shout for D... the win' blow me, knock me over, so I fell an' laid down 'n I trieda git u' 'n win' know me over again* (Kaldor and Malcolm 1979: 414). In Queensland, Readdy (1961: 114) observed that the paratactic structure, with sentences following one



another with only pauses in between, was the commonest in her data, and Flint (1968, 1971) observed the common occurrence of coordinated clauses linked only with pauses or *and*. A similar pattern was noted by Elwell (1977) in the Northern Territory: *You can get kangaroo, you bring it someone meat, I'll eat it.*

### 3.1.8. *Passive*

The passive occurs rarely in Aboriginal English. Active voice is used in contexts where Standard English might use the passive (e.g. *A bee sting him* 'He was stung by a bee'). Where Aboriginal English speakers use the passive, they form it either without an auxiliary verb, as in *Most books made of paper* or with a form of the auxiliary verb *get*, as in *Uncle Steve, he got hit.*

### 3.1.9. *Transitive*

Although the transitive verb suffix *-im* or *-em* is essentially a feature of creole rather than Aboriginal English, it has been reported as occurring in Aboriginal English among speakers from relatively remote areas of Queensland (Flint 1971), Central Australia (Koch 1991; Sharpe 1977) and Western Australia (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982: 91), as in *I bin eatim up goanna* 'I ate up the goanna' or *We seeim buffalo got big horn* 'We saw a buffalo with big horns' (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982: 91).

### 3.1.10. *The adverb*

In common with other non-standard varieties of English, Aboriginal English may not use the *-ly* suffix on adverbs where it is required in Standard English, hence *You can easy do it*. On the other hand, Aboriginal English, following Australian creoles, may introduce its own suffixes to mark adverbs for manner or time, as in *long-way, quick-way, north-way, wobbly-way, dark-time, all-time* and *late-time*.

## 3.2. Noun phrase

### 3.2.1. *Determiners*

It has been observed by Holm (1988–1989: 191) that "[e]xcept for the decreolized varieties (e.g. Jamaican Creole English *di* 'the'), the creoles appear not to have borrowed definite articles from the superstrate languages but rather to have created them anew from demonstratives and other particles." We observed this trend in Australian creoles which commonly use variants of *that* and *one* where Standard English would use the definite and indefinite articles, respectively

(2.2.1.). The tendency to substitute the demonstrative for the definite article is a commonly-reported feature of Aboriginal English (Readdy 1961; Eagleson 1977: 539; Flint 1968, 1971: 2; Alexander 1965: 65, 1968), as in *Dat door bin close* 'The door closed'. The tendency to substitute *one* for the indefinite article is also often reported (Sharpe 1977; Readdy 1961: 100; Flint 1968, 1971: 2; Alexander 1965; Kaldor and Malcolm 1979: 422), as in *They seen one green snake tangled round a tree* 'They saw a green snake tangled round a tree' (Alexander 1965: 66). Articles are frequently omitted in contexts where they are required in Standard English (Flint 1968, 1971: 2), as in *We was playing game*, though they may also be apparently redundantly inserted, as in *Bloke with the long hair* (Kaldor and Malcolm 1979: 422).

### 3.2.2. *Number*

It is a widespread feature of Aboriginal English not to mark the noun consistently for plural. Often, though the plural inflection is missing, the plurality of the noun is evident by other means, as in *Some plum over there* 'There are some plums over there'; *Two man in a jeep* 'There are two men in a jeep' or *ten dollar* 'ten dollars'. An alternative pluralizer *-mob* (from Kriol, see section 2.2.2.) may be used occasionally in some areas, as in *clean water-mob* 'lots of clean water' (Sharpe 1977). Some nouns which function as mass nouns in Standard English are count nouns in Aboriginal English and may therefore be pluralized, as with *woods* 'bits of wood', *irons* 'pieces of iron', *dusts* 'clouds of dust' (Sharpe 1977: 48), *glasses* 'bits of glass', or *police* 'police officer'. Nouns with irregular plurals may still receive the regular noun plural morpheme, as in *two childrens*.

### 3.2.3. *Gender*

The gender distinctions made in Standard English do not always apply in Aboriginal English. The third person singular personal and possessive pronoun forms may be used interchangeably between male and female referents, as in *He a big girl* 'She's a big girl' and *That he dress* 'That's her dress'. In some areas *e* functions as a gender-inclusive pronoun form, hence *My mother, when e gonna talk language e talk* 'When my mother intends to talk in Aboriginal language she does so' (Kaldor and Malcolm 1979: 422).

### 3.2.4. *Possession*

Nouns tend not to be marked for possession with the *-s* suffix, especially in some areas. Hence, juxtaposition alone may enable possessive to be inferred in, for example, *That my Daddy car* or *Look at John boat*. In some areas, alternative possessive markers have been retained from creole, as in *Gun belong to Hedley* (Readdy

1961: 100; cf. Koch 1991, 2000), *Long time he was for my sister husband* ‘A long time ago he was my sister’s husband’, or *Rachel mob-for dog bin die* ‘Rachel’s people’s dog died’ (Kaldor and Malcolm 1979: 422). As in Kriol (2.2.5.), personal pronouns may function as possessive adjectives without having possessive marking, as in *im dog* ‘his dog’.

### 3.2.5. Kin relation marking

In Central Australian Aboriginal English, Koch (2000: 43–44) has observed the adoption of a new suffix which he calls a ‘kin relation marker’. The suffix is the term *-gether* (from ‘together’) and it essentially creates a kin dyad with the family member with which it is used. Hence, *father-gether* means the dyad of father and child, *mother-gether*, mother and child, *brother-gether*, elder brother and younger brother or sister, *sister-gether*, elder sister and younger brother or sister, and *cousin-gether*, a pair of cross-cousins, one of whom is male. These terms all have corresponding terms in the Kaytetye language.

### 3.2.6. Pronouns

Aboriginal English speakers in some areas may transfer some creole personal pronoun forms into their speech. Aboriginal English as a whole, however, has a different system, as shown in Table 5. The forms shown bring together data from Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia and exclude what seem likely to be unmodified transfers from creole. Certain creole-influenced forms have only been reported from Queensland and are therefore marked as such. This does not imply that the other forms do not occur in Queensland. The variation among forms may be less random than appears on the table, in that, for example, the *me* form of the subject pronoun is most likely to occur in multiple subjects (e.g. *Me and Sharon*).

Table 5. Personal pronouns of Aboriginal English

	Singular	Dual	Plural
first person	<i>I ~ me</i> (subj) <i>me</i> (obj)		<i>we ~ us</i>
first person inclusive			<i>we ~ afla</i> (Qld) (S, O)
first person exclusive			<i>mifela</i> (Qld) (subj)
second person	<i>you</i>	<i>you two, you-n-him</i> (SE Qld)	<i>you, youse</i> <i>you mob</i> (SE Qld) <i>youfla</i> (Qld) (S, O)

Table 5. (continued) Personal pronouns of Aboriginal English

	Singular	Dual	Plural
third person	(h)e ~ (h)im (subj, masc/fem/inan) (h)im (obj, masc/fem/inan) she (subj, fem) it (subj, pred, inan)	dattufela ~ distufela (NW Qld) (subj, obj)	they, dey (subj) them, dem (subj, obj)

Personal pronouns, as mentioned above (3.2.4.), may often function as possessive pronouns in Aboriginal English. The possessive pronouns of Aboriginal English, where they differ from the personal pronouns, are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Possessive pronouns of Aboriginal English

	Singular	Plural
first person	my, moofla (Qld)	our
second person	your	your
third person	(h)is, (h)e's, (h)er, its	their, deir

Aboriginal English reflexive pronouns in the third person tend to incorporate the possessive rather than the personal pronouns before the reflexive suffix, hence *hisself* 'himself'; *theirsself*, *theirselves* 'themselves'. The pattern of reflexives is thus regularized in keeping with that of the first and second person reflexive pronouns.

### 3.2.7. Adjectives

In Aboriginal English, adjectives may not be inflected for the comparative and superlative, though the superlative suffix *-est* may be used for emphasis, as in *biggest mob o emus* 'a very big flock of emus'. The *-est* suffix may also be used in a way that would be considered redundant in Standard English, as in *most rottenest* (Eagleson 1977: 538). Some expressions that would need to be expressed predicatively in Standard English may be expressed attributively in Aboriginal English, as in *long way country* 'a country far away' (Flint 1971: 3). One influence from creole (and also, perhaps, from Indigenous languages) is the frequent use of nominalising suffixes on adjectives, as in *black-one*, *hot-one*, *sweet-one*, *slippery-one*, *shorty-one*, *good-one*, *new-one*, *same-one* (Bavin and Shopen 1985: 83).

### 3.2.8. Prepositions

Prepositions which are required in Standard English are often not required in Aboriginal English, as in *We was gonna go Derby* ‘We were going to go to Derby’ (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982: 100), or *We bin wait loooong time* ‘We waited for a very long time’ (Eades 1996: 134). The infinitive marker *to* may be omitted, as in *I bin go dere work*. The locative prepositions *in*, *at* and *on* may often be interchanged, omitted or, in some Kriol-influenced areas, replaced with *la* or *longa*, as in *We always go la ol’ town* ‘we always go to the old town’ or *young guy longa book* ‘the young man in the book’. Where two prepositions are required in Standard English, one may be used, i.e. *up* for ‘up at’, *out* for ‘out at’ (Alexander 1965: 66).

## 3.3. Structure of sentences

### 3.3.1. Statements

The basic statement form in Aboriginal English is, as in Standard English, following the SVO or S(V)C pattern. Variations from the basic word order are possible to serve the purposes of topicalization of a subject (as in ‘*Yungagees*’- *da’s sort of a real way of sayin goanna* [Malcolm 1995: iii]) or the expression of an “afterthought” as in *five sheeps fat one* ‘five fat sheep’ (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1985: 104; cf. Koch 1991: 98; see further 3.3.6.).

### 3.3.2. Questions

The inversion of subject and verb/auxiliary is much less common in Aboriginal English than in Standard English. Rather, questions may be indicated by intonation, as in *You like banana?* ‘Do you like bananas?’ or by the use of a final question tag. One of the most widespread tags is *-eh*, as in *He can walk, eh?* (cf. 2.3.2. above), but this may also be used with a falling intonation, in which case it functions not as a question marker but as a confirmation elicitation, as in *We bin give you a lot of shell, eh* ↓. Other tags which may be used in different areas to form questions include *you know*, *init*, *inti*, *ina*, *na* and *ana*. Questions may also be formed in Aboriginal English through the use of interrogative pronouns, though their use sometimes differs from Standard English, as in *Who your name?* ‘What is your name?’.

### 3.3.3. Embedding

As in creole, embedded relative clauses may have no relative pronoun (Sharpe 1977; Readdy 1961: 100; Koch 1991). Where a relative pronoun is used, it may not be the same as in Standard English. In some contexts (e.g. Sydney), *what* may

be used in place of the Standard English *that*, as in *I got one mate what goes to a Catholic school*. Generally, embedded clauses are not common in Aboriginal English, which (as noted in 3.1.7. above) prefers a paratactic arrangement of clauses.

### 3.3.4. *Phrase and sentence repetition*

There is some evidence of a greater amount of repetition of phrases and sentences in Aboriginal English than in Standard English. This may be illustrated in the following extract: *...when R go into hospital, mela bin get in; mela bin liar-cry. E bin cry for one doctor gonna take my toothache! E bin cry...* ‘when R went to hospital we got in; we were pretending to cry. He was crying for a doctor to take away his toothache! He cried...’ (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982: 102). Sharpe (1976: 6) has observed that Queensland Aboriginal English is particularly prone to the repetition of phrases and sentences, and she sees this as a response on the part of its speakers to the unusually high utterance rate in that area, which may adversely affect intelligibility. The tolerance of repetition in Aboriginal English may be better understood as a discourse or pragmatic rather than a grammatical feature.

### 3.3.5. *Predicate marking*

It was noted (2.3.5.) that in creoles, the predicate phrase may be signalled by a marker (usually derived from *he* or *they*). This phenomenon has been identified under many different names, including “nominal appositives” (Steffensen 1977), “concord particles” (Crowley and Rigsby 1979) and “pronominal cross-referencing”. The latter term is used by Elwell (1977) in describing a pattern in Aboriginal English as spoken in the Northern Territory, which she sees as corresponding to a structure within local languages. She exemplifies it as follows: *If I find it kangaroo; We, all de kid, we going to somewhere we gonna play*. The recovery of the subject in this way is not uncommon in nonstandard Australian English, and is also widespread in Aboriginal English in all areas, e.g. *Dese um two boys dey’s teasing this owl* ‘Two boys were teasing an owl’ (Kimberley, Western Australia); *The policeman he heard this banging* (Sydney) (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982: 232).

### 3.3.6. *Post-sentence modification*

Aboriginal English shares with creoles a tendency towards post-sentence modification. This sometimes occurs with the use of a completion marker, such as *finish* or *das all* when a narrative has been concluded. It also is built into the grammar by means of a constraint on the amount of information which can be expressed within one clause. There are many examples of an “afterthought” structure (as referred to in 3.3.1.) being used, where some information is appended to, rather

than included in, the clause. Some examples from Kaldor and Malcolm (1979: 423) are: *This tree here close-up one; man make that fire smoky one; we bin see one bird, flying one.*

### 3.3.7. *Successive pronoun subject deletion*

It has frequently been observed (e.g. Readdy 1961: 114; Flint 1968, 1971) that subjects, once introduced, may not be repeated although there are successive verbs which relate to them. This may be particularly characteristic of narration. This is another aspect of parataxis (3.1.7.).

### 3.3.8. *Associated motion*

An unusual feature of Aboriginal English has been related by Koch (2000) to the influence of Central Australian languages. This feature involves the use of what appear to be two main verbs in the sentence, as in *Twofella bin go 'n wait for ...them bullock; or Nother mob go down long creek and go and drink water.* Koch (2000: 49) sees such structures as enabling the expression of associated motion which may be prior to, immediately subsequent to, or concurrent with the main activity. The indigenous language influences leading to this feature may exist, or have existed, in languages beyond Central Australia, in that similar patterns have been recorded in Western Australia, for instance in the following exchange:

- A: *they go there chargin on don't they*  
B: *yeah yeah go drinkin dere*

### 3.3.9. *Embedded observation*

A similar feature has been observed in both Central and Western Australian contexts, where the verb *see* is accompanied by another verb, as in *I saw him was running behind me.* This is not, in my view, embedding but rather fusion of *I saw him* and *He was running behind me*, and it relates to what, in my view, is the Indigenous Australian “cultural imperative” of reporting on one’s observations. The matter observed and the act of observation are given equal prominence in the manner of reporting.

## 4. **Practical and research issues**

The use of Holm’s (1988–1989) categories for the account given in this chapter enables some comparisons to be made between Australian creoles and Atlantic creoles. The similarities, which further research could attempt to account for, include the reduced marking (by comparison with Standard English) of inflection

on nouns and verbs, the use of an anterior tense marker derived from the verb *be*, the preverbal use of *no* or *neva* (but not *gan*) to mark negation, the reduced use (or non-use) of the copula in equative and adjectival constructions, the serial verb construction, the lack of a passive construction, the replacement of definite articles with demonstratives and indefinite articles with the numeral *one*, the expression of possession by juxtaposing nouns (though this is not the only way of expressing possession in Australian creoles), the use of a general locative to cover 'in', 'at' and 'on', the maintenance of SVO word order, and the marking of questions by intonation, tags or initial question markers.

On the other hand, the morphosyntax of Australian creoles is distinctive in other ways. It does not use a form based on *there* to express progressive aspect, nor a form based on *do* to express habitual or completive aspect. It does not use the complementizer *for*, though it does perform the same function with forms based on personal pronouns. It has its own system of marking transitive verbs and it has a distinctive set of enclitics derived from English prepositions. The personal pronoun systems of Australian creoles seem to be distinctive in the strength of their recognition of the inclusive/exclusive and singular/dual/plural discriminations.

As we have considered Australian creoles and Aboriginal English together in this description, it is possible also to make comparisons between the creoles and Aboriginal English. In many ways, as we would expect, the Aboriginal English forms come close to acrolectal forms in the creoles, but the similarities are greatest in areas where there is contemporary influence on Aboriginal English from the creoles. Aboriginal English as a whole does not maintain transitive verb marking, nor does it incorporate inclusive and exclusive forms in its pronoun system, though there is some evidence of a tendency to maintain ways of expressing duality. The tense of the verb, the number of the noun subject, the number and gender of the pronoun are all much less salient in Aboriginal English than in Standard English morphology. The marking of verb tense preverbally is strongly maintained with respect to the future tense and selectively maintained with respect to the past tense. While Aboriginal English does not fully maintain the systems of adjective and adverb marking (*-taim*, *-wei*) of the creoles, it does carry these systems over to some extent, as it does the system of enclitics (as seen in expressions like *learn up*), and it does commonly use *that/dat* in place of *the* and *one* in place of *a*. There is also a marked reluctance among Aboriginal English speakers to use the verb *to be* as copula or auxiliary, except to mark the past tense.

The question of the indebtedness of Aboriginal English to Indigenous languages, both those still spoken and those which formed the original substrate of the pidgins from which it developed, has been pursued by a number of scholars. Harkins (1994) and Sharpe (1976), among others, have argued that this indebtedness is considerable. It can be demonstrated not only in phonology, morphology and syntax, but, perhaps more strongly, in pragmatics and semantics.



Much of the research reported on here dates back several decades, indicating that the study of the morphology and syntax of Australian creoles and Aboriginal English have not been the focus of much contemporary attention. The emphasis of research has shifted from grammatical analysis to the analysis of discourse, genre, lexico-semantics and conceptualization, and to the more applied areas of literacy, bilingual and bidialectal education and the use of these varieties in cross-cultural communication especially in legal contexts. These areas are important in extending the understanding the dynamics of the restructuring and management of English by Aboriginal speakers, but do not come within the purview of this chapter.

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# Bislama: morphology and syntax\*

Terry Crowley

## 1. Introduction

Bislama is a predominantly English-lexifier radically restructured contact language – also described as a pidgin or a creole – that is spoken as the constitutionally declared national language of Vanuatu alongside eighty or so local vernaculars. For more details of the historical and sociolinguistic background of Bislama, see the accompanying chapter on Bislama phonetics and phonology (Crowley, other volume).

In keeping with pidgins and creoles in general, Bislama exhibits morphological reduction vis-à-vis English. None of the inflectional morphology of English has survived into Bislama as productive processes. Some inflectional suffixes have survived, though these have been reanalyzed as inseparable parts of noun and verb roots in Bislama, e.g. *anis* ‘ant’ (< *ant-s*), *prestem* ‘press’ (< *press-ed* ‘em).

The inflectional categories of English nouns and verbs are either not marked at all in Bislama, or they are marked syntactically by means of phrase-level modifiers of some kind. The past tense suffix on English verbs is systematically lost, with the distinction between present *I float* and *I floated* being expressed by the absence versus presence of a pre-verbal auxiliary *bin* (< *been*), i.e. *mi flot* and *mi bin flot*. The suffixed plural markers on English nouns are again systematically lost, and plural is distinguished from singular by means of the preposed plural marker *ol* (< *all*), e.g. *trak* ‘car’ and *ol trak* ‘cars’. The suffixed genitive marker on English nouns is expressed in Bislama by means of a prepositional construction with the possessor noun introduced by *blo(ng)* (which derives from the English verb *belong*). Thus, ‘Kali’s car’ is expressed as *trak blo(ng) Kali*. Further discussion of each of these constructions can be found in the relevant sections below.

Productive patterns of derivational morphology in English have also been lost or reduced to largely unproductive status. A nominalized verbal construction such as *my swimming saved me*, for example, is not expressed in Bislama by means of a gerund. Rather, the only option for encoding such a meaning is to recast this construction in terms of the underlying verb, as in (1):

- (1) *Mi bin swim mo i mekem mi sef.*  
‘I swam and it saved me (i.e. made me safe).’

Verb-noun pairs such as *demonstret* ‘demonstrate’ and *demonstresen* ‘demonstration’ involve processes that are less than fully predictable in English. With a much

smaller proportion of the lexicon of Bislama comprizing “learned” vocabulary such as this for most the population, such patterns are arguably even less productive in Bislama.

Most of the derivational morphology that we find in Bislama represents new developments out of material that began as lexical forms in English rather than continuations of superstrate morphological patterns. Thus, the third person singular masculine object pronoun *him* has been reanalyzed in Bislama as a transitive marker on verbs which has come to acquire a causative function. Compare, therefore, the following:

- (2) *Wota i boel.*  
‘The water is boiling.’
- (3) *Kali i boelem wota.*  
‘Kali boiled the water.’

Other examples of lexical forms which have been morphologized in Bislama are discussed below. To date, there has been no publicly available comprehensive grammatical account of the language. Tryon (1987) adopts a pedagogical approach and presents some of the main patterns, though many details (and much variation) are ignored. Other substantial sources (e.g. Crowley 1990: 200–351; Meyerhoff 2000) concentrate only on selected aspects of the grammar without aiming to be comprehensive.

Given the restriction on length imposed on this chapter, the following discussion, too, cannot be exhaustive, and many interesting (and poorly described) features have necessarily been dealt with extremely briefly. The main features of the morphology and syntax of Bislama are presented in a way that allows for comparison with varieties such as Solomons Pijin and Tok Pisin, as well as other varieties of English covered in this Handbook. There are various structures in Bislama which are markedly different from those of English for which mention is made of significant similarities between Bislama and the Oceanic substrate.

## 2. Nominal morphology

Nominal compounds are common in Bislama. A variety of patterns can be found, with one of the commonest being adjective + noun constructions, e.g. *smol-traosis* ‘underwear’ (< *smol* ‘little’ + *traosis* ‘shorts’), *swit-blad* ‘diabetes’ (< *swit* ‘sweet’ + *blad* ‘blood’). The boundary between word-level and phrase-level phenomena plagues any discussion of compounding in Bislama (as it does in many languages), especially when we consider that a single-word form such as *long-nek* ‘reef heron’ (< *long* ‘long’ + *nek* ‘neck’) means exactly the same as the two-word form *long-fala nek* (see section 4.2. for a discussion of the adjectival suffix *-fala*). There is a

handful of compound nouns derived instead on the basis of noun + adjective order, e.g. *sik-nogud* ‘venereal disease’ (< *sik* ‘disease’ + *nogud* ‘bad’). An additional small number of compounds is built up of an initial element that is a verb with a following noun, e.g. *stil-man* ‘thief’ (< *stil* ‘steal’ + *man* ‘man, person’).

There is a large number of compounds which involve two nouns together. Longer established compounds are typically formed on the basis of HEAD + MODIFIER order, as in *sos-pima* ‘chilli sauce’ (< *sos* ‘sauce’ + *pima* ‘chilli’), *lif-kokonas* ‘coconut frond’ (< *lif* ‘leaf’ + *kokonas* ‘coconut’), following the construction that is typically found in Oceanic languages. However, more recently formed compounds tend to follow the MODIFIER + HEAD order that we find in English, e.g. *turis-bot* ‘cruise vessel’ (< *turis* ‘tourist’ + *bot* ‘boat’), *stori-haos* ‘multi-storey building’ (< *stori* ‘storey’ + *haos* ‘house, building’). Some nouns appear with constituents in either order in free variation, e.g. *gras-nil* and *nil-gras* ‘*Mimosa pudica*’ (< *gras* ‘grass’ + *nil* ‘thorn, prickle’).

### 3. Pronouns

There is a single set of pronouns in Bislama, in contrast to the separate subject, object and possessive pronouns of English. Subject and object forms are distinguished by position vis-à-vis the verb, while possession is expressed by means of the same pronominal forms appearing after the possessive preposition *blo(ng)*. Thus:

- (4) *Mi bin salem trak blo(ng) yu.*  
‘I sold your car.’

The pronoun system of Bislama marks a radically different set of contrasts to those categories that are formally marked in Standard English. The three-way gender distinction in the third person singular is lost with Bislama having the gender-neutral pronoun *hem*. The two-way number distinction of English has been expanded in Bislama into a four-way distinction between singular, dual, trial and plural. In the first person non-singular forms, there also is a systematic distinction in Bislama between inclusive and exclusive pronouns. We therefore find the paradigm set out in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Bislama pronouns

	Singular		Dual	Trial	Plural
1	mi	Inclusive	yumitu(fala)	yumitrifala	yumi
		Exclusive	mitufala	mitrifala	mifala
2	yu		yutufala	yutrifala	yufala
3	hem		tufala	trifala	ol(geta)

The English origin of the forms of these pronouns should be obvious, i.e. *mi* < me, *hem* < him, *yumi* < you + me, *yufala* < you + fellows. The source of some of the categories that are marked, however, is clearly not English in origin. The substrate Oceanic languages involved in the initial formation of Bislama typically make exactly the same kinds of categorial distinctions that we find in Bislama, so this aspect of the pronoun paradigm is very likely to be of substrate origin.

It will be obvious from this paradigm that there are some recurring formal similarities between different pronouns. Non-singular pronouns often – though by no means always – involve the element *-fala*, obviously deriving from English *fellow(s)*. The dual and trial forms are all derived with the elements *-tu* and *-tri* respectively, which correspond in shape to the numerals *tu* ‘two’ and *tri* ‘three’ respectively in Bislama. However, these numerals have clearly been grammaticalized in this paradigm, as other numerals cannot be incorporated into pronouns in the same way. A pronoun referring to six individuals, for instance, must be expressed by means of a numeral postmodifier in conjunction with a plural pronoun, e.g. *mifala sikis* ‘we (exclusive) six’, and not *\*misikisfala*.

#### 4. Noun phrases

Noun phrases can consist of a nominal or pronominal head associated with a range of modifiers, as described in turn under the following headings.

##### 4.1. Quantifiers

Nouns can be preceded by the number marker *ol* ‘plural’, or any of the following quantifiers: *olgeta* ‘all’, *evri* ‘each, every’, *fulap*, *plande*, *staka* ‘many’, *eni* ‘any’, *sam* ‘some’, *tumas* ‘a lot, too much of, too many of’, *naf* ‘enough’. We therefore find examples such as *ol man* ‘people, men’, *olgeta man* ‘all the people/men’, *evri man* ‘each/every man’, *fulap man* ‘many people’. We sometimes find the pluralizer *ol* redundantly appearing in association with some of these other quantifiers, with *ol* generally appearing closest to the noun, e.g. *fulap ol man* ‘many people’.

Also appearing before nouns are the numerals, e.g. *sikis woman* ‘six women’, as well as the interrogative *hamas* ‘how much, how many’, e.g. *hamas trak* ‘how many cars’. These forms do not co-occur with the plural marker *ol*, i.e. *\*sikis ol woman*. Numerals differ from the quantifiers described in the preceding paragraph in that they can accept the adjectival suffix *-fala* (see section 4.2.), e.g. *sikis-fala trak* ‘the six cars’.

Pronouns differ from nouns in that they do not accept noun phrase premodifiers. However, some of the premodifiers presented above can be used as postmodifiers in association with pronouns. This includes any of the numerals, e.g. *mifala*

*sikis* ‘six of us (exclusive)’, *olgeta hamas* ‘how many of them’. Some of the other nominal premodifiers also appear as pronominal postmodifiers, e.g. *yufala plande* ‘many of you’. The nominal premodifier *evri* corresponds to the pronominal postmodifier *evriwan*, e.g. *yumi evriwan* ‘each one of us (inclusive)’.

#### 4.2. Adjectives

Most adjectives precede the noun phrase head in Bislama, e.g. *stret ansa* ‘correct answer’, *rabis tingting* ‘terrible idea’, *sting mit* ‘rotten meat’. There is, however, a small subset of adjectives which follow the head, e.g. *man nogud* ‘bad person’, *haos olbaot* ‘ordinary house’. There is a preference for only a single adjective to be associated with a noun in Bislama, so a complex phrase such as *big black dog* in English is likely to be expressed in Bislama with one attribute expressed by means of an adjective and the other expressed in a relative clause, e.g. *big-fala dog we i blak* ‘big dog which is black’.

There is a subset of premodifying adjectives which can accept the suffix *-fala*, which represents the morphologization of the noun *fellow* in English. One of the functions of the suffix *-fala* is to indicate that the quality expressed by the adjective is especially characteristic of the referent of the noun with which it is associated. Contrast *gud wok* ‘good job’ and *gud-fala wok* ‘especially good job’. The same suffix can also be used to mark definiteness of a noun phrase, as in (5):

- (5) *Mi karem wan waet trak. Waetfala trak ya i stap long garaj.*  
 ‘I have a white car. That white car is in the garage.’

Adjectives which accept this suffix are predominantly, though by no means exclusively, monosyllabic. It should be pointed out that there are also monosyllabic adjectives which do not accept this suffix. Thus, while we encounter forms such as *sot-fala* ‘short’, *naes-fala* ‘nice’ and *swit-fala* ‘sweet’, we find only *hot* ‘hot’, *wael* ‘wild’ and *drae* ‘dry’, never *\*hot-fala*, *\*wael-fala* and *\*drae-fala*.

Adjectives can also fairly freely accept the derivational suffix *-wan* which has arisen out of the morphologization of English *one*. This creates nouns out of adjectives, where the noun usually refers to an entity characterized by the quality expressed in the adjectival root, e.g. *smol* ‘small’ > *smol-wan* ‘small one’. For many speakers, *-fala* and *-wan* are mutually exclusive, though younger speakers are increasingly able to add the nominalizing suffix *-wan* to an adjective carrying *-fala* where that suffix performs the characterizing function referred to above. Contrast, therefore, *sot-wan* ‘short one’ and *sot-fala-wan* ‘especially short one’.

Adjectives often reduplicate according to the same formal patterns that are described in section 5.1. for verbs. In fact, given the lack of inflectional morphology in Bislama, it is often difficult in any case to draw a rigid distinction between



adjectives and intransitive verbs. Adjectives are often reduplicated when they are associated with plural rather than singular nouns, e.g. *longfala plang* ‘long plank’, *ol long-longfala plang* ‘long planks’. Another function of adjectival reduplication is to express concentration of a quality, e.g. *fas* ‘stuck’ > *fas-fas* ‘well and truly stuck’.

#### 4.3. Demonstrative

Bislama has only a single demonstrative form, and it has additional functions as well. The form *ya* (< ‘here’) appears after a nominal head. This can simply express definiteness, e.g. *man ya* ‘the man’, or it can perform a general demonstrative function (making no reference to number), meaning ‘this man/person’ or ‘that man/person’ (or, with the plural phrase *ol man ya*, ‘these men/people’ or ‘those men/people’). In order to disambiguate the multiple senses of *ya*, we sometimes find the proximate demonstrative sense being expressed as *ya nao* ‘this/these’ and the distant demonstrative sense as *ya lo(ng)we* ‘that/those’, e.g. *trak ya nao* ‘this car’, *ol trak ya lo(ng)we* ‘those cars’.

#### 4.4. Complex noun phrases

Coordinate noun phrases can also be linked in the same way as clausal coordination, using the coordinator *mo*, e.g. *Kali mo Janet* ‘Kali and Janet’. There are, however, other options available for the expression of noun phrase coordination. One possibility is to use the accompanitive preposition *wetem* ‘with’, e.g. *Kali wetem Janet*. Where a pronoun is coordinated with a noun, a rather different construction can be used in which a non-singular pronoun representing the sum of the coordinated noun phrases is preposed to the noun. Thus, the meaning *Janet and I* can be expressed in Bislama in one of three ways: *mi mo Janet*, *mi wetem Janet*, *mitufala Janet*.

Relative clauses in Bislama are introduced by the relativizer *we*, e.g. *tija we i toktok* ‘the teacher who is talking’. Relativized non-subject noun phrases are marked by means of a pronominal copy at the site of the deleted co-referential noun phrase, as in (6):

- (6) *Mi harem tija we ol studen oli laekem hem.*  
 ‘I hear the teacher who the students like.’

Bislama allows noun phrases from a wide range of structural positions to be relativized. The following, for example, illustrates the relativization of a prepositional object:

- (7) *Mi harem tija we ol studen oli givim buk lo hem.*  
 ‘I hear the teacher who the students gave the book to.’

## 5. Verb morphology

As mentioned above, there is no inflectional morphology in Bislama. The productive morphological processes involving Bislama verb morphology are all derivational in nature.

### 5.1. Reduplication

Although reduplication is not a productive feature of English morphology, it is quite commonly encountered in Bislama verbal morphology. Although the substrate languages also exhibit fairly productive patterns of verbal reduplication, both the forms and functions of reduplication tend to be somewhat constrained in the world's languages, so this is perhaps an area of Bislama grammar where a search for a substrate origin is not totally convincing.

A variety of different patterns of reduplication are encountered in Bislama, both from the perspective of the forms that it takes and the functions that it expresses. Reduplication is normally partial rather than full, involving the repetition of material from the first syllable or the first two syllables of the verb root. Since there are relatively few verb roots longer than two syllables, many instances of reduplication are actually indeterminate between the two patterns, e.g. *ron* 'run' > *ron-ron*.

Partial reduplication covers a range of possibilities, including repetition of only an initial syllable, e.g. *fogivim* 'forgive' > *fo-fogivim*, *brekem* 'break' > *bre-brekem*, *faetem* 'punch' > *fae-faetem*. An additional pattern involves repetition of initial CV(V) along with a following consonant, e.g. *kilim* 'kill' > *kil-kilim*, *jenis* 'change' > *jen-jenis*, *laekem* 'like' > *laek-laekem*, *save* 'know' > *sav-save*. Reduplication occasionally also involves the repetition of material from the second syllable along with the repetition of the initial syllable, e.g. *difren* 'be different' > *difre-difren*.

A root can reduplicate on more than one of these patterns at the same time. Thus, *brok* 'break' can reduplicate as *bro-brok* or as *brok-brok*. Some roots also appear in slightly different shapes involving the optional presence of epenthetic vowels between initial consonant clusters, resulting in competing reduplicated forms such as the following: *s(i)mol* 'be small' > *smol-smol*, *smo-smol*, *si-simol*, *sim-simol*.

Verbal reduplication expresses a range of functions in Bislama, including the following:

- random or distributed action, e.g. *foldaon* 'fall' > *fol-foldaon* 'fall all over the place'
- habitual action, e.g. *giaman* 'tell lie' > *giam-giaman* 'tell lies all the time'
- reciprocal action, e.g. *save* 'know' > *sav-save* 'know each other'

No single pattern of reduplication is associated with any specific function, so if a verb is reduplicated according to more than one pattern (as is frequently the case), these forms may be associated with any of these functions.

## 5.2. Suffixation

The frequently encountered verbal suffix /-Vm/ alternates in shape in ways that were described in the chapter on Bislama phonetics and phonology (Crowley, other volume). These morphophonemic alternations represent a significant point of contrast between Bislama on the one hand and Solomons Pijin and Tok Pisin on the other, where such alternations are either less apparent, or simply non-existent.

This suffix is regularly attached to transitive verbs in Bislama. We therefore encounter intransitive-transitive pairs such as *kuk* ‘cook (intr.)’ > *kuk-um* ‘cook (tr.)’, *stil* ‘steal (intr.)’ > *stil-im* ‘steal (tr.)’, *smok* ‘smoke (intr.)’ > *smok-em* ‘smoke (tr.)’, *skras* ‘itch’ > *skras-em* ‘scratch, scrape’. Many transitive verbs ending in this suffix do not have corresponding unsuffixed intransitive forms so the verb invariably appears with this suffix, e.g. *kar-em* ‘carry’, *tal-em* ‘tell’, *sper-em* ‘spear’. Sometimes, the root of a verb carrying the transitive suffix is not an intransitive verb but belongs instead to some other word class. Thus, corresponding to *melek-em* ‘extract cream out of (grated coconut)’ and *hama-rem* ‘hammer (tr.)’ we find *melek* ‘coconut cream’ and *hama* ‘hammer (noun)’ respectively.

This transitive suffix is so productive that any newly introduced transitive verb from English will automatically appear with the suffix, e.g. *imel-em* ‘email (someone)’. However, there is a small subset of transitive verbs which irregularly appear without any transitive suffix, including *kakae* ‘eat, bite’, *dring* ‘drink’, *luk* ‘see’, *save* ‘know’, *tokbaot* ‘discuss’, *lego* ‘leave’, *gat* ‘have’. Some of these verbs can be used both transitively and intransitively with no change in shape. There is a further subset of transitive verbs which alternate between carrying the suffix /-Vm/ and having no suffix with no change of function or meaning, e.g. *singaot(-em)* ‘call (tr.)’, *seraot(-em)* ‘distribute’.

Bislama verb morphology also involves an additional order of derivational suffixes of the shapes *-ap*, *-daon* and *-aot*. These derive from the particles *up*, *down* and *out* which are frequently encountered in English phrasal verb constructions, though they have been reanalyzed as suffixes in Bislama. We therefore find examples such as *res-em-ap* ‘raise up’, *kat-em-daon* ‘cut down’ and *poen-em-aot* ‘point out’. While many forms of this type represent straightforward morphologizations of English phrasal verb collocations, some represent genuine new creations in Bislama, e.g. *tal-em-aot* ‘report on’ (< *tal-em* ‘tell’ + *-aot* ‘out’). Note that, in contrast to English, these forms are completely inseparable from the verb with which they are associated, thus only (8a), but not (8b):

- (8) a. *Bae mi left-em-ap yu.*  
 b. \**Bae mi left-em yu ap.*  
 ‘I will lift you up.’

## 6. Verb phrases

A verb phrase without any associated pre-verbal markers can be used in the expression of any tense if appropriate contextual clues are available. A form such as *mi go*, for example, could be used to express present, past or future tense. However, it is much more common for future tense to be overtly marked by *bae* (see below) rather than being left unmarked. An unmarked verb for which there are no contextual clues providing information about tense will normally be interpreted as being realis (present or past) rather than irrealis.

Imperative verbs can also be expressed by means of unmarked verbs. With a singular imperative, the bare verb may be used, although the singular second person pronoun may precede this, e.g. (*yu go* ‘go!’). With non-singular referents in the imperative, it is normal to include the relevant non-singular second person pronouns, e.g. *yufala go* ‘you (all) go!’. Such imperatives are all fairly brusque. Less impolite imperatives can be expressed by using the corresponding future constructions as imperatives, e.g. *bae yu go* ‘go!’, even more polite imperatives are expressed by using the verb *traem* ‘try’ before the verb in question, e.g. (*yu traem go* ‘please go!’), or by using the adverbial *fastaem* ‘first’, e.g. *kam fastaem* ‘please come!’. It is worth noting that this use of *traem* represents a significant contrast with English for which there are widespread parallels in the substrate languages. Prohibitives are expressed by means of the regular negative forms, i.e. *no go* ‘don’t go!’, *yufala no go* ‘don’t you all go!’, *bae yu no go* ‘don’t go!’, *traem no go* ‘please don’t go!’.

There is a variety of pre- and post-verbal modifiers that go to make up a verb phrase in Bislama. Those forms which appear immediately before a verb include *mas* ‘must’, *bin* ‘past (or prior past)’, *jas* ‘immediate past’, *save* ‘abilitative, permissive’, *stap* ‘continuous, habitual’, *wandem* ‘desiderative, immediate future’, *traem* ‘try’, *finis* ‘completive’, *stat* ‘inceptive’. Immediately before these pre-verbal modifiers we find the negative marker *no*, which can be combined with the emphatic negative marker *nating* or *wanpis* appearing after the verb, e.g. *yu no save kam* ‘you cannot come’, *mi no bin toktok nating* ‘I didn’t talk at all’. When the postmodifier form *yet* ‘still’ appears in conjunction with the pre-verbal negative marker it means ‘not yet’. Compare, therefore: *mi go yet* ‘I am still going’ and *mi no go yet* ‘I haven’t gone yet’.

There is also a future marker of the shape *bae* which behaves somewhat differently in that it typically appears immediately before the subject of the verb rather

than appearing between the subject and the verb. Contrast, therefore, *bae mi kam* ‘I will come’ with *mi mas kam* ‘I must come’. The corresponding form in Tok Pisin has grammaticalized beyond its behaviour in Bislama and it now appears also between the subject and the verb. Equivalent sentences such as \**mi bae go* as an alternative to *bae mi go* are ungrammatical in Bislama.

Some of these pre-verbal modifiers in Bislama tend to undergo phonological erosion. In particular, *save* is often reduced in shape to *sae*, *stap* to *sta* and *wandem* to *wande*. The form *bae* sometimes also reduces to the proclitic *b-* when followed by a vowel-initial form. Thus, *bae oli kam* ‘they will come’ may sometimes be heard as *b-oli kam*.

In addition to the post-verbal modifiers *yet*, *nating* and *wanpis*, we find the perfective marker *finis*, e.g. *mi go finis* ‘I have gone’. Also appearing post-verbally, there is a range of modifiers which perform a range of adverbial functions, including forms such as *gud* ‘properly’, *nogud* ‘wrongly’, *krangki* ‘wrongly’, *stret* ‘correctly’ and *strong* ‘strongly, hard’. These frequently appear between the verb and a following object:

- (9) *Bae mi pulum strong rop ya.*  
‘I will pull the rope hard.’
- (10) *Mi mas talemaot gud ansa.*  
‘I must reveal the answer properly.’

However, adverbial modifiers can also be expressed by means of the core-layer serial verb construction described in section 8.1., as in (11):

- (11) *Bae mi pulum rop ya i strong.*

## 7. Simple sentences

### 7.1. “Predicate marking”

Before we can discuss sentence structure, there is one aspect of the grammar which needs to be outlined first. There is no general agreement about the most appropriate way of describing “predicate marking” in Bislama. The section heading here is presented in inverted commas to indicate the unsatisfactory nature of some aspects of the analysis, while at the same time using a term that many Melanesian Pidgin specialists will immediately recognize. The treatment in this section will be necessarily sketchy, and readers are referred to the extensive literature on the subject in Melanesian Pidgin for more detailed information (see also Smith, this volume).

Between many categories of subject and a following verb in Bislama we find the unstressed particle *i*, e.g. *hem i go* ‘(s)he went’, *mitufala i go* ‘we (exclusive) went’, *tufala i go* ‘the two of them went’, *Janet i go* ‘Janet went’. This form is sys-

tematically excluded after the subject pronouns *mi* ‘I’ and *yu* ‘you’, e.g. *mi go* ‘I went’, *yu go* ‘you went’. The form *i* frequently appears as *oli* after a plural nominal subject, and also after the third person plural pronoun subject *olgeta* ‘they’, e.g. *ol woman oli go* ‘the women went’, *olgeta oli go* ‘they went’.

Many descriptions of Melanesian Pidgin have referred to *i* and *oli* in examples such as these as “predicate markers”, which implies that these forms appear between a subject and a following predicate. Others have referred to these forms as “subject referencing pronouns”, drawing an analogy between the behaviour of these forms and the inflectional subject cross-reference markers that are widely encountered in Oceanic languages. Such an analysis would be consistent with the fact that in addition to *mi go* ‘I went’, we also find *mi mi go*, where the first instance of *mi* is treated as a subject pronoun, while the second *mi* represents the subject referencing pronoun.

## 7.2. Constituent order

Bislama, like English and the majority of the substrate Oceanic languages, is an SVO language, e.g. *mi stap ronron* ‘I jog’, *mi laekem yu* ‘I like you’. Third person singular pronominal objects are often expressed by means of zero rather than the pronoun *hem*, especially when they have inanimate rather than animate reference, which means that SV transitive constructions such as the following are frequently found: *mi laekem* ‘I like it’. In the same way, third person singular subjects are often omitted, with the only signal of the subject category being the predicate marker *i* before the verb. Thus, in alternation with *hem i laekem* ‘(s)he likes it’ we may find a transitive clause consisting of just a verb phrase, i.e. *i laekem* ‘(s)he likes it’.

Non-subject noun phrases can be fronted to pre-subject position to express contrast. Thus, from *mi laekem taro* ‘I like taro’ we can derive *taro mi laekem* ‘I like taro’. Constituents that have been fronted in this way are very often followed by the focus marker *nao*, e.g. *taro nao mi laekem*. When a singular inanimate noun such as *taro* is fronted in this way, there is typically no pronominal trace left behind at the original site of the shifted noun phrase. However, with a plural noun phrase, or with a noun phrase with animate reference, there will normally be a pronominal trace. Thus, from *mi laekem ol taro ya* ‘I like those taros’ we can derive *ol taro ya (nao) mi laekem olgeta*, while from *mi laekem yu* ‘I like you’, we can derive *yu (nao) mi laekem yu*.

Although the examples just presented involve movement from the verbal object position, noun phrases can be moved from any non-subject position of the clause. Prepositional objects can therefore also be readily fronted in the same way. Thus from *mi wokbaot wetem stik ya* ‘I walked with that stick’ we can derive *stik ya (nao) mi wokbaot wetem*. The comment just made about zero pronominal copy with inanimate singular nouns does not apply with the prepositions *lo(ng)* and *blo(ng)*. Fronted noun phrases associated with these two prepositions must always

be marked by means of a pronominal copy. In contrast to the example just presented, from *trak ya lowe blo man ya* ‘that car is that man’s’ we can derive *man ya (nao) trak ya lowe blo hem*, but not *\*man ya (nao) trak ya lowe blo*.

Bislama discourse allows other focussed noun phrases to appear before the subject of a clause, again with optional marking by *nao*. It is not uncommon to find constructions such as the following:

(12) *Mifala (nao) ol jif oli toktok tumas.*

The subject of this clause is *ol jif* ‘the chiefs’ and the associated predicate is *oli toktok tumas* ‘(they) talk too much’. The noun phrase *mifala* ‘we (exclusive)’ which appears at the beginning of the clause does not represent a fronted constituent. Rather, this form appears here simply to indicate that the following clause is understood with respect to ‘us’. The only possible translation of such a sentence in English would therefore be:

(12)’ ‘With respect to us, the chiefs talk too much.’

Bislama does not have a copula corresponding to the English verb *to be*. Equational sentences are therefore expressed as non-verbal constructions with the topic and comment noun phrases juxtaposed with no intervening verb:

(13) *Mi tija blo boe blo yu.*  
‘I am your son’s teacher.’

With a nominal topic, there is likely to be a “predicate marker” appearing between the two constituents:

(14) *Tija blo skol i no man blo smok.*  
‘The teacher of the school is not a smoker.’

However, it is probably more common for an equational sentence to be expressed with a nominal topic to be followed by a pronoun, which is then followed by the predicate introduced by the “predicate marker”, as in (15):

(15) *Tija blo skol hem i no man blo smok.*

A significant structural difference between Bislama and English is the absence of a passive construction in Bislama. The functional equivalent of the agentless passive in English involves the use of the plural “predicate marker” *oli* with no overt (or even implied) subject noun phrase. Thus, an English sentence such as ‘My car was stolen’ is expressed in Bislama as:

(16) *Oli stil-im trak blo mi.*

If such a sentence were to include an overt third person plural subject, as in *olgeta oli stili-im trak blo mi*, this could only mean ‘they (i.e. some particular individuals) stole my car’.

The functional equivalent of an English passive construction with an overtly expressed agent, e.g. 'my car was stolen by the youth', involves the fronting of the focussed object in an otherwise normal active transitive construction in Bislama. Thus, corresponding to *boe ya i stil-im trak blo mi* 'the youth stole my car' we find the following as the functional equivalent of the passive construction in English:

(17) *Trak blo mi (nao), boe ya i stil-im.*

### 7.3. Prepositional phrases

Bislama has only a fairly small set of prepositions, in common with many of the Oceanic languages which make up its substrate. The prepositions, and the range of functions that they express, are listed below.

- (i) *long*: This preposition generally appears in casual speech as *lo*, which often reduces further to the proclitic *l-* when the following word begins with a vowel. Thus: *lo trak* 'in the car', *l-ofis* 'in the office'. The longer form *long* is what we generally encounter in written Bislama though it is sometimes also encountered in speech, especially before a word beginning with a vowel.

This preposition expresses a wide range of functions including location, e.g. *mi wok lo Vila* 'I work in Vila', goal, e.g. *mi go lo taon* 'I am going to town', source, e.g. *mi kambak lo taon* 'I am returning from town', and instrument, e.g. *mi katem bred lo naef* 'I am cutting bread with the knife'. This preposition also precedes a patient noun phrase that follows a formally intransitive verb, allowing it to function as a pseudo-object, e.g. *mi rato long ol lif* 'I raked the leaves'. This preposition effectively functions as a default preposition when no other preposition is specifically called for, as in examples such as the following:

(18) *Mi fraet lo dok ya.*  
'I'm afraid of that dog.'

(19) *Mi les l-ol man blo smok.*  
'I'm sick of smokers.'

Although Bislama has only a small set of genuine prepositions, there is a set of locational markers which can be used in conjunction with these prepositions to express a broader range of meanings. Forms such as *antap* 'above', *ananit* 'beneath', *ova* 'over', *klosap* 'nearby', *lo(ng)we* 'far off', *insaed* 'inside', *aosaed* 'outside', *afta* 'after', *bifo* 'before', *bihaen* 'behind' and so on can be used before a prepositional phrase marked by *lo(ng)*. Thus, compare *pijin i flae antap* 'the bird flew above' and *pijin i flae antap lo hil* 'the bird flew above the hill'.



(ii) *blong*: This preposition alternates in shape between *blong*, *blo-* and *bl-* according to the same conditions just noted for *lo(ng)*. It precedes a possessor noun or pronoun phrase in a possessive construction, e.g. *naef blong papa* ‘Dad’s knife’, *trak blo mi* ‘my car’. It also marks a benefactive noun phrase, e.g. *bae mi katem bred blo yu* ‘I will cut the bread for you’, as well as marking a habitual or characteristic relationship between two noun phrases, e.g. *man blo smok* ‘smoker’.

(iii) *from*: This expresses a causal function, as in *mi stap kof from sigaret* ‘I cough because of cigarettes’, as well as expressing a purposive function:

(20) *Hem i kam from masket blong sutum man blo smok.*  
 ‘(S)he came for a gun to shoot the smoker.’

(iv) *wetem*: This is an accompanitive preposition, as in (21):

(21) *Bae mi toktok wetem yu.*  
 ‘I will speak with you.’

The same form can also be used to express the instrumental function, in alternation with *lo(ng)*:

(22) *Mi katem bret wetem naef.*  
 ‘I am cutting bread with the knife’.

(v) *olsem*: This expresses the simulative function, as in (23):

(23) *Mi no olsem yu.*  
 ‘I’m not like you.’

In addition, a number of forms that began as transitive verbs are currently acquiring prepositional functions. These newly developed prepositions include the following:

(vi) *kasem*: As a transitive verb, *kasem* means ‘reach, arrive at’, but this form can also be used as a preposition meaning ‘as far as, until’, as in (24):

(24) *Bae mi stap kasem tri klok.*  
 ‘I will stay until three o’clock.’

(vii) *bitim*: The transitive verb *bitim* means ‘defeat’. As a preposition, this form has come to express the meaning of ‘past’:

(25) *Bae mi stap bitim tri klok.*  
 ‘I will stay past three o’clock.’

This form is also used in comparative constructions:

(26) *Mi longfala bitim yu.*  
 ‘I am taller than you.’

(viii) *agensem*: The verb *agensem* means ‘oppose’, but when used as a preposition this form expresses the meaning of ‘against’:

(27) *Bae mi toktok agensem yu.*  
‘I will speak against you.’

(ix) *raonem*: This form can be used as a verb meaning ‘surround’ or ‘go around’, but as a preposition it means ‘around’:

(28) *Mi pulum fanis raonem yad blo buluk.*  
‘I made a fence around the cattle yard.’

(x) *folem*: Finally, the form *folem* as a verb means ‘follow’, but when this is used as a preposition it expresses the idea of ‘according to’:

(29) *Mi wokem kek folem buk blo kuk.*  
‘I made a cake according to the cookbook’.

#### 7.4. Interrogative constructions

Polar questions are very frequently distinguished from statements by means only of a change in intonation. Alternatively, polar questions can be marked by means of the tag (*n*)o ‘or’ e.g. *bae yu kam* ‘you will come’ > *bae yu kam no?* ‘will you come?’ Such sentences represent abbreviations of longer alternatives such as *bae yu kam no bae yu no kam?* ‘will you come or will you not come?’.

Content questions are expressed by means of the following interrogative forms: *wanem* ‘what?’, *hu(ya)* ‘who?’, *hamas* ‘how much/many?’, *we(a)* ‘where?’, *wataem* ‘when?’, *wijwan* ‘which?’. Some interrogative meanings are expressed by complex interrogatives, e.g. *olsem wanem* ‘how?’ (< *wanem* ‘why?’). These forms typically appear in a sentence in the structural position appropriate to a corresponding statement, i.e. as we find in English without automatic movement of the interrogative form to the head of the clause, as in (30):

(30) *Yu wokem wanem?*  
‘What did you do?’

These forms can, however, be fronted in the same way as other fronted constituents:

(31) *Wanem (nao) yu wok em?*

In contrast to English, where questions with fronted WH-words represent the unmarked pattern, in Bislama fronting of question words represents a much more strongly expressed interrogative.

## 8. Complex predicates and sentences

### 8.1. Serial verbs

Representing a major typological contrast with English, we find fairly extensive patterns of verb serialization of a variety of kinds in Bislama. While some of these patterns are encountered also in Tok Pisin and Solomons Pijin, other serial verb constructions appear to be restricted to Bislama, or to be more frequently encountered in Bislama than in the other varieties of Melanesian Pidgin.

Just as in many of the Oceanic substrate languages, we also find a distinction in Bislama between what we can call nuclear-layer and core-layer serial verb constructions, with the two patterns differing in the degree of structural juncture between the verbs involved. Basically, nuclear-layer serial verb constructions involve a relatively tight and more compound-like juncture between verbs, whereas core-layer serial verbs involve a loose and more subordinate-like juncture. However, clear criteria can be recognized for distinguishing between serial verbs and compounding on the one hand and subordination on the other.

With nuclear-layer serial verb constructions, we find two verbs in sequence with no marking of subordination or coordination linking the two. There is just a single “predicate marker” applying across the verb series, and there is just a single subject preceding both verbs and a single object following both verbs. An example of this kind of pattern is:

- (32) *Kali i katem spletem wud.*  
 ‘Kali cut the log in two.’

Here, the transitive verbs *katem* ‘cut’ and *spletem* ‘split’ are associated with a single subject and a single object.

There is a fairly restricted set of verbs which can appear as the second verb in this kind of serial verb construction in Bislama. This includes transitive verbs such as *spletem* ‘split’, *brekem* ‘break’, *klinim* ‘clean’, *flatem* ‘completely finish’, *blokem* ‘block’, *spolem* ‘damage, ruin’, *hipimap* ‘pile up’, *finisim* ‘finish’ and *fasem* ‘tie’. The resultant combination expresses a resultative meaning as in the following examples:

- (33) *Sera i terem brekem pepa.*  
 ‘Sarah tore the paper in two’
- (34) *Manu i kakae flatem raes.*  
 ‘Manu ate all of the rice.’
- (35) *Roi i sidaon blokem rod.*  
 ‘Roy blocked the way by sitting on the road.’

There is also a handful of intransitive verbs which can appear in the second position in the same construction, including *haed* ‘hide’, *raf* ‘be dishonest’, *raon* ‘go

around’, *taet* ‘be tight’ and *redi* ‘prepare’. Although these forms carry no transitive suffix, they can still be followed by an object if the initial verb is transitive. Consider (36):

- (36) *Mi kukum haed ol yam.*  
 ‘I secretly cooked the yams.’

Intransitive verbs in a serial verb construction such as this typically express the manner in which an action is performed.

Core-layer serialization differs from nuclear-layer serial verb constructions in that there can be independent object marking associated with the initial verb, and there is also likely to be “predicate marking” between the two verbs (though there is no possibility for the second verb to independently choose its own subject). Contrast the examples just given with the following core-layer serial verb construction:

- (37) a. *Kali i sendem buk i kam.*  
 ‘Kali send the book hither.’

This differs from the nuclear-layer serial verb construction in that the serialized verb *sendem* ‘send’ is associated with the object *buk* ‘book’, and *kam* is then serialized with this whole verb phrase. If this were a nuclear-layer serial verb construction, the pattern would be:

- (37) b. \**Kali i sendem kam buk.*

It is worth commenting, however, that in Solomons Pijin, this pattern is in fact how this particular meaning is typically expressed.

While nuclear-layer serial verb constructions are occasionally used for the expression of manner, it is also possible for manner to be expressed by means of core-layer serial verb constructions, as in (38):

- (38) *Hem i holem rop i taet.*  
 ‘(S)he held the rope tightly.’

It is far more common, however, for core-layer serial verb constructions in Bislama to be associated with the expression of the directional orientation of an event, with verbs that are physically directed either to or from the speaker being serialized with the basic motion verbs *kam* ‘come’ and *go* ‘go’, as already illustrated. However, other directional (and also posture) verbs can also appear in this kind of construction:

- (39) *Hem i putum pos i slip lo graon.*  
 ‘(S)he lay the post on the ground.’
- (40) *Maki i bin wokbaot i stap lo bus.*  
 ‘Maki walked in the bush.’

The multiply ambiguous preposition *long* can be disambiguated in terms of its location, goal and source senses by being associated with core-layer serial verb constructions expressing direction and position. Consider (41) to (43):

- (41) *Maki i wokbaot i go lo bus.*  
‘Maki walked to the bush.’
- (42) *Maki i wokbaot i kam lo bus.*  
‘Maki walked from the bush.’
- (43) *Maki i wokbaot i stap lo bus.*  
‘Maki walked in the bush.’

## 8.2. Coordination

The form *mo* is used to link coordinate clauses:

- (44) *Bae mi kam lo haos mo bae yu wet lo mi.*  
‘I will come to the house and you will wait for me.’

The form *be* is used to express adversative coordinate clauses:

- (45) *Bae mi kam lo haos be bae yu no wet lo mi.*  
‘I will come to the house but you will not wait for me.’

A disjunctive relationship is expressed by *o*, which varies freely with *no*:

- (46) *Bae yu kam (n)o bae yu stap lo haos?*  
‘Will you come or will you stay at home?’

## 8.3. Subordinate clauses

There is a range of different kinds of subordinate clause markers in Bislama. The possessive preposition *blo(ng)* is used to introduced a purpose clause:

- (47) *Mi kam blo harem nius.*  
‘I came to hear the news.’

The general oblique preposition *lo(ng)* is used to introduce a variety of non-purposive complement clauses, as in (48):

- (48) *Mi intres lo pem trak.*  
‘I am interested in buying the car.’

The form *se* is used to introduce a quotative clause in which a clause containing a verb of locution is followed by the content of the utterance:

- (49) *Mi talem lo hem se bae mi kam.*  
‘I told him/her that I would come.’
- (50) *Mi singaotem hem se bae i kam.*  
‘I shouted to him that he should come.’
- (51) *Hem i giaman se bae i kam.*  
‘He lied that he would come.’

However, this form is also used to introduce a wide variety of complement clauses in which the initial clause expresses not just contents of locutions but also thoughts and feelings in general, as in (52) to (54):

- (52) *Mi hop se bae yu kam.*  
‘I hope that you will come.’
- (53) *Mi save se yu bin pem trak.*  
‘I knew that you bought the car.’
- (54) *Mi bilif se yu save helpem mi.*  
‘I believe that you can help me.’

The form *we* is used to express a location clause:

- (55) *Hem i putum we mi no save faenem.*  
‘(S)he put it where I can’t find it.’

Another very frequently encountered construction involving the subordinator *we* in Bislama is a pattern of emphasis in which a predicate is subordinated to itself by means of *we*. Thus, contrast *graon i strong* ‘the ground is hard’ with *graon i strong we i strong* ‘the ground is really hard’. It is common for the repeated material after the subordinator *we* to be deleted, giving constructions such as *graon i strong we* meaning the same thing.

The prepositional forms *from* and *olsem* are also used to introduce particular kinds of subordinate clauses. The causal preposition *from* is used to introduce reason clauses, while the similitive preposition *olsem* introduces clauses expressing similarity. Thus:

- (56) *Mi kam from yu bin singaotem mi.*  
‘I came because you called me.’
- (57) *Mi wokbaot olsem yu bin talem.*  
‘I walked like you said.’

The noun *taem* ‘time’ is used to introduce a temporal clause:

- (58) *Mi stap lo haos taem yu bin kam.*  
‘I was at home when you came.’

Other subordinators in Bislama have no independent function. One such form is *sapos* ‘if’:

- (59) *Bae mi kam sapos yu talem.*  
 ‘I will come if you say.’

*Nomata* or *nevamaen* can also be used to mean ‘although, even if’:

- (60) *Bae mi kam nomata yu no talem.*  
 ‘I will come even if you don’t say.’

All of the subordinators mentioned in the preceding paragraph are frequently associated with a following *we* (which normally expresses either a place clause or it introduces a relative clause within a noun phrase) or *se* (which normally introduces a quotative clause), with no apparent change of meaning. Thus, reason clauses may be introduced by *from*, *from we* or *from se* in free variation. This tendency to make use of these complex subordinators seems to be an increasing trend particularly among younger speakers.

- \* John Lynch is acknowledged for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this chapter. Final responsibility for all interpretation rests, of course, with the author.

### Selected references

Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# Solomon Islands Pijin: morphology and syntax\*

Christine Jourdan

## 1. Introduction

Pijin is the local name of the pidgin spoken in the Solomon Islands. Even though it has no official status, Pijin is the de facto national language of the country: it is used as a secondary language in the rural areas where vernacular languages are central to local cultures, and as a main language in the urban centres. An ever growing number of urbanites have Pijin as a mother tongue and have no knowledge of the vernaculars of their parents. For further details on the socio-linguistic situation of Pijin in the Solomon Islands, please refer to the accompanying chapter on phonetics and phonology of Pijin. Pijin is an English lexified language (80 per cent of the vocabulary) that has been heavily shaped by local vernaculars (Keesing 1988).

Pijin is typical of pidgin and creole languages in that it displays limited morphology and syntax. Whatever resemblances one may see with English is essentially lexical, as morphology and syntax bear no fundamental resemblances with those of English. However, one sees traces of English presence in the morphology, mainly under the form of reanalyzed tokens. For instance, some inflectional suffixes present in English (plural marking, pronouns) have been reanalyzed as parts of nouns and verb roots in Pijin.

In general, none of the inflectional systems of English has survived in Pijin. Plural marking of nouns is analytical and not morphological and is marked by the preposition of a plural marker (also the third person pronoun). Verbs are not inflected for tense, which is indicated by the use of aspect markers in initial clause position or in preverbal position. Budding auxiliaries such as *bin* (*been*) appear in the preverbal slot (in some dialects of Pijin only). So do duratives such as *stap* (*stay*). Genitive marking is realized through the use of the preposition *blo blong* (derived from English *belong*) between the possessed and the possessor.

As with Bislama (Vanuatu) and Tok Pisin (Papua New Guinea), most of the derivational morphology found in Pijin is a recent development out of lexical items. Reanalysis of English lexical items was one of the most productive derivational systems of early Pijin. It is now progressively replaced by derivation of the Pijin system. Thus whereas the English third person pronoun *him* was reanalyzed early on as a transitive marker on verbs *-em*, this derivational



suffix *-em* is now also used to transform nouns, adjectives and prepositions into verbal predicates. Please consult the relevant sections below for more details.

As for syntax, we find a limited amount of multifunctional words (e.g. pronouns serving also as plural or transitive markers), a limited presence (until recently) of clause marking devices (relatives, causatives, etc.), a developed set of prepositions, a large class of stative verbs and a small class of adjectives, and the preference for aspect marking rather than time marking.

In general, one has to keep in mind that many dialects of Pijin coexist in the Solomon Islands: in addition to the more basilectal and acrolectal varieties, there exist also dialects based on differences created by geography, social class, gender and age. One of the most important contrasts is between urban and rural speech. The sketch presented here cannot do justice to the rich diversity exhibited by all these dialects and is, by necessity, incomplete.

## 2. Sentences and word order

Unlike English, Pijin does not have a copula, simple equational sentences are thus often non-verbal sentences of the type *Mi nao mi sif blong ples ia* 'I am the chief of this place'. In rural areas and in the speech of older people in urban areas, the predicate marker /i/ tends to be inserted in the verb phrase after the nominal or the pronominal subject, as in (1):

- (1) *Puskat nao hem i dae finis.*  
'The cat has died.'

The predicate marker is becoming increasingly optional in urban centres. In the speech of young people, it is almost non-existent.

Pijin, like most of the local vernacular languages and English, prefers SVO word order for equational and simple sentences of the type:

- (2) *Mami blong mi siki.*  
'My mother is sick.'

However, in general, topicalization (of the subject or the object) is the preferred form for informative and more complex sentences. When the subject noun phrase is the focus, a subject pronoun is often inserted in the verb phrase:

- (3) a. *Pikinin blong mi hem siki long hospital nao.*  
'My child is sick at the hospital.'

Topicalization, with or without fronting of the subject or object noun phrase can be reinforced by the optional addition of the focus marker *nao*:

- (3) b. *Pikinin blong mi nao hem siki long hospital.*

When a pronoun subject is topicalized, it must be followed by the focus marker *nao*:

- (4) *Hem nao hem siki.*  
 ‘He is sick.’ or ‘It is he who is sick.’

As with Bislama, other focused noun phrases can be located before the subject, with optional marking by *nao*, as in (5):

- (5) a. *Olketa pikinin tisa kros long olketa.*  
 b. *Olketa pikinin nao tisa kros long olketa.*  
 ‘The teacher is upset at the children.’

In narratives, the preferred pattern involves the repetition of the last clause or words of the preceding sentence at the beginning of the next sentence, thus giving the story a gentle lull and rhythm as in (6):

- (6) *Olketa pikinin go wokabaot long bus. Wokabaot long bus, olketa lukim wanfala jaeen. Jaeen ia aksem samfala selen long olketa. Askem samfala selen long olketa, batawea, olketa no garem nao.*  
 ‘The children went for a walk in the forest. As they went for a walk in the bush, they saw a giant. The giant asked them for some money. He asked them for some money, but they did not have any.’

This pattern is also found in local Austronesian vernacular narratives and is rather reminiscent of some structures of ritual language in Indonesia (see Fox 1974), thus indicating that it may be an Austronesian pattern.

### 3. Noun phrase constituents

In Pijin, the noun phrase can be composed of determiners, pronouns, nouns, qualifiers and quantifiers.

#### 3.1. Determiners

Unlike English, Pijin has no definite or indefinite singular article similar to English *the* or *a*. Thus singular nouns appear alone as in (7):

- (7) *Kokorako kolsap bonem eg blong hem.*  
 ‘The chicken is ready to lay its egg.’

However, the quantifier *wanfala* ‘one’ is progressively becoming reanalyzed by some speakers as an indefinite singular article that would be translated in English

either by ‘a’ or by ‘one’ according to context. Plural of nouns is indicated by the anteposition of the third person pronoun plural *olketa* which also means ‘all’. Only the context indicates whether a proper translation is with English ‘the’ or with English ‘all’. The demonstrative pronoun *ia* (from English *here*) is increasingly being used also as a definite article. Again, the context reveals the meaning of *ia*. Thus the sentence *Man ia mi lukim long sip* can be understood as ‘I saw this man in the ship’, or ‘I saw the man in the ship’.

### 3.2. Quantifiers

Like English, Pijin has two types of numeral quantifiers: cardinals and ordinals. Cardinals are formed by adding the suffix *-fala* derived from English *fellow* but now semantically bleached, to any of the regular numerals (e.g. in *wanfala pikinin* ‘one child’, *fofala dola* ‘four dollars’, *tuentifala man* ‘twenty men’). Under the influence of English, an ever increasing number of urban speakers are dropping the suffix *-fala* from the cardinals. When emphasis on the number is needed, the suffix *-fala* is always present. Note that plural is not morphologically marked on the nouns that follow. Ordinals are formed in two ways: first, by adding the prefix *mek-* (English *make*) before the numeral, as in *mekwan* ‘first’, *mekfoa* ‘fourth’, *meksikis* ‘sixth’, or:

- (8) *Mekfoa sista blong mi marit long Malaita.*  
‘My fourth sister is married to someone from Malaita.’

Second, by prefixing the word *namba-* ‘number’ to the numeral *nambawan*, *nambatu*, *nambatri*, etc. and placing the ordinal immediately before the word that is qualified, as in (9):

- (9) *Nambatri pikinin blong mi stap siki.*  
‘My third child is sick.’

Lexical quantifiers such as *olketa* ‘plural, all’, *samfala* ‘some’, *plande* ‘lots of’, *staka* ‘many, lots of’, *evri* ‘each, every’, *lelebet* ‘a few’, *naf* ‘enough’, *tumas* ‘too much, a lot of’ can also be used to modify nouns as in (10):

- (10) a. *Staka pipol long maket distaem.*  
‘There is a lot of people at the market today.’  
b. *Lelebet selen long pasbuk blong mi.*  
‘There is a bit of money in my account.’

Note that some of these quantifiers can be used as pronouns, without accompanying nouns, according to context as in (11):

- (11) *Staka long olketa kam long naet.*  
‘Many of them came at night.’

### 3.3. Qualifiers

Unlike English, Pijin has a small class of true adjectives, compared to the large class of predicate adjectives that function as statives. This is a pattern found in most of the substrate Oceanic languages (Ross 1998). Except for a small group of them, they are pre-modifiers as in *bigfala sista* ‘elder sister’ or *gudfala waka* ‘good work’, and characteristically identified by the possible presence of the suffix *fala* (even though it tends to disappear from the speech of an increasing amount of speakers). For some speakers, the suffix *-fala* is simply redundant, for others it is a way to add emphasis if the general way of constructing adjectives does not involve a regular use of the suffix. These adjectives typically include colour terms, size, relative age (young or old), and numbers.

On the other hand, there exists also a large class of predicative adjectives, but given the absence of copula, these adjectives function fundamentally like verbs as in *Pikpik blong mi gris fogud* which we can render in English only by ‘My pig is very fat’. For this reason I prefer to analyze them as stative verbs and so does Keesing (1988). Others, however, analyze them as adjectives, like for example Crowley (this volume) for Bislama.

### 3.4. Affixes

The main derivational affixes are suffixes: they are *fala* which signals adjectives, *wan* which transforms statives or adjectives into nouns (e.g. *siki* [stative] ‘sick’ vs. *sikiwan* ‘sick person’), and *-em* (as well as its variants *-im* and *-um*), also commonly referred to as the transitive marker (e.g. *kaekae* ‘to eat’ vs. *kaekaem* ‘to eat something’). Beside marking the transitivity of active verbs, the transitive marker can turn nouns, statives and prepositions into transitive verbs. The noun *ren* ‘rain’ becomes *renim* ‘rain on’:

- (12) *Disfala big ren ia renim mi tumas.*  
 ‘This big rain storm (rained on me) drenched me.’

The stative *tuwet* ‘drenched, soaked’ becomes transitive in the following sentence:

- (13) *Hu nao tuwetim kaleko blong mi?*  
 ‘Who has soaked my clothes?’

The preposition *of* ‘off’ becomes transitive with the adjunction of *-um* (for more details see section 4.1.):

- (14) *Ofum laet ia.*  
 ‘Switch off the light.’

## 3.5. Personal pronouns

The paradigm of Pijin personal pronouns is as follows:

	Singular		Dual		Trial		Plural
1	<i>mi</i>	Inclusive	<i>iumitufala</i>		<i>iumitrifala</i>		<i>iumi</i>
		Exclusive	<i>mitufala</i>		<i>mitrifala</i>		<i>mifala</i>
2	<i>iu</i>		<i>iutufala</i>		<i>iutrifala</i>		<i>iufala</i>
3	<i>hem</i>		<i>tufala</i>		<i>trifala</i>		<i>olketa</i>

The presence of the suffix *-fala* derived from English *fellow* is probably due to a reanalysis of *fellow* as a plural marker in the early day of the formation of Melanesian Pidgin. This paradigm is both simple and complex. On the one hand, it is simple, because, in contrast with English, Pijin (like Bislama) does not distinguish case or gender. The position of the pronouns in the sentence with regard to the verb allows for the distinction between subject and object. Reflexivity is indicated by the addition of the adjective *seleva* ‘self’, as in

- (15) *Mi seleva nao wakem.*  
 ‘I did it by myself’ or ‘I did it myself.’

Reciprocity is indicated by the repetition of the same pronoun in subject and object position, as in (16):

- (16) *Sapos iumi mitim iumi moa, bae iumi stori.*  
 ‘If we meet each other again, we will talk.’

Possession is indicated by the expression *blong*, for example in (17):

- (17) *Sista blong mi bonem bebi blong hem.*  
 ‘My sister gave birth to her child.’

On the other hand, the system is complex because, and also in contrast with English, the pronominal paradigm of Pijin makes a rather elaborate set of distinctions between singular, dual, trial and plural. In addition, pronominal forms indicate a systematic distinction between inclusive and exclusive. These features correspond exactly to the substrate languages and are clearly not of English origin.

As with English and the substrate languages, the system makes it possible to incorporate noun subjects along with the pronouns. Thus ‘We young people...’ can be translated by *Mifala iangwan*. But Pijin and substrate languages make use of these constructions much more frequently than English. Particularly striking, yet pervasive, are constructions of the type illustrated in (18), where the second subject is clearly included in the pronoun, but yet singled out:

- (18) *Mitufala Resina bae go maket.*  
 ‘Resina and I will go to the market.’

### 3.6. Nouns

Common nouns are of such forms as *ston* ‘stone’, *popo* ‘pawpaw’ and *brata* ‘brother’. The great majority of the words are derived from English etyma, and English is now the main source of neologisms such as *kompjuta* ‘computer’, *vidio* ‘video’, etc. A significant number of words are from Melanesian origin, most specifically Eastern Oceanic terms (some of them pan-Solomonic): *susu* ‘breast’, ‘milk’, *nana* ‘pus’, *maman* ‘opening’, *kokosu* ‘hermit crab’.

Nouns enter into three main types of constructions involving either NOUN + NOUN, MODIFIER + NOUN and VERB + NOUN. In constructions of the type NOUN + NOUN, the model, common in the substrate languages, is HEAD + MODIFIER, as in *koprahaos* ‘copra shed’, *lemantri* ‘lemon tree’, *masolman* ‘strong man’, *samanfisi* ‘tinned fish’. So strong is the substrate model that some well-established English compound words undergo metathesis as *sitbed* ‘bed-sheet’, *haostakis* ‘tax house’, *nelfingga* ‘finger nail’, or *lifti* ‘tea leaf’.

More common are the compounds involving MODIFIER + NOUN, as in *redsos* ‘ketchup’, *raonwata* ‘lake, puddle’, *levolples* ‘flat land’, *bikmere* ‘important woman’ *ialotri* ‘Indian mulberry’, *smolkisin* ‘outside kitchen’, or *smolmami* ‘mother’s younger sister’.

A small class of compounds involve VERB + NOUN in either order, contrary to what we see in Bislama where verbs seem to precede nouns exclusively (see Crowley, this volume). A relevant example is Pijin *manstil* (*man* ‘man’ + *stil* ‘steal’) ‘thief’ for Bislama *stilman*. But we also have the Bislama order as in *maritbed* ‘conjugal bed, double bed’ or *maritkwata* ‘housing for married people’.

### 3.7. Plural marking

Plural marking is not always necessary provided the context makes it clear that the noun is plural. However, when plural is marked, it is marked analytically by the preposition of the third person plural pronoun *olketa* ‘they, all’:

- (19) *Olketa boe bae kam long naet.*  
 ‘The boys will come at night.’

Under the pressure of English, the official language of the country and the language of education, an increasing number of common words seem to be marking plural both morphologically and analytically. That is the case for words such as *boe* ‘boy’ as in *olketa boes* ‘the boys’ and *gel* ‘girl’ as in *olketa gels*. Interestingly, the plural suffix *-s* is in most cases used in conjunction with the plural marker

*olketa* even though I have heard some people use the morphological plural without *olketa*. Is it a case of code switching or are we talking of the development of variation in Pijin plural marking? It is hard to say at this stage.

Plural can also be marked by the preposition of indefinite nominal modifiers such as *samfala* ‘some’ or plural personal pronouns such as *mifala* ‘we’ and *iufala* ‘you’ and their dual, trial, inclusive forms as in (20):

- (20) *Mifofala boe go wokabaot nao.*  
 ‘The four of us boys are going for a walk.’

Note also that some English plural forms were reanalyzed early in Pijin as singular. For instance *ants* became *anis* as in *blakanis* ‘black ant’. Thus ‘one ant’ would be glossed as *wanfala anis* and ‘the ants’ would most likely be glossed in Pijin by *olketa anis*.

## 4. Verb phrases

### 4.1. Verbs and verbal morphology

Pijin verbs can be divided into two main classes: stative and dynamic. Stative verbs have semantic properties that give them the attributive quality usually associated in English with adjectives. But as Pijin lacks copula, these statives are fundamentally verbal, as they are in the substrate languages (Keesing no date). Consider examples like *marit* ‘be married’, *lesi* ‘be lazy’, or *finis* ‘be finished’. Some of these statives can become transitive with the adjunction of the transitive marker *-em* or one of its variants.

The dynamic verbs are divided into intransitive verbs and transitive verbs. The latter are marked by the addition of a transitive marker on the intransitive form. The choice of transitive suffix to be added (*-em*, *-im* or *-um*) varies according to a rule of vocalic harmony between the stem of the verb and the transitive suffix as in the following model:

Verb stem vowel	Suffix
<i>-a</i>	<i>-em</i>
<i>-e</i>	<i>-em</i>
<i>-i</i>	<i>-im</i>
<i>-o</i>	<i>-em</i>
<i>-u</i>	<i>-um</i>

This “rule” is more or less regular: *huk* ‘to hook’ becomes *hukum* ‘to hook something’, *hit* ‘to hit’ becomes *hitim* ‘to hit someone’, but *baet* ‘to bite’ becomes *baetim* for some speakers and *baetem* for others. A general trend in the speech of young urban Pijin speakers is the shortening of *-em* to *-m*. Thus we get *ansam* ‘to answer something/someone’ instead of *ansarem*, or *kalam* ‘to colour something’ instead of *kalarem*.

The transitive suffix is very productive as it can be used with nouns (for example, *san* ‘sun’ becomes *sanim* ‘to put in the sun’) and prepositions (*ap* ‘up’ becomes *apum* ‘to raise’). So far, it does not seem possible to append the transitive suffix to true adjectives. A good indicator of the productivity of this suffix is that any new verbs directly borrowed from English today will automatically receive the transitive suffix: *fotokopim* ‘to photocopy’, *faksim* ‘to fax’, etc. Typically, most intransitive verbs, and a small group of stative verbs such as *marit* ‘be married’, *komplit* ‘be finished’, *hot* ‘be hot’, and *fraet* ‘be scared’, can become transitive. Thus the stative *fraet* ‘be scared’ can become *fraetem* ‘to scare’, as in (21):

- (21) *Bikfala dogi ia fraetem mi tumas.*  
 ‘This big dog scares me a lot.’

But a number of transitive verbs do not have intransitive equivalents, such as *duim* ‘do (it)’, *wakem* ‘make (it)’, *falom* ‘follow (it)’, *tekem* ‘take (it)’. As with Bislama, a small category of transitive verbs can be marked with the suffix or not and yet not change meaning: *drink* or *drinkim* ‘to drink’, *kaekae* or *kaekaem* ‘to eat’, etc.

A small subset of verbs are exclusively intransitive: *save* ‘to know, to facilitate, to have the habit of’, *go* ‘to go’, *kam* ‘to come’, and *stap* ‘to stay, to exist’. Interestingly, these verbs also function as auxiliaries and modals, and are used in serial verb constructions. *Go* and *kam* function also as directionals: when placed after an action verb, they indicate the direction of the action towards or away from the speaker (e.g. *tekem go* ‘remove from here, take away’, *tekem kam* ‘bring’, *ring go* ‘phone someone’, *ring kam* ‘receive a phone call’). When used in conjunction with other verbs, the verb *stap* indicates origin as in (22a), or a durative as in (22b):

- (22) a. *Iu stap kam long wea?*  
 ‘Where are you coming from?’  
 b. *Mam blong mi stap siki.*  
 ‘My mother is sick.’

The verb *save* acts as a modal indicating habituality and ability:

- (23) a. *Hem save sevis long sande.*  
 ‘She (usually) goes to church on Sunday.’  
 b. *Pita no save draeva.*  
 ‘Peter cannot drive.’

It can also indicate desirability:

- (24) *Waswe, mi save kaekae kek tu?*  
 ‘Tell me, may I also eat some cake?’

One could claim that the so-called transitive marker is a form of inflection as it marks agreement with the object. However, this is true when the object is a noun



or a pronoun (even when it is absent, since Pijin is a third person pro-drop language), but not when the object is a verb phrase, as will be shown in the analysis of serial verb constructions in section 4.5.

#### 4.2. Reduplication

Contrary to English, Pijin makes room for reduplication as a productive pattern in the morphology of verbs. It is an important element of the language that can modify meaning and/or mood. It is also present in the substrate languages of the Solomon Islands.

Reduplication is used to indicate intensity, duration, or repetition of an action. Many speakers make use of it liberally throughout their speech, for affect or precision. It is a particularly important tool for story tellers who make use of it to develop the atmosphere and the meaning of their story.

<i>go</i>	‘go’	<i>gogo</i>	‘after sometime’
<i>suim</i>	‘swim’	<i>susuim</i>	‘be swimming’
<i>fraet</i>	‘afraid’	<i>fafraet</i>	‘very afraid’
<i>krae/karae</i>	‘cry’	<i>kakarae</i>	‘cry continuously’

In some cases reduplication changes the meaning of the word slightly as with:

<i>dae</i>	‘die’	<i>dadae</i>	‘pine away’
<i>go</i>	‘go’	<i>gogo</i>	‘journey’
<i>ting</i>	‘think’	<i>tingting</i>	‘thought’
<i>was</i>	‘wash’	<i>waswas</i>	‘laundry’
<i>sing</i>	‘sing’	<i>singsing</i>	‘song’

The standard patterns seem to involve reduplication of the initial syllable of the verb stem, or reduplication of the whole verb root when the consists of one syllable. In the first case we find *save* ‘to know’ and *sasave* ‘to be very knowledgeable’, *siki* ‘be sick’ and *sisiki* ‘keep being sick’, *bisi* ‘be busy’ and *bibisi* ‘be very busy’, *silip* ‘to sleep’ and *sisilip* ‘to sleep a long time’. In the second case we find *kis* and *kiskis*.

However, other reduplication patterns reveal that the rule is not that simple. Note that one-syllable verb roots containing a diphthong will follow the general pattern above, as in *faet* ‘to fight’ and *fafaet*. Note also that when the verb starts with a consonant cluster (a pattern predominantly found in the speech of young urbanites), speakers will copy the first consonant and the first vowel. Thus *stap* becomes *sastap*, *presim* becomes *pepresim*, *ple* becomes *peple*. From this we conclude that the basic rule for verbal reduplication is that speakers will copy the first consonant and the first vowel. Very rarely will speakers choose to reduplicate the

consonant cluster if it is in initial position, contrary to what is happening in Bislama (see Crowley, this volume).

Reduplication is rather specific to verbal morphology and is very rarely found in other parts of speech except in a few limited nouns, with or without a change of meaning in the process: *kala* ‘colour’ and *kalakala* ‘multicolour’, *wan* ‘one’ and *wanwan* ‘one at a time, individually’, *pikpik* ‘pig’ and *sipsip* ‘sheep’, *kaekae* ‘food’. In these cases the whole root of the noun is reduplicated. Note that the noun *kaekae* ‘food’, derived from Eastern Oceanic *kae*, is also the verb *kaekae* ‘eat’. All these words entered Pijin as lexicalized reduplicated forms.

#### 4.3. Compound verbs

Pijin has lexicalized a small set of English verb phrases based on verbs such as *talk* (*tok*), *make* (*mek*), *hold* (*holem*), which are usually followed by a preposition, a stative verb, or a noun. When the Pijin compound is built with a preposition, some sets of verbs, such as *tok*, will have the transitive marker affixed after the preposition, as in *tokabaotem* ‘talk about’, *tokwetem* ‘talk with’, *tokdaonem* (*tok* ‘talk’ + *daonem* ‘lower’ = ‘denigrate’). When the compound is built with a stative or a noun, the verb is intransitive, as in *mekenoēs* = *mek* + optional epenthetic /e/ + *noēs* ‘noise’ = ‘to be noisy’, *mekelaen* = *mek* ‘make’ + /e/ + *laen* ‘line’ = ‘line up’, *mekwara* = *mek* + *wara* ‘water’ = ‘to be sterile’, *mektambu* = *mek* + *tambu* ‘sacred, off-limit’ = ‘consecrate’. A relevant example is: *Olketa dadi long laen blong mi kam for mektambu long ples ia* ‘The male relatives of my lineage come to consecrate this area’.

#### 4.4. Prepositional verbs

Like English, Pijin can use prepositions such as *of* ‘off’, *ap* ‘up’, *daon* ‘down’ as the verbal nucleus of transitive verbs. English has *up the ante*, Pijin has *ofum* ‘to switch off, to turn off’, *apum* ‘to raise’, *daonem* ‘to lower’, *antapem* ‘to be on top of’, *insaetim* ‘to bring inside’, *atsaetim* ‘to bring outside’. These prepositional verbs (as with other verbs derived with the transitive suffix) have become quite prevalent in the speech of younger urbanites. On the other hand, we find in the speech of older speakers, and also of rural speakers, a distinct prevalence of constructions involving the prepositions following dynamic verbs such as *tekem* ‘take’ and *wakem* ‘make’. Whereas they would say *Iumi mas tekem kaleko insaet from ren* ‘We have to bring the clothes inside because of the rain’, a young urbanite would probably say *Iumi mas insaetim kaleko from ren*. These verbs are a good example of the productivity of the suffix *-em*.

However, these verbs are different from a second type of prepositional verbs that have the morphology of transitive verbs but are used as prepositions with an object. These are typically Melanesian and are found in many substrate languages.

They include *agensem* ‘against’, *abaotem* ‘about’, *raonem* ‘around’, *lusim* ‘away from’, and *wetem* ‘with someone’, as in (25):

- (25) *Ellen nao bae mi kam wetem.*  
‘It is with Ellen that I will come.’

#### 4.5. Serial verb constructions

Verb serializations exist in Pijin only if serial constructions consisting of auxiliary + verb are included in that category. This construction is also common in English in phrases such as *go ask*, *come see*, etc. In Pijin this form is quite common and involves transitive and intransitive verbs and auxiliaries such as *go* ‘go’, *kam* ‘come’, and modals such as *save* ‘know, can’, *wande* ‘want, wish’, *laek* ‘want, like’. Thus there are numerous serial constructions like *go tekem* ‘go and take’, *go lukim* ‘go and look’, *kam tekem* ‘come and take’, *go silip* ‘go and sleep’, *go suim* ‘go and wash’, *wande kaekae* ‘want to eat’, or *laek stap* ‘wish to stay’. It is worth noting that the verb *wandem* becomes *wande* as a modal in serial constructions. When verbs are serialized with modals, the second verb loses its transitive marker even though it is functionally transitive. Consider (26):

- (26) *Dadi wande kaekae fis, ma fis nomoa nao.*  
‘Daddy wants to eat fish, but there is none left.’

Another type of serial verb constructions involves VERB + VERB, but this is a rather small group limited to resultative verbs, and is certainly not as productive as can be seen in Bislama. They all involve intransitive verbs, and it would probably be just as efficient to analyze the second verb as an adverb, even though functionally these adverbs are also stative verbs: *kilim dae* = *kilim* ‘beat up’ + *dae* ‘die’ = ‘beat to death’, *kilim haed* = *kilim* ‘beat up’ + *haed* ‘hide’ = ‘beat in an ambush’. Contrary to what is happening in Bislama, there is no verb serialization in which the second verb is also transitive.

#### 4.6. Aspect marking

In contrast to English, Pijin does not have a tense system. It is by the use of adverbs (*taem* ‘when’, *taembifoa* ‘in the old days’, *fastaem* ‘long before’, etc.), prepositions (*long naet* ‘at night’, *long mone* ‘in the morning’) and aspect markers (*finis* ‘finish’ indicates completion, *bae* indicates that an action may or will happen), and combinations thereof, that speakers indicate the sequence of events.

Time adverbs can occupy two slots, the preferred slot is at the very beginning of the sentence, as in (27):

- (27) a. *Taembifoa, mifala no garem trake.*  
 ‘In the old days we did not have cars.’  
 b. *Tumoro nomoa iumi go.*  
 ‘It is tomorrow that we will go.’

Rarely do we find *Iumi go tumoro* ‘We shall go tomorrow’, unless the sentence is meant to be interrogative in which case the adverb is stressed with a raising intonation.

Aspect marking can occur in three different positions, depending on the respective aspect marker. The only aspect marker that appears in clause-initial position is *bae* and its variant *babae*, *bambae*, thus revealing the adverbial origin of this aspect marker. The presence of *bae* in the sentence indicates that the action of the verb will take place in the future (*Bae mifala go sevis* ‘We will go to church’), or may take place in the future, as a possibility, and usually as a direct consequence of another action that might or might not take place. In such cases, *bae* is an irrealis marker and often appears in association with the irrealis particle *sapos*, as in (28), or with modals such as *maet* ‘maybe, perhaps’ and *ating* ‘maybe, probably’.

- (28) *Sapos hem hotsan, bae iumi go suim long si.*  
 ‘If the weather is good we will go swim in the ocean.’

Beyond indicating the future or the possibility of an action in the future, *bae* also indicates causality, sequentiality, etc. (Jourdan and Selbach 2001)

The second aspect-marking slot follows the subject pronoun, more rarely the subject noun, and can be occupied by only three aspect markers: *des*, *bin* and *bae*. *Jes* (interspeaker variation [dʒes ~ des]) is derived from English ‘just’ and indicates that the action of the verb has just taken place:

- (29) *Mi des lukim kaen pipol olsem.*  
 ‘I have just seen this type of people.’

Keesing (1988: 39) claims that this is the result of the calquing of Pijin on the basis of local vernacular languages. In other words, Pijin speakers use their vernaculars as a template to construct these types of sentences. The point is debatable since a similar structure exists also in English. *Bin* was attested very early on in the history of Pijin, but had not been used for a long time. It has been reintroduced over the last 20 years through sustained contact with Tok Pisin and Bislama, and is distinctively part of the urban educated dialect. The influence of English in this reintroduction is not negligible either. Thus we have *Mi bin go long Ruasuara* ‘I went to Ruasuara’. *Bae* also appears in that slot as a marker of future or in conjunction with irrealis propositions. On the basis of Sankoff and Laberge’s (1973) study of *bae* in Tok Pisin, theorists have posited that as a result of nativization, *bae* had moved from sentence-initial position to preverbal position, and was thus being grammaticalized as a future marker. This is not the case in Pijin where all groups

of speakers overwhelmingly place *bae* in preverbal position, and most particularly adults of rural areas who use Pijin as a second language (Jourdan 1985). In addition to marking future, *bae* can also mark sequentiality of action, destination, purpose, and causality.

The last aspectual slot is located immediately after the verb, and only a small set of aspect markers can fit in it. Besides *iet* ‘yet, still’, this set consists of the following three markers: *finis* indicates that the action is completed, *moa* indicates the repetition of the action and *nao* that the action is taking place. I also call *nao* a statement marker. This is a false friend for speakers of English who have to be alerted to the fact that the Pijin equivalent for English *now* is *distaem* and not *nao*. All these markers are perfective, and indicate whether the action has taken place, whether it is taking place or whether it is completed, as in (30):

- (30) *Mi wakem gaden blong mifala finis.*  
 ‘I have completed my work in our garden.’

Note here the possible ambiguity that is resolved by the context: have I finished my work in our garden? Or have I finished all the possible work in our garden?

#### 4.7. Adverbs

Adverbs fall into two categories. Some are distinctly stative verbs that are used in serial constructions to modify the head verb as in *kilim dae* with *kilim* ‘to beat up’ + *dae* ‘die’, or *kilim strong* ‘hit hard’. The second type are adverbs that cannot be used as stative verbs. They appear in postposition and modify the verb that precedes them like *tumas* ‘very, too much’ in (31):

- (31) *Hem laekem bia tumas.*  
 ‘He likes beer very much.’

Further examples are *nating* ‘for no reason, only’ (32a), *wantaem* ‘at the same time, together’ (32b), and *olowe* ‘until the end, all the way’ (32c):

- (32) a. *Mi ti nating.*  
 ‘I only had tea.’  
 b. *Tufala Diake wetem Muina, tufala kam wantaem.*  
 ‘Jack and Muina came together.’  
 c. *Sip ia save go olowe kasem Honiara.*  
 ‘The ship goes all the way to Honiara.’

#### 4.8. Prepositional phrases

Pijin makes use of a small set of prepositions such as *blong* ‘belong’, *long* and its variant *lo*, and *fo* ‘for’ in order to build prepositional phrases. The possessive *blong*,

derived from English *belong*, and commonly realized in urban centers as *blo*, is also used to indicate a relation of habituality or natural connection. This latter usage can be analyzed as a form of metaphoric extension of the possessive construction (Keesing no date). In this type of construction, the preposition is located before the verb, as in *miusik blong dae* ‘funeral music’, *man blong stil* ‘a habitual thief’, or *ples blong silip* ‘sleeping quarters’. In the more urban varieties, and increasingly also in other areas, the preposition *fo* tends to replace *blong* in these types of constructions, e.g. *man fo stil* ‘habitual thief’, *ples fo silip* ‘sleeping quarters’.

The preposition *long* is by far the most versatile and multifunctional preposition. On the one hand, it acts as the instrumental preposition ‘with’ in sentences such as (33):

- (33) *Pikpik olketa kilim dae long akis.*  
 ‘The pig was killed with an axe.’

It is also, and foremost, the locative preposition that can be glossed in English by ‘to’ and ‘at’:

- (34) a. *Dadi blong mi long hospital distaem.*  
 ‘My father is now at the hospital.’  
 b. *Olketa go long Makira fo holide blong olketa.*  
 ‘They go to Makira for their vacation.’

Pijin requires directional prepositions obligatorily as in *Krismas nao mi go long hom.*

The preposition *from* establishes a causal relationship, as in (35):

- (35) *Pikinin ia siki from malaria.*  
 ‘This child is sick because of malaria.’

Another type of prepositional phrase is constructed with prepositional verbs, i.e. prepositional verb forms that have the morphology of a transitive verb (stem + transitive suffix) but which are used as prepositions (see section 4.4. above).

#### 4.9. Relativization

Like English, Pijin has several ways of marking relative clauses: with the relative markers *hu* and *wea*, or without, yielding what I will call here free relatives. In addition one can embed a sentence bracketed by the deictic *ia* (see Sankoff 1980). Free relatives are the earliest and still the most important way of building relative clauses in Pijin, whether the relative clause is embedded or not, and whether the focus of the relative clause (the head noun) is a subject, a direct object or another syntactic function. In the following examples, the relative clause is given in square brackets:

- (36) a. *Olketa pipol [olketa ranawe] olketa go stap long bus.*  
 ‘The people who escaped took to the forest.’  
 b. *Olketa go nomoa lukim jaeian [hemi itim man].*  
 ‘They went looking at the giant who eats people.’

These types of sentences have a particular structure: the subject pronoun co-referential with the focused head noun signals the beginning of the relative clause and serves as its subject. This is possible only when the focused head noun is co-referential with the subject of the relative clause. It is impossible, of course, in sentences where there is a switch in reference in which the head noun is the object of the relative clause, as in (37):

- (37) *Pikpik [olketa kilim finis] hem fat fogud.*  
 ‘The pig they have killed is very fat.’

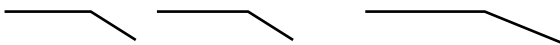
The subject pronoun of an embedded clause always introduces the relative if it is co-referential with the focus head noun. If we were to remove the subject pronoun from the embedded clause, the sentence would be ungrammatical or contextually unclear, or would become a chain-claused sentence. In the latter case, only the intonation pattern and the prosody would establish the difference between a relative sentence and a chain-claused sentence. Intonation is a very important marker of relativization. In a relative sentence the pause and intonational patterns are as follows:

*Pikpik ia hem kilim, mifala kaekaem.*  
 Pig            the he killed            we ate.  
 ‘We ate the pig that he killed.’



As a chain-claused sentence, the pause and intonational patterns are as follows and the meaning of the sentence is totally different:

*Pikpik ia, hem kilim, mifala kaekaem.*  
 Pig            the killed            we ate.  
 ‘The pig killed it, we ate it.’



As with Tok Pisin (Sankoff and Brown 1980), the bracketing of the embedded pronominal clause by the deictic *ia* reinforces embedding and thus relativization. The presence of *ia* is not necessary, however.

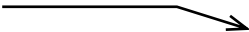
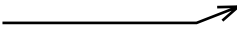
Speakers of Pijin can also build relative clauses by using the relative markers *hu* and *wea*. *Wea* can be used with either people or things, whereas *hu* is used with human nouns. The former is the earliest form, and is currently more widespread.

It tends to be associated with older age groups and rural populations. *Hu* is still rather rare overall, but its usage is expanding, particularly in the speech of young urbanites. As is the case in English, both markers are optional in Pijin as can be seen in the following example:

- (38) *Disfala gele (wea) mi lukim, hemi siki.*  
 ‘The girl (whom) I saw is sick.’

#### 4.10. Interrogative constructions

Interrogative sentences can be formed with or without interrogative markers. In the latter case, as with relative constructions, intonation contours play an important role in the formation of interrogative sentences: a simple change of intonation (raising at the end of the sentence) changes an affirmative clause into a question:

<p><i>Bae iumi go maket.</i>          ‘We will go to market.’</p> 	<p><i>Bae iumi go maket?</i>          ‘Are we going to market?’</p> 
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The following interrogative markers are most commonly used: *hu?* ‘who?’, *hao mas?* and more commonly *hamas?* ‘how much/many?’, *wataem?* ‘when?’, *was-we?* ‘how?’/‘what?’, *wanem?* ‘what?’. All these markers can be fronted, as in (39):

- (39) *Wataem nao bae iu kam?*  
 ‘When will you come?’

More commonly they are placed at the end of the clause or sentence, without any raising of the intonation contour, as in (40):

- (40) *Bae iu kam wataem?*  
 ‘You will come when?’

\* This chapter owes much to the example set by Terry Crowley in his own chapter on Bislama morphosyntax, and to enlightening discussions with Kevin Tuite and Rachel Selbach. Shortcomings and infelicities are, of course, my own.

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# Tok Pisin: morphology and syntax

Geoff Smith

## 1. Introduction

As noted in the introduction to Tok Pisin in the companion chapter on phonology (see Smith, other volume), there is a great deal of variability in the language, depending on such factors as first or second language use, region, situation, degree of bilingualism with English and so on. As a result, it is sometimes not easy to say what is permissible in the grammar and what is not. The following account of morphology and syntax is, then, again idealised to some extent. Generally accepted patterns of use are described, but where some variants occur, this is also indicated. Examples are generally taken from the corpus of first language speakers in Smith (2002), occasionally simplified for illustrative purposes of the feature under discussion.

## 2. Morphology

Although derivational morphology is in evidence in a variety of word-formation processes, Tok Pisin, like many other pidgin and creole languages, has not transferred a productive inflectional morphology from the lexifier. The only affixes normally encountered are the *-im* suffix, derived from English *him* and attached to transitive verbs, and two *-pela* suffixes, derived from English *fellow*. However, with the increasing influence of English among some first language varieties, some English affixes, such as the *-s* pluralising suffix, are appearing with increasing frequency.

### 2.1. The transitive marker *-im*

The transitivity marker *-im* is one of the most characteristic features of Melanesian Pidgin English, and its use has been recorded from the earliest pidgins of the Pacific. It is derived from the English object pronoun *him*. This form appeared in early pidgins from Australia and may have been reinforced according to Oceanic substrate patterns in the early development of Pacific pidgins (Keesing 1988). Generally, this suffix is obligatory on transitive verbs, although there are a few exceptions. About 90 of the verbs listed in Mihalic (1971) have two forms, one transitive and one intransitive, distinguished according to the presence or absence of

*-im*. For example, the verb *sanap* means ‘to be standing up’, while *sanapim* means ‘to stand something up’. Other examples include the following:

- |     |    |                  |   |
|-----|----|------------------|---|
| (1) | a. | <i>dring</i>     | <i>dringim</i>  |
|     |    | ‘to be drinking’ | ‘to drink (something)’  |
|     | b. | <i>giaman</i>    | <i>giamanim</i>   |
|     |    | ‘to be lying’    | ‘to deceive (someone)’ (from obsolete English <i>gammon</i> ‘to deceive’) |
|     | c. | <i>marit</i>     | <i>maritim</i>  |
|     |    | ‘be married’     | ‘to marry (someone)’  |

Occasionally the intransitive form may be reduplicated:

- |     |    |                       |   |
|-----|----|-----------------------|---|
| (2) | a. | <i>waswas</i>         | <i>wasim</i>                            |
|     |    | ‘wash oneself, bathe’ | ‘to wash (something)’                   |
|     | b. | <i>tok(tok)</i>       | <i>tokim</i>                            |
|     |    | ‘to talk, converse’   | ‘to say (something), to tell (someone)’ |

The suffix may be used in other ways to make semantic distinctions. For example, the transitive verb *kaikai* ‘to eat’ is unmarked by *-im*, while *kaikaim* is glossed as ‘bite’ in most accounts (e.g. Mihalic 1971). More recently, however, the use of the suffix with this particular word has been described as a way of distinguishing human from non-human agents (Smith 2002). The verbs *pispis* ‘urinate’ and *pekpek* ‘defecate’ are most often used intransitively, but still do not take the *-im* suffix when transitive use is called for. The forms *pispis blut* ‘Blackwater Fever’ (literally ‘urinate blood’) and *pekpek wara* ‘diarrhoea’ (literally ‘defecate liquid’) are used, although it could be argued that the transitivity is low in these cases. Forms of these verbs with *-im* were not thought to be permissible (Dutton 1973). However, Smith (2002) has recorded the semantically distinguished forms *pekpekim* ‘to lay (eggs)’ and *pispisim* as both ‘piss on’ and ‘sting’. The common verb *gat* ‘to have’, also used as an existential, normally does not take a transitive suffix, even when it is clearly transitive in nature: *em i gat ol naispla nambis* ‘it has nice beaches’. However, occasional instances of *gatim*, considered unacceptable in most areas, have been recorded, mainly from the Eastern Highlands.

In modern Tok Pisin, especially as spoken by first language speakers, the final *-m* of the *-im* suffix is frequently elided, leaving transitive verbs marked by *-i*. The following, for example, was recorded from a young first language speaker in the Simbu province:

- |     |           |             |            |            |            |           |             |           |           |            |
|-----|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| (3) | <i>ol</i> | <i>suti</i> | <i>sla</i> | <i>boi</i> | <i>ia,</i> | <i>ol</i> | <i>puti</i> | <i>em</i> | <i>lo</i> | <i>kar</i> |
|     |           |             |            |            |            |           |             |           |           |            |
|     |           |             |            |            |            |           |             |           |           |            |
- ‘They shoot this boy ANAPH they put him in car’

When a verb stem ends in *-i*, for example, *redim* ‘to prepare’, loss of *-m* can negate the transitive/intransitive distinction.

In recent years, many English verbs have been borrowed into Tok Pisin, sometimes because of greater specificity, sometimes for stylistic reasons (Smith 1994):

- (4) a. *mi bin witnessim long ai bilong mi*  
 I PAST witness with eye POSS me  
 ‘I witnessed it with my own eyes’  
 b. *husat i bin othoraisim?*  
 who PRED PAST authorise?  
 ‘Who authorised this?’

## 2.2. The *-pela* suffix

The English word *fellow* appears to have been in frequent use in the early days of contact, and has entered all varieties of Melanesian Pidgin in reinterpreted form. While in some other dialects it appears as *-fala*, the Tok Pisin version is *-pela*, now almost universally reduced by fluent speakers to *-pla*. In Tok Pisin this has taken two distinct forms, one as a marker of monosyllabic adjectives, including numerals, the other as a plural marker on pronouns.

### 2.2.1. The *-pela* adjectival suffix

The *-pela* suffix on adjectives and quantifiers is superficially similar in structure to measure words or classifiers in Chinese. Phrases such as the Cantonese *yàt go yàhn* ‘one person’, for example, look like an exact parallel of the Tok Pisin expression *wan-pela man*. Indeed, something analogous appeared in Chinese Pidgin English in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, *wan piecee man* and some influence from that direction might reasonably be suspected. However, Baker (1987) has made a detailed study of the question and specifically ruled out influence from Chinese on Tok Pisin in this respect.

There appears to be no sign that the *-pela* adjectival suffix is becoming obsolescent, in spite of its apparent redundancy and almost total lack of substrate reinforcement. A number of points, though, are worth noting. Firstly, the category of adjective in Tok Pisin is somewhat problematic, as there is considerable overlap between what can be defined as adjectives and stative verbs. Secondly, there are a number of common monosyllabic adjectives which do not take *-pela*, and only appear after the noun, e.g. *banana mau* ‘ripe banana’ and *han kais* ‘left hand’. Lastly, a recent study of first language speakers (Smith 2002) has shown that while the full *-pela* form was heard in some slow or deliberately pronounced words, and is retained as an etymological spelling, the reduced form *-pla* is now the canonical form of this suffix among a considerable number of speakers. There are some examples of adjectives with more than one syllable taking the suffix, particularly numerals and colours (e.g. *sevenpela, yelopela*). Some quantifiers and demonstra-

tives ending in *-pela* appear to follow the same pattern, although it should be noted that some words such as *dispela* ‘this’ and *sampela* ‘some’ contain bound morphs, as there are no independently occurring forms *\*dis* and *\*sam*. Indeed the status of *-(pe)la* as a suffix here is now open to question. Among first language speakers in some areas, the *-pela* suffix may take on a semantic role, for example, in distinguishing the general form *hamas* ‘how much/many’ from a more emphatic form *hamaspela* ‘goodness knows how many’ (Smith 2002: 64).

### 2.2.2. *-pela* in the pronoun paradigm

At some very early stage in its development, Melanesian Pidgin English speakers apparently re-interpreted the English *fellow* as a plural marker on pronouns, but this had to compete with other means of signalling plurality, and the resulting system is now somewhat complex. Tok Pisin pronouns differ from the pronouns of the main lexifier language (English) in a number of respects, as seen in a typical paradigm shown in the following table.

Person Number	Singular	Dual	Trial	Plural
First	<i>mi</i>	(excl.) <i>mitupela</i> (incl.) <i>yumitupela</i>	<i>mitripela</i> <i>yumitripela</i>	<i>mipela</i> <i>yumi</i>
Second	<i>yu</i>	<i>yutupela</i>	<i>yutripela</i>	<i>yupela</i>
Third	<i>em</i>	(em) <i>tupela</i>	<i>emtripela</i>	<i>ol</i>

The paradigm is simpler than in English in some respects, for example in that case distinctions between subject and object, or gender distinctions between masculine, feminine and neuter are not normally made. (The variable use of *en* in place of *em* after *long* and *bilong* is the only exception; *en* is the usual unstressed form, while *em* is used for emphasis.) Thus three singular forms *mi*, *yu* and *em* are equivalent to the English forms *I*, *me*, *you* (singular), *he*, *she*, *it*, *her* and *him*. However, the system is more complex in other respects. There is a separate plural form of the second person pronoun, and dual and often trial numbers are distinguished in addition to plural. Moreover, first person plural (and sometimes dual and trial) pronouns have distinct inclusive and exclusive forms.

It seems that the trial form is becoming less and less common, and that the canonical third person dual form is now *tupela*, making it homophonous with the numeral two. Some reduced forms are also being used with increasing frequency; in rapid speech *mipela*, for example, may reduce to *mipla*, *mila* or *mila*, while *mitupela* and *yutupela* are routinely reduced to *mitla* and *yutla*. Thus, as with the case of *disla* described above, *-pela* here may no longer be best thought of as a suffix at all in a synchronic analysis.

### 2.3. The *-s* pluralising suffix

Nouns in Tok Pisin are usually pluralised where necessary by the use of the preceding word *ol*, homophonous with the third person plural pronoun. However, the unsystematic use of the English *-s* suffix has been in evidence for many years. A few lexical items include the unanalysed plural suffix from either English (*anis* ‘ant’ from English ‘ants’) or German (*binen* ‘bee’ from German *bienen* ‘bees’) (Mühlhäusler 1981: 39). However, neither of these suffixes became involved in widely-used productive rules during stabilisation. Mühlhäusler (1985a: 276) notes a highly variable use of the suffix in urban Tok Pisin which he interprets as a reduction of the systematic adequacy of the language as it decreolises, agreeing with Lynch’s (1979: 6) characterisation of the use of *-s* as an interference phenomenon. Romaine’s (1992) study of children in the Madang and Morobe Provinces gives details of 195 lexical items to which *-s* is attached and tabulates occurrences in each of the locations investigated. She concludes that animacy does have some influence, with a larger proportion of humans than animates taking the suffix, and that count nouns take *-s* considerably more often than mass nouns (Romaine 1992: 234–235). Smith’s (2002) study of first language speakers shows increasing use of obligatory marking of plurals with *-s* among some speakers, often with retention of the redundant *ol* marker as well. The use of both markers with more recent lexis such as *bois* ‘boys’ and *gels* ‘girls’ is particularly evident. A few examples of *-s* pluralisation on words of non-English origin may be heard, but they are very uncommon. The nouns most commonly taking the *-s* suffix were, in order, *boi* ‘boy’, *fren* ‘friend’, *perent* ‘parent’, *wik* ‘week’, *gel* ‘girl’, *student* ‘student’ and *ticha* ‘teacher’ i.e. mostly recent additions to the lexis, and heard frequently in bilingual contexts. For nouns ending in sibilant consonants, the normal form would be *-is*, for example, *klesis* ‘classes’ or *pisis* ‘pieces’, occasionally voiced in anglicised varieties.

### 2.4. Other word-formation processes

Although many of the derivational processes of English word formation were routinely ignored in the development of Tok Pisin, Mühlhäusler (1979) showed that the language has an extensive and sophisticated facility for producing new words through internal productive processes. These processes consist of compounding to produce new series of lexemes, multifunctionality, where a new item is derived by zero affixation from a different part of speech, and reduplication. Examples of each of the above processes are illustrated below.

#### 2.4.1. *Compounding*

A wide variety of different patterns for the formation of compound nouns can be described. Mühlhäusler (1979) listed 23 “programmes” or paradigms for produc-

ing compound expressions. For example, *wantok* from *wan* ‘one’ and *tok* ‘talk’ means ‘person who speaks the same language, friend.’ This provides the model for further examples such as *wanwok* ‘workmate’ and *wanskul* ‘person in the same school.’ Following a different pattern, an adjective-noun compound can be used to derive a word meaning someone who has that characteristic, for example, *bikbol* ‘elephantiasis’ (literally ‘big testicles’). Similarly, a noun-adjective compound may indicate someone or something with certain properties, for example, *aipas*, ‘blind’ from *ai* ‘eye’ and *pas* ‘fast, closed’.

21 paradigms for multifunctionality were also described by Mühlhäusler (1979), whereby new parts of speech are formed from existing lexical items, a highly productive process in the early stages of pidgin development. One example involves a noun becoming an intransitive verb meaning ‘to perform the work of that noun’, for example, *jas* ‘judge’ > *jas* ‘to be a judge’. The way is thereby paved for further development of a transitive verb *jasim* ‘to judge’.

#### 2.4.2. Reduplication

Reduplication is productive in 12 patterns identified by Mühlhäusler (1979), although in modern Tok Pisin this does not seem to be as prominent as in earlier stages. An example is the “distributive meaning” expressed by reduplication of numerals in (5):

- (5) *wanpela wanpela ailan i gat nem bilongen yet*  
 one one island PRED have name POSS it REFLEX  
 ‘Each island has its own name’

The reduplicated form emphasises that each one has a separate identity (Mühlhäusler 1985d: 439).

Occasionally, complete or partial reduplication appears with plural nouns. Two examples from Smith (2002) are:

- (6) a. *diwai ia i gat ol nil nil*  
 tree FOCUS PRED have PL needle needle  
 ‘The tree has spines’  
 b. *ol bin taitim ol rorop nabaut ia*  
 they PAST tie PL rope(s) about EMPH  
 ‘They tied the ropes and things’

Elsewhere, Mühlhäusler (1979) predicted that the grammatical marking of plurality would appear on other parts of the sentence than nouns, and this appeared to be borne out by an incipient system of verb reduplication in apparent agreement with plural subjects in one creolised variety in Manus (Mühlhäusler 1981: 57). However, this does not appear to have been adopted more generally.

### 2.4.3. Phrasal elements in verbs

Many established Tok Pisin words incorporate an element derived from an English adverb, most notably *up*, *down* and *out*, such as: *karamap* ‘to cover (up)’, *litimap* ‘to lift (up)’, *painaut* ‘to find out’, *singaut* ‘shout, call (out)’, *kamdaun* ‘come down’, etc.

The extent to which these elements can be regarded as distinct morphemes is debatable, and in most cases it seems that, whatever the ultimate derivation, the item is used as a single unanalysed lexeme, as in:

- (7) a. *em harim wanpla dok singaut*  
       ‘He heard a dog barking’  
    b. *wanpela diwai i pundaun antap lo pikinini*  
       ‘A tree fell on top of the child’

It can be seen that some of these forms appear to have completely reanalysed such original suffixes as part of the root, as evidenced by the addition of further transitive suffixes, e.g. *karamapim* ‘to cover (up)’, *litimapim* ‘to lift (up)’.

The words *aut* ‘out’, *daun* ‘down’ and *ap* ‘up’ do exist as independent items, and a good case can be made for a morphemic analysis of words such as *kamaut* ‘to come out’ into component morphemes *kam* ‘come’ and *aut* ‘out’. Indeed, it is not clear whether forms such as this and *godaun* ‘go down’ should be written as one word or two (Smith 2002). In the last example, there is no separate word *\*pun*, and *pundaun* could be regarded as a single morpheme or as a bimorphemic construction containing a bound form.

## 3. Syntax

The canonical word order is SVO. However, occasionally for the sake of focus or emphasis, elements other than the subject may be moved to initial position. A further discussion of this kind of variation in word order for emphasis appears in section 3.5. on focus and topicalisation.

### 3.1. The particle *i*

A very troublesome particle traditionally referred to as the “predicate marker” is one of the most common lexical items in Tok Pisin. Keesing’s (1988) discussion of its origin also refers to a role as “resumptive pronoun” and “subject referencing pronoun”. The particle does often appear before the predicate but is also frequently used before verbs in other contexts, such as the post-verbal aspect markers *stap*, *kam* and *go*, for example, *mi wokobaut i go* ‘I walked away’. Traditionally (see



for example Mihalic 1971), the *i* has been described as obligatory between third person subjects and predicates, but not used after first and second persons:

- (8) a. *mi kam, yu kam, em i kam*  
 'I come, you come, (s)he pred comes'

Recent studies, however, have shown that there is a great deal of variability, and suggestions have even been made that the marker may be in the process of dropping out of use altogether (Lynch 1979; Romaine 1993). However, geographical location is an important factor here. Smith (2002) has shown that the *i* in its traditional predicate marking role is still very common in the New Guinea Islands region, but may be omitted very frequently in the Highlands and North Coast regions of the mainland. Some extreme examples are presented below, the first from New Ireland in the New Guinea Islands region and the second from the Western Highlands. Positions where the marker could but does not occur are marked by [Ø]:

- (9) a. *Madang i bik, taun i bikpla na planti olsem planti*  
 Madang PRED big, town PRED big and many like many  
*man i sae raun long taun na i gat*  
 person PRED habit go around in town and PRED have  
*planti ol stua na ol ka i wok long ron long rot.*  
 many PL store and PL car PRED CONT in run on road.  
 'Madang is big, the town is big and there are lots of people going  
 around in the town and there are lots of stores and cars running on the  
 road.'
- b. *mipela [Ø] go l' aus na [Ø] stap nau mipela [Ø] ting osem*  
 we go to house and stay now we think that  
*[Ø] nogat wantla problem ba [Ø] kamap osem na mipela*  
 not one problem FUT arise so that we  
*femli olgeta mipela [Ø] go [Ø] stap lo aus*  
 family all we go stay in house  
 'We went to the house and stayed there thinking that there were no  
 problems so we stayed in the house.'

It is also evident that collocation is important in determining the retention of *i*. Most occurrences in areas where the predicate is seldom marked involve the use of *i* immediately before *no*, *gat*, *dai* or *bin*, as indicated from the following Highlands samples, where predicate marking is not the rule:

- (10) a. *laki na wanpela kar i no bin kam*  
 lucky and one car PRED NEG PAST come  
 ‘Luckily no cars came’
- b. *sapos wanpela kar i bin kam em [Ø] ken [Ø] krukutim mi*  
 if one car PRED PAST come it can crush me  
 ‘If a car had come it could have crushed me’
- c. *disa meri i gat bel ia em [Ø] kam daun*  
 this woman PRED have belly FOCUS she come down  
 ‘The woman who was pregnant came down’
- d. *mipla kukim ol tasol ol i no indai yet.*  
 we burn them but they PRED NEG die yet  
 ‘We burned them (the sorcerers) but they hadn’t died yet’

In the last example it is not clear whether the lexeme is *dai* or *i(n)dai*, as both forms are commonly encountered. The same is true of the particle *inap* meaning ‘capable’ and also used as a modal for ability or permission. Although the original form derived from English *enough* is usually rendered as *inap*, it appears that it is frequently reinterpreted as *i* and *nap*.

In Bislama, the plural form of the predicate marker *oli* is used. This does not generally occur in Tok Pisin, and in most areas of Papua New Guinea no examples are normally encountered. There are, however, some occurrences of *ol* followed by *i* in transcripts from the New Guinea Islands region which appear to be a repeated plural pronoun, but also suggest that a reinterpretation as a plural predicate marker could be valid. It is not clear, for example, whether the following extract of speech should be written with *oli* as a plural marker or a resumptive pronoun *ol* followed by *i*:

- (11) *ol man blong Kevieng ol i/oli gutpla man*  
 PL man POSS Kavieng they PRED/PL PRED good man  
 ‘Kavieng people are good people’

## 3.2. The verb phrase

### 3.2.1. Tense, mood and aspect

In the absence of inflections to mark tense, mood and aspect (TMA), a number of particles may be placed before or after the verb.

Future is marked by the particle *bai*. This is typically placed before first and second person subjects and after third person singular: *mi bai kam* ‘I will come’, *em bai kam* ‘he/she/it will come’; but *bai yu go* ‘you will go’, etc.

Historically, *bai* is derived from the adverbial *by and by* placed in clause-initial position, but Sankoff and Laberge (1973) described evidence that grammaticalisation has involved reduction to a single syllable and moving to preverbal posi-

tion. The reduction of *bai* may lead to cliticisation, as noted by Lynch (1979) and Sankoff (1986), for example:

- (12) *ol i bagarap olgeta b' ol i dai*  
 they PRED spoiled all FUT they PRED die  
 '(If) They are completely spoiled they will die' (Smith 2002)

This grammaticalisation path might have been expected to continue to a regular and stable future tense affix, but more recently Sankoff (1991) has re-examined the status of *bai* and shown that the situation is considerably more complex. Firstly, irrealis or conditional/hypothetical modal uses complicate the picture, and iterative-habitual and punctual aspects may also be involved. More surprisingly, she notes that the particle was sometimes associated not only with future time, but also with present and past time. Romaine (1992) also looked in detail at the role of *bai* in her examination of the Tok Pisin of young people in Morobe and Madang provinces, showing that the placement of preverbal *bai* is still very much more frequent after the third person singular pronoun than first or second. She also looks at some early written materials, and questions the sequence of grammaticalisation described by Sankoff and Laberge (1973), and raises the possibility that reduction of *baimbai* and movement to preverbal position may be independent processes. Also raised is the possibility of the reinterpretation of *baimbai* as a repeated particle separated by the third person singular pronoun: *bai em bai*.

My own corpus shows that the traditional description of *bai*'s position relative to pronouns is continuing with first language speakers. It tends to be used in preverbal position much more frequently after third person pronouns, and considerably less after first and second person persons. However, it also reveals that there is considerable variation, with the *em bai* pattern almost categorical among Highlands speakers, but much more variable in other regions. In the latter case, however, no semantic distinction was identified and it appears to be a case of free variation.

In common with other pidgin and creole languages, the unmarked form of the verb is often used to indicate past, especially for non-stative verbs. However, past tense may be unambiguously marked by a preverbal particle, *bin*, derived from the English 'been' as with many other Atlantic and Pacific creoles. Some reports have indicated that the use of *bin* is declining, but it appears that there is considerable regional variation, with much greater use in the New Guinea Islands region. It also tends to be used with considerable redundancy by many first language speakers. *Bin* is almost invariably placed immediately before the verb.

In addition to past and future time reference, a number of aspectual distinctions are made with other pre- and post-verbal particles. For example, the pre-verbal particle *laik*, often appearing in the reduced forms *lai* and *la*, has a dual role to indicate 'wanting to do something' or 'being about to do something'. In some cases it is difficult to distinguish between the two meanings, and both could equally

apply. This suggests substrate influence in the re-interpretation of the semantics of the English *like*, although an internal grammaticalisation path is also quite possible. (13) is an example of an ambiguous interpretation:

- (13) *em i laik go long gaden*  
 ‘He/she PRED likes/is about to go to the garden’

In other cases, such as *em i laik dai* ‘he/she is about to die’ the meaning is normally unambiguous. Otherwise the meaning would be disambiguated through context. The ‘about to’ meaning can also be made clear by using adverbials such as *klostu* or *klosap* ‘nearly’ in conjunction with *la(ik)*:

- (14) *biknait nau, klostu laik tulait*  
 late night now, nearly ABOUT TO dawn  
 ‘It was late at night, just before dawn’

It appears that the reduced form is more closely associated with the aspectual function than the lexical meaning ‘like’, but analysis is difficult due to the fact that many examples could be interpreted in both senses. It appears that the distinction between *laik* + verb with the above meanings and *laik i* + verb as a definite future described in some accounts (e.g. Dutton 1973) is no longer widely used.

Completed action is marked post-verbally by the particle *pinis* derived from the English *finish*. It appears that in earlier forms of Melanesian Pidgin English, various forms such as *bin* and *pinis* competed for past time reference before the stabilisation of *bin* as a past tense marker and *pinis* as a completive aspect marker. Mühlhäusler (1985c: 388) notes that *bin* may still imply some idea of completion. The word *pinis* occurs as a lexical verb as well as an aspect marker. The intransitive form *pinis* and transitive *pinisim* both refer to finishing or terminating something, as in *mi pinisim skol* ‘I finished school’. As an aspect marker, the post-verbal *pinis* is very commonly used, as in (15):

- (15) *mi kukim pinis*  
 I cook-TRANS COMPLETIVE  
 ‘I have cooked it’

The fact that *pinis* indicates completion has led to a role for *pinis* in sequencing discourse, often in conjunction with the word *orait* (< English *all right*), as will be described in section 4.

Habitual action is marked by the particle *save*, very often reduced to *sa* by fluent speakers. The word *save*, generally accepted to be from the Portuguese *sabir* ‘to know’ is common in many pidgin and creole languages worldwide, and appears to have entered some of the earliest contact varieties. However, it is generally used as an unsuffixed transitive verb with its lexical meaning ‘to know’, which is also present in Tok Pisin:

- (16) *mi no save long tok ples bilong yu*  
 I NEG know about language POSS you  
 'I don't know your language'

Habitual action may be marked with considerable redundancy by fluent speakers, as with this extract from a young man in Bougainville:

- (17) *mipla sa harim ol gan i pairap. Nau ol militens*  
 we HABIT hear PL gun PRED fire. Now PL militant  
*sa kam ol sa brukim ol sto nambaut*  
 HABIT come they HABIT break PL store about  
 'We heard the guns firing. The militants came and broke into the stores and things'

Again substrate influence is suspected in the initial reinterpretation of the semantics of *save* in its current dual role. Ambiguous utterances are still found, where a habitual interpretation or the meaning 'to know' would be equally valid:

- (18) *Mi save wokim banara*  
 'I know how to/habitually make a bow'

The reduction of *save* to *sa* as a habitual aspect marker could effectively differentiate it from the *save* meaning 'to know', which is generally not reduced. Lynch's data showed exactly such a categorical distinction, and he found that both *sa* and *la* were reduced only in their aspectual role, and not in their regular verbal use (1979: 8). However, more recently, it appears that fluent first language speakers are also reducing the lexical form, although my corpus shows that the reduced form *sa* is used with overwhelmingly greater frequency in its aspectual role (Smith 2002: 85).

Continuous or durative aspect may be marked pre-verbally by the expression *wok long* or post-verbally by (*i*) *stap*. The latter contrasts with the pre-verbal use of *stap* in Bislama. The use of *wok long* may have connotations of being busy or actively engaged in an activity. Examples of use are *mi wok long raitim pas* 'I am (busy) writing a letter' and *ol i wokabaut i stap* 'they are walking'. Occasionally, both constructions may be used together, as in *ol i wok long stori stap* 'they were telling stories'. Use of *i go* and *i kam* after the verb can indicate directionality as in *ol i wokabaut i kam* 'they were walking (towards us)' and *ol i wokabaut i go* 'they were walking away'. However, *i go* may be used after verbs to indicate something continuing for a long time. Extreme lengths of time can be indicated by repeating a number of times: *bebi wok long krai i go i go i go* 'the baby kept on crying and crying'.

In Tok Pisin, the most common modals are *mas*, *ken* and *inap*, associated with obligation, permission and possibility. The particle *mas* from English *must* can imply not only personal obligation to do something, but also an assumption that something must be true, corresponding to a distinction which is sometimes made between deontic and epistemic modality. These are illustrated respectively by *mi*

*mas wokim wanpela samting pastaim* ‘I must do something (first)’ and *em mas brata bilong mi i kam* ‘it must be my brother (coming)’. There is rarely any ambiguity between the two meanings.

Both *ken* from English *can* and *inap* from English *enough* can also have a modal role, implying permission or capability. Generally, *ken* implies permission (*yu no ken kam insait* ‘you can’t come inside’) while *inap* implies capability (*mi inap pinisim dispela kaikai* ‘I can finish this food’). But occasionally *inap* is also used in the former role: *inap mi tokim yu wanpela samting?* ‘can I tell you something?’.

One or two other particles, although not traditionally described in this role, appear to be undergoing grammaticalisation as aspect or modal particles. The verb *kirap*, for example (from English *get up*), is frequently used in some areas in a discourse regulating role (cf. section 4 below). The particle *bek* ‘back’ also appears to be undergoing grammaticalisation from an adverb to a post-verbal modal particle, indicating that something is happening again after a break, equivalent to the English *re-*prefix, for example *em i marit bek* ‘she re-married’. In addition, some speakers borrow English modals such as *shud* ‘should’, but this is uncommon, and restricted to heavily anglicised speech.

### 3.2.2. Verb serialisation

There has been considerable interest in serial verb constructions in pidgin and creole languages, mainly focussing on Atlantic Creoles. Tok Pisin, in common with other varieties of Melanesian Pidgin, has a number of such constructions, and whatever the “naturalness” of such forms, there is also substantial substrate motivation in the languages of the area. A number of verbs such as *go*, *kam* and *stap* have already been discussed in relation to their directionality and aspectual role, but other verbs may appear serially to encode more specific meanings, as in:

- (19) a. *em kam kamap long ples*  
 he/she come arrive at village  
 ‘(S)he arrived at the village’
- b. *em i sindaun smail long em*  
 (s)he PRED sit down smile at him/her  
 ‘(S)he sat down smiling at him’
- c. *em i brumim rausim ol pipia*  
 (s)he PRED brush discard PL rubbish  
 ‘(S)he swept away the rubbish’

However, although in Bislama a number of serial verb constructions involving the verbs *agensem*, *kasem*, *bitim*, *raonem* and *folem* have developed into prepositions (Crowley 1990), this does not appear to have occurred to any significant extent in Tok Pisin. Nonetheless, some serial constructions could be involved in ongoing grammaticalisation, as with the use of *kam* and *go* described above, and also pos-

sibly with *kirap* ‘get up, initiate’ and *stat* ‘to begin’, which appear to approach an aspectual role in the examples below:

- (20) a. *nau ol stat kuk lo kleipot*  
 now they start cook in clay pot  
 ‘They started cooking in the clay pot’  
 b. *ol kirap pait na ol pait.*  
 they got up/started fight and they fight  
 ‘A fight started’

In the case of *kirap*, there is again ambiguity between the meanings ‘get up’ and ‘initiate’ which may have motivated a re-interpretation:

- (21) *dewel ia kirap holim em na em karim go lo aus*  
 spirit ANAPH got up/start hold him and he carry go to house  
*blo em.*  
 POSS him

‘The spirit got up and held him/started to hold him, and took him to his house’

### 3.3. The noun phrase

The noun phrase in Tok Pisin can consist of a pronoun or a noun, either bare or accompanied by pre- or post-modifiers, such as quantifiers, other pre-nominal modifiers and post-nominal modifiers.

Pronouns are generally invariable in form, the only exception being the alternative form *-en* of the third person singular *em*. This *-en* form is only found after *long* or *bilong*. It is normally written as an enclitic, although solid evidence that its phonological status is different from that of *em* is lacking.

- (22) a. *Em i haus bilong em* or *Em i haus bilongen*  
 ‘It is his/her house’  
 b. *mi givim han long em* or *mi giving han longen*  
 ‘I have him/her a (helping) hand’

The *-en* form is generally unstressed, whereas *em* may be used to focus attention on the pronoun.

Quantifiers include numerals and the terms *olgeta* ‘all’, *planti* ‘many’, *sampela* ‘some’ and *liklik* ‘few, small’. Examples of other pre-nominal modifiers are *wanpela* ‘one’, *dispela* ‘this’, *narapela* ‘another’ and *ol* (plural). The category of post-nominal modifiers includes the demonstrative *ia*, possessive constructions with *bilong*, and restrictive relative clauses or adjectives.

Sankoff and Mazzie (1991) suggest that *wanpela* and *dispela* are prime candidates for grammaticalisation as indefinite and definite articles, but report that

they were used only sporadically in this role. In my own data (Smith 2002) both *wanpela* ‘one’ and *sampela* ‘some’ did continue with a quantifying role as ‘one in number’ and ‘some but not all’ but are also frequently used in a way analogous to articles:

- (23) a. *mipla wetim man bilong wanpla anti blong mi*  
 we wait man POSS one/art aunt POSS me  
 ‘We were waiting for the husband of an auntie of mine’  
 b. *yu lukim sampela abus o nogat?*  
 you see some game animal or not?  
 ‘Can you see any animals (to hunt)?’

*Dispela* ‘this’ appears to be further along the grammaticalisation route, and is undergoing considerable reduction and loss of stressed syllables, indicating possible future status as a definite marker. Typical renderings are *displa*, *disla* or *sla*, as in:

- (24) *yu kisim sla buk*  
 ‘Take this/the book’

Moreover, *dispela* or its reduced forms are often used in conjunction with *ol* for plural referents, as in:

- (25) *ol sla ol man meri i stap lo ples*  
 PL DEM PL man woman PRED stay/be at village  
 ‘These people were in the village’

This suggests the possible evolution of *sla* as a singular and *slo* as a plural definite article. So far, however, this is mere conjecture extrapolating from some existing tendencies.

### 3.3.1. Relativisation

There are a number of ways of signalling relative clauses in Tok Pisin. These include the absence of overt markers, often accompanied by distinctive intonation (Wurm 1971), pronominalisation with personal pronouns or the relative pronouns *wonem*, *husat* and *we*, and bracketing with *ia* (*ya*). In addition, the clause-final use of *longen* is frequently involved in marking relatives in the Highlands region. Some examples of each are given below.

Relatives may lack overt marking if the meaning is clear from the context, for example in (26):

- (26) *ol i lukim dispela pasin ankol blo em wokim*  
 they PRED see this fashion/behaviour uncle POSS he do/make  
 ‘They saw this kind of thing their uncle was doing’



However, in my corpus, this is most frequently used when the word *dai* is involved, as in:

- (27) *tupla brata mama i bin dai stap wantaim papa*  
 two brother mother PRED PAST die live with father  
 ‘The two brothers whose mother had died lived with their father’

It appears that in the early days of Tok Pisin this kind of structure was more common. However, with a demand for increasing sophistication of meaning, a number of other mechanisms developed.

The use of a personal pronoun to introduce a relative may help to make the meaning more clear. In (28), for example, the relative clause is introduced by the third person singular pronoun:

- (28) *em i gat wanpla lapun meri em sa stap long hap*  
 he PRED have one old woman she HABIT stay/live at place  
 ‘There was an old woman who lived there’

Distinct relative pronouns (*h*)*usat* and *we* may also be used, but these are less typical of spoken styles and are used more in the written register, for example, in *Wantok Niuspepa* reports, especially those translated from English. However, it appears that the use of *husat* as a relative may be increasing, especially in varieties in contact with English.

- (29) *Em i painim ol pikinini usat ol i biket*  
 he PRED look for PL child who they PRED disobedient  
 ‘He was looking for the children who were misbehaving’

The use of *we* is interesting in that it appears to have been generalised from the meaning ‘where’ to a more generic relative to refer first to human, then to non-human animate and then to inanimate referents as well. The examples in (30) illustrate this gradation:

- (30) a. *em wanpla baret we wara sa ron*  
 it one drain which water HABIT run  
 ‘It was one drain where water flowed’
- b. *mi bin lukim wanpla krokodail we em i traim lo*  
 I PAST see one crocodile which it PRED try to  
*atekim mipla*  
 attack us  
 ‘I saw a crocodile which tried to attack us’
- c. *em papa bl’ em we helpim em*  
 it father POSS him who help him  
 ‘It was his father who helped him’

Sankoff drew attention to another means of relativisation arising out of discourse, bracketing by the deictic particle *ia*, derived from English *here*, which is also very common as a focal or anaphoric marker. In the following example, the relative clause is delimited by *ia*:

- (31) *stereo ia mitla putim lo kout ia, em no lukim*  
 stereo REL we put in coat REL he not see  
 ‘The stereo which we put in the coat he didn’t see’

One sometimes gains the impression from reading secondary sources that this mechanism is neat, well-defined and regular, but in reality it is much more messy. One or other of the pair is frequently omitted, and it may be difficult to decide in some cases whether an element should be interpreted as a relative clause or whether it is merely a case of anaphoric or focal reference.

In parts of the Highlands region, especially the Western Highlands, *longen* is often involved in relative clause isolation. As noted above, *longen* is the unstressed form of *long em* ‘to it’:

- (32) *Mi lap longen*  
 ‘I smiled at him’

Again this structure may have arisen out of reanalysis in discourse. A gradation of examples showing the ambiguity underlying reanalysis is shown in the following. In (33) *longen* clearly refers to a location, but appears to have a secondary clause delimiting role:

- (33) *em putim tupla lo wanpla ples we ol sa putim man longen*  
 he put two at one place where they HABIT put man in it  
 ‘He put two at one place where they kept people (prisoner)’

In other cases, however, reference to location is not so easy to demonstrate, and the clause delimiting function appears primary:

- (34) *i man Wabag ia em poisinim em longen ia wokobaut*  
 PRED man Wabag REL he poison him at it REL walk  
*kam i go*  
 come PRED go  
 ‘It was the Wabag man who poisoned him approaching’

In (34), *ia*-bracketing as described above also contributes to the delimitation of the relative clause, although in some other examples, like (35), *ia* is not present:

- (35) *em smelim pik tupla bin kilim longen na em kam klostu*  
 he smell pig two PAST kill REL and he come close  
 ‘He smelled the pig which the two had killed and he approached’

### 3.4. Complementation

A number of words such as *long*, *olsem*, *na* and in some areas *se* are used to introduce complements in Tok Pisin. Mühlhäusler (1985b) also gives *bilong*, *baimbai*, *sapos* and *we* in creolised varieties. This list represents a variety of word types: prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions and serial verb constructions, which have presumably developed during syntactic reanalysis in discourse to adopt the role of complementiser.

The word *olsem*, frequently reduced to *osem* and sometimes further to *sem* or *se*, is the most common of the above, in particular in conjunction with the verb *tok* to introduce direct or indirect quotations:

- (36) *Em bin tok olsem “mi les lo yu”*  
 he PAST say COMPL “I tired of you”  
 ‘He said “I’m tired of you”’

It may also be used with a variety of other verbs:

- (37) *Rabaul i luk olsem i gutpla ples*  
 Rabaul PRED look COMPL PRED good place  
 ‘Rabaul looked like it was a good place’

As noted above, *olsem* is occasionally reduced to *se*, but *se* itself has for some time been another form which is frequently used in introducing complements, as in Bislama. However, this appears to be confined to parts of the New Guinea Islands, as in this extract recorded in East New Britain:

- (38) *meri ia i ting se em tewel ia na em*  
 woman ANAPH PRED think COMPL it spirit EMPH and she  
*i pret*  
 PRED afraid

‘The woman thought that it was a spirit and she was afraid’

The use of *we* in relativisation has been noted above. Its use as a complementiser appears to be uncommon in my corpus, with only one or two tokens:

- (39) *em tok we ol no givim em planti man*  
 he say COMPL they NEG give him much money  
 ‘He said that they did not pay enough’

### 3.5. Focus and topicalisation

As mentioned previously, the canonical word order is SVO, but occasionally focussed or topicalised elements appear in initial position. Sometimes topicalisation is distinguished from focus in that the topic has a co-indexed pronoun whereas fo-

cus involves emphasis without this. A number of mechanisms for focus and topicalisation exist in Tok Pisin and were first described in detail by Sankoff (1993). An example of fronting an element for focus is (40):

- (40) *pipia bilong em yumi save kaikai*  
 rubbish POSS him we HABIT eat  
 'His rubbish is what we eat'

Question words such as *we* 'where' and *wonem* 'which' may also be fronted for emphasis:

- (41) *wonem skul yu givim em?*  
 'Which schooling did you give him?' (Sankoff 1993)

In addition, the third person singular pronoun *em* sometimes precedes noun phrases in constructions which appear to be similar to clefts in English, as in Sankoff's example in (42):

- (42) *nogat, em wantok i putim long maunten ia*  
 no, it friend PRED put on mountain EMPH  
 'No, it was my friend who was wearing it on the mountainside'

In addition, there are a number of distinct focal particles in Tok Pisin. One of these is the word *yet*, which appears to have been derived from English *yet*, but has been heavily influenced by the Tolai *iat*. *Iat* has a meaning similar to 'yet' but also extra meanings, including a focus marking role. In addition to the meaning similar to English 'yet' (often in the negative), the Tok Pisin *yet* can act as a reflexive, usually in conjunction with a pronoun:

- (43) a. *em bin askim em yet*  
 he PAST ask him REFLEX  
 'He asked himself'
- b. *em bin lukautim em olsem pikinini blong em yet*  
 she PAST look after him like child POSS her REFLEX  
 'She looked after him like her own child'
- c. *em ples blo mipla yet*  
 it village POSS us REFLEX  
 'It's our own village'
- d. *yu yet yu les lo mi*  
 you FOCUS/REFLEX you tired of me  
 'It's you that's tired of me'

*Yet* may also be used as an intensifier of adverbs or adjectives, mainly in collocation with the words *bipo* 'before' and *mo* 'more'. Typical traditional stories, for example, begin something like:

- (44) *long taim bifo yet i gat wanpla yangpla meri*  
 at time before EMPH PRED exist one young girl  
 ‘Long, long ago, there was a young girl’

#### 4. Discourse processes

Discourse processes appear to have been involved in the grammaticalisation of some items described above. In the present section a brief look will be taken at some discourse features of Tok Pisin. Few detailed accounts of discourse features have appeared, the most detailed apparently being Lomax (1983). Lomax follows Halliday and Hassan’s (1976) model and notes some ways in which cohesion is maintained, besides looking at deixis and lexical cohesion as exemplified by letters to the editor and traditional stories to *Wantok Niuspepa*.

Smith (2002) looks at some of these processes, and notes that conjunctions such as *bikos* and *bat* have been borrowed from English to provide alternatives to the more usual *long wanem* ‘because’ and *tasol* ‘but’.

The particle *ia* (also sometimes spelled *ya* and *hia*) has already been discussed in relation to relative clause delimitation. Its other main use is as an anaphoric marker to signify that something has already been referred to:

- (45) *em i lukim wanpla lapun man... lapun man ia kirap*  
 He PRED see one old man... old man ANAPH get up  
*na tok ...*  
 and say  
 ‘he saw an old man... the old man got up and said...’

In (45), the role of *kirap* ‘get up, initiate’ in discourse is also worth mentioning. The meaning of *em i kirap na tok olsem* is literally ‘he got up and said’ that which is in fact a form which sometimes appears in Papua New Guinea English, but the effect is to indicate the initiation of a new speaker’s conversational turn.

The particle *pinis* has also been mentioned above (section 3.2.1.) as a completive aspect marker. Another common use is in conjunction with the term *orait* ‘all right’ to signal a new stage in a narrative:

- (46) *mi kukim rais. Kukim pinis, orait mi lusim haus.*  
 I cook rice. Cook COMPLET, then I leave house.  
 ‘I cooked the rice. Having cooked it, I left the house.’

Another interesting example of apparent grammaticalisation concerns the case of *yes* ‘yes’ and *nogat* ‘no’ which appear to have been reinterpreted in a discourse role. Lomax (1983: 41) notes that *yes* is a common rhetorical feature of *Wantok* letters, and appears to be best translated as ‘well then’ or a similar phrase:

- (47) *Mi gat bikpela kros long ol plisman. Yes, ol plisman ...*  
 'I am very angry with the police. **Well then**, you policemen...'

In Smith (2002), a number of puzzling cases of *nogat* 'no' were examined, and it appears among some speakers in the North Coastal region of the New Guinea mainland to be best interpreted as a conjunction meaning something like 'when all of a sudden', indicating the unexpected onset of an event:

- (48) a. *mipla plei go ia nogat ol ringim bel*  
 we play go EMPH no they ring bell  
 'We were playing when all of a sudden the bell rang'
- b. *Mipla sidaun na stori stap ia nogat diwai kam.*  
 we sit down and story CONTIN EMPH no branch come  
 'We were sitting telling stories when (without warning) the branch broke off.'

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# Hawai‘i Creole: morphology and syntax

Kent Sakoda and Jeff Siegel

## 1. Overview

Hawai‘i Creole is a creole language lexified predominantly by English but also by other languages such as Hawaiian and Japanese. It is spoken by approximately 600,000 people in the American state of Hawai‘i. For details on its lexicon and origins (including an account of the influence of other languages on its morpho-syntax), see section 1 of the chapter on the phonology of Hawai‘i Creole (Sakoda and Siegel, other volume).

Although the lexicon of Hawai‘i Creole is closely related to English, its morphology and syntax are quite distinct. In general, like other creole languages, the amount of bound morphology is less than that of the lexifier language and there are quite different morphosyntactic rules for expressing tense, aspect, modality and negation, as well as for relativization, complementation and focusing.

The situation is complicated by the fact that the majority of speakers of Hawai‘i Creole also know English, and there is a continuum from “heavy” varieties furthest from Standard English (the basilect) to “light” varieties closest to Standard English (the acrolect), with a great deal of variation in between (the mesolects). The description here is based primarily on the basilect, but some of the mesolectal variants are also indicated.

In this description, particular Hawai‘i Creole words and grammatical morphemes are given in the text in the phonemic Odo orthography, followed in parentheses by other, mainly etymological, spellings that may be found more commonly in written versions of the language. Longer examples are also given, from both spoken and written Hawai‘i Creole. The spoken examples come from recordings or from our own experience, and are given in the Odo orthography. The written examples are taken from a few works of published literature and from the Pidgin translation of the Bible (*Da Jesus Book*). These examples are given in their original orthography (i.e., as they appear in print), followed by the source (author, year and page number for literature, page number and biblical reference for examples from *Da Jesus Book*).

## 2. The verb phrase

Like other creole languages, Hawai‘i Creole has little bound inflectional morphology in the verb phrase. There are no agreement markers to index the number, person or gender of the subject or object. With only one exception (the *-ing* suffix



which is used to indicate the progressive), there are no affixes to indicate distinctions in tense, aspect or modality. Rather, again like other creoles, Hawai'i Creole uses preverbal independent morphemes for this purpose.

### 2.1. Tense markers

There are three different tense markers in Hawai'i Creole: for future, past, and past habitual. Each one occurs at the beginning of the verb phrase.

Future tense is usually marked by *gon* (*goin*, *going*):

- (1) a. *Ai **gon** bai wan pikap.*  
'I'm going to buy a pickup.'  
b. *She **goin** miss da prom.*  
'She'll miss the prom.' (Kearns 2000: 13)

Past tense is most often indicated by *wen* (*wen* ', *went*) before the verb:

- (2) a. *Ai **wen** si om.*  
'I saw him.'  
b. *Dey **wen** cut down da mango tree...*  
'They cut down the mango tree...' (Tonouchi 1998: 245)

The marker *wen* is sometimes reduced to *en* or just *n* as in the following example:

- (3) *Make me feel like da bugga in da play we'**n** read lass year.*  
'He makes me feel like the guy in the play we read last year.' (Kearns 2000: 5)

Two other preverbal morphemes are also used by some speakers to mark past tense: *bin*, especially by speakers of heavy varieties and older speakers, and *haed* (*had*), especially by speakers from the island of Kaua'i:

- (4) a. *Ai **bin** klin ap mai pleis fo da halade.*  
'I cleaned up my place for the holidays.'  
b. *De **haed** ple BYU laes wik.*  
'They played BYU last week.'

A few irregular past tense verb forms from English are also frequently used. The most common is *sed* (*said*). It is rare to hear *wen sei*. Others are *sin* (*seen*) or *saw*, *keim* (*came*), and *tol* (*told*). These occur in variation with *wen si*, *wen kam* and *wen tel*. When these forms are used, they do not normally co-occur with the preverbal tense marker. Some examples are given in (5):

- (5) a. *Shi **sed** shi wen smok om.*  
(*She **said** she wen smoke em.*)  
'She said she smoked it.'

- b. *Shi **sin** wan sigaret.*  
(*She **seen** one cigarette.*)  
'She saw a cigarette.'
- c. *Hi **tol** om, No.*  
(*He **tol** em, No.*)  
'He told him, No.'

The past habitual is indicated by *yustu* (*used to*):

- (6) a. *Ai **yustu** ple futbawl.*  
'I used to play football.'
- b. *Your mahda **use to** tink so.*  
'Your mother used to think so.' (Kearns 2000: 10)

In what follows, an outline will be given of the major differences in tense marking between Hawai'i Creole and English: in Hawai'i Creole, the future tense marker *gon* (*goin, going*) can be used to mark not only actions and events that have not occurred yet, but also future actions being talked about in the past that may have occurred already, as in (7):

- (7) a. *When I went Farrington, brah, you no can talk Pidgin, you **going** run home every day from school.*  
'When I went to Farrington [High School], brother, if you couldn't speak in Pidgin, you would [have to] run home from school everyday.'  
(Kearns 2000: 32)
- b. *Da gai sed hi **gon** fiks mi ap wit wan blain deit.*  
'The guy said he'd fix me up with a blind date.'

Some Hawai'i Creole speakers, however, use *waz* (*was*) to mark such past-future constructions:

- (8) *He said dat she **was going** help all us guys go heaven.* (Lum 1998b: 225)

Hawai'i Creole also differs from English in the use of past tense marking in that tense neutralization often occurs. Once the past time frame is established with an adverb or a verb marked for past tense, it is not necessary to mark the subsequent verbs:

- (9) *He **went wink** at me and tell, "Choo, choo, choo" and laugh backwards, you know like he sucking air in, "Hurh, hurh, hurh".*  
'He **winked** at me and **said**, "Choo, choo, choo" and **laughed** backwards, you know like he **was sucking** air in, "Hurh, hurh, hurh".'  
(Lum 1999: 26)

Furthermore, *wen* in Hawai'i Creole is often used only to indicate relative past, i.e. something that had occurred previously in relation to the actual time being

discussed. So if an event happened before another event (that is, even further in the past) then the past tense marker is used. The following sentence, for example, comes from a narrative of past events:

- (10) *Da Man/Lady stay piss off dat I **went change** da channel.*  
 'The man/lady was pissed off that I had changed the channel.' (Lum 1999: 27)

On the other hand, perhaps because of the influence of English, some Hawai'i Creole speakers, and especially writers, use the past tense marker *wen* more frequently:

- (11) *Dat time nobody **wen** bodda da peopo dat **wen** come togedda to church all ova Judea, Galilee an Samaria. Dey **wen** trus God mo an mo, an God's Spesho Spirit **wen** kokua dem.*  
 'At that time nobody bothered the people that came together for church all over Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. They trusted God more and more, and God's Special Spirit helped them.' (*Da Jesus Book, Jesus Guys* 9: 33)

## 2.2. Modals

The modals in Hawai'i Creole are separate words which occur before the verb to indicate ability, permission, possibility, volition or obligation.

*kaen* (*can*) indicates ability, permission or possibility:

- (12) a. *Jo **kaen** ple.*  
 'Joe can play.'  
 b. *You tink you **can** lift dis?*  
 'Do you think you can lift this?' (Lum 1999: 23)

*laik* (*like*) indicates volition:

- (13) a. *Ai **laik** go Vegas.*  
 'I want to go to Las Vegas.'  
 b. *You **like** come?*  
 'Do you want to come?' (Ching 1998: 182)

Note that *laik* (*like*) can also act as a verb meaning 'like' or 'want', especially before a noun phrase, as in: *Mama rili laik daet wan* 'Mama really likes that one', or before the *-ing* form of a verb, as in *Ai laik going Las Vegas* 'I like going to Las Vegas'. The other modals indicate various degrees of obligation:

*gata* (*gotta*) and *haeftu* (*have to*) imply some outside pressure to do something now or in the future:

- (14) a. *Ai gata bring om maiself.*  
 ‘I’ve got to bring it myself.’  
 b. *Okay, but I gotta eat early.*  
 ‘Okay, but I have to eat early.’ (Tonouchi 1998: 245)
- (15) a. *Jo haefu wrk frs bifo hi kaen ple.*  
 ‘Joe has to work first before he can play.’  
 b. All da time you **have to** try your best.  
 ‘You always have to try your best.’ (Lum 1998b: 227)

*beta* (*bettah*, *better*) indicates that it would be good to do something or else something bad might happen:

- (16) a. *You bettah quit that, or we going broke yo’ head!*  
 ‘You’d better quit that or we’ll break your head!’ (Pak 1998a: 117)  
 b. *So, you betta do um!*  
 ‘So, you’d better do it!’ (*Da Jesus Book*, 14 [Matthew 5:33])

*sapostu* (*suppose to*) can imply a past obligation as well as a present or future one:

- (17) a. *Bil sapostu finish hiz homwrk yestade bat hi neva finish.*  
 ‘Bill was supposed to finish his homework yesterday, but he didn’t finish it.’  
 b. *You suppose to call da teachas at UH “doctah”...*  
 ‘You’re supposed to call the teachers at UH “doctor”...’ (Kearns 2000: 27)

Some tense markers can occur before the modals *kaen* (*can*), *laik* (*like*), *haefu* (*have to*), and *sapostu* (*suppose to*); however, some of these combinations are quite infrequent:

- (18) a. *Hi bin kaen go?*  
 ‘Was it possible for him to go?’  
 b. *Herod wen like kill him.*  
 ‘Herod wanted to kill him.’ (*Da Jesus Book*, 43 [Matthew 14:5])  
 c. *De gon kaen kam o wat?*  
 ‘Will they be able to come or what?’  
 d. *Yu gon haefu pau da wrk.*  
 ‘You’re going to have to finish the work.’  
 e. *Shi wen sapostu klin da haus.*  
 ‘She was supposed to clean the house.’

In some varieties, *waz* (*was*) is used to show past tense before the modal *sapostu* (*suppose to*) as well as before the future marker *gon* (*goin*, *going*) as previously mentioned:

- (19) *Last weekend I **was suppose to** go wit Vernalani folks to da Pure Heart concert.* (Kearns 2000: 29)

### 2.3. *Chrai* (try)

The verb *chrai* (try) 'try' can occur after the tense marker and/or modal and before the main verb:

- (20) a. *I went **try** draw one horn of plenty.*  
'I tried to draw a horn of plenty.' (Lum 1998a: 71)  
b. *I like **try** explain someting to you.*  
'I want to try and explain something to you.' (Kearns 2000: 13)

In imperative sentences, *chrai* (try) functions as a mitigator:

- (21) a. ***Chrai** paes da rais.*  
'Could you pass the rice.'  
b. *Faye, **try** wait!*  
'Faye, wait a minute!' (Kearns 2000: 28)  
c. *Terry, **try** look what I found!*  
'Terry, have a look at what I found!' (Pak 1998a: 101)

### 2.4. Aspect markers

Hawai'i Creole has three aspect markers which occur before the main verb to mark the following: progressive, perfective, inchoative, and completive. They are *ste* (*stei*, *stay*), *stat* (*start*), and *pau* 'finish'. Each of these markers can also occur on its own as a main verb. As aspect markers, they occur mainly before verbs which are active in Hawai'i Creole, but can also occur before some verbs which are stative, such as *kam* (*come*) 'become' (see section 2.6.).

Progressive: The most common aspect marker is *ste* (*stei*, *stay*), which is used to indicate progressive (or continuous) aspect. It can occur before either the plain form of the verb, or more commonly, before the verb with the progressive suffix, *-ing*:

- (22) a. *Wi **ste** meik da plaen.*  
'We're making the plan.'  
b. *...my grandpa **stay** listening to his Japanese radio station.*  
'...my grandpa is listening to his Japanese radio station.' (Tonouchi 1998: 245)  
c. *I **stay** drowning my sorrows in Faye and Shakespeare.*  
'I was drowning my sorrows in Faye and Shakespeare.' (Kearns 2000: 26)

For some speakers, *ste* + *V-ing* implies an action that is in progress just at the moment, while *ste* + *V* implies a more durative or habitual action.

Nowadays in Hawai'i Creole, the aspect marker *ste* is frequently left out, and progressive aspect may be indicated with only the *-ing* form of the verb:

- (23) a. *He helping me.*  
           'He's helping me.' (Ching 1998: 187)  
       b. *She talking to herself.*  
           'She's talking to herself.' (Lum 1998b: 230)  
       c. *I t'ink Chunky playing one big joke on us.*  
           'I think Chunky is playing a big joke on us.' (Pak 1998a: 116)

Perfective: The marker *ste* (*stei*, *stay*) can also be used for perfective aspect, indicating that a condition resulting from the action of the verb, or a particular state, has been accomplished. In this case, only the plain form of the verb can be used (i.e. without the *-ing* suffix):

- (24) a. *Ai ste kuk da stu awredi.*  
           'I already cooked the stew.'  
       b. *Evribadi ste finish.*  
           'Everyone is finished.'  
       c. *When I stay come one old man...*  
           'When I've become an old man...' (Kearns 2000: 26)

Inchoative: The preverbal marker *stat* (*start*) indicates that the action of the main verb is beginning. It normally co-occurs with the *-ing* suffix on the main verb:

- (25) a. *Mai sista gon stat pleing saka.*  
           'My sister is going to start playing soccer.'  
       b. *And I wen' start eating the Raisinets all one time.*  
           'And I started eating the Raisinets all at once.' (Yamanaka 1998a: 153)

Completive: The marker *pau* is used for completive aspect. It can also be used as a main verb meaning 'finish' or an adjective meaning 'finished'. As an aspect marker, *pau* occurs before the plain form of the main verb (i.e. without the *-ing* suffix):

- (26) a. *You supposed to burn da Daruma dolls aftah you pau get your wish...*  
           'You're supposed to burn the Daruma dolls after you've got your wish.' (Lum 1998b: 224)  
       b. *Jesus pau use all dis kine story to teach. (Da Jesus Book, 43 [Matthew 13:53])*  
           'Jesus finished using this kind of story to teach with.'

As for the co-occurrence of aspect markers with tense markers and modals: the tense markers can occur with the aspect markers *stat* (*start*) (see examples [25a] and [25b] above) and *ste* (*stei*, *stay*):

- (27) a. *De gon ste ple da geim tumaro.*  
 'They'll be playing the game tomorrow.'  
 b. *Hi wen ste it.*  
 'He was eating.'

As can be seen in (27b), the *wen + ste* construction is used in basilectal Hawai'i Creole to indicate past progressive. In this construction, the *V-ing* form is not permitted. But in mesolectal and acrolectal varieties, the past progressive is marked with *waz* (*was*) rather than *wen + ste*, and this co-occurs only with the *-ing* form of the verb:

- (28) a. *De bot waz duing daet.*  
 'They both were doing that.'  
 b. *What you was tinkin'?*  
 'What were you thinking?' (Kearns 2000: 21)

Some of the modals can also occur before *ste* (*stei*, *stay*), but most often with the perfective meaning:

- (29) a. *Yu sapostu ste mek da rais awredi.*  
 'You were supposed to have finished cooking the rice.'  
 b. *Yu kaen ste mek evriting bifo ai kam?*  
 'Can you finish doing everything before I come?'

## 2.5. Serial verbs

Two verbs, *go* and *kam* (*come*), can occur in a serial construction just before the main verb or before the auxiliary or before *chrai* (*try*). These serial verbs have several functions. Most often, they indicate movement in space corresponding to the meanings of *go* and *kam* (*come*), as in the examples in (30):

- (30) a. *We can go find dah treasure and take 'em.*  
 'We can go find the treasure and take it.' (Pak 1998a: 103)  
 b. *Mo bettah he come play handball wit us.*  
 'It'd be better if he came to play handball with us.' (Lum 1999: 19–20)  
 c. *So da worka guys wen go check out all da roads.*  
 'So the workers went to check out all the roads.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 66 [Matthew 22: 10])  
 d. *I going come sit on you.*  
 'I'm gonna come sit on you.' (Lum 1998b: 229)

A serial verb can be preceded by a tense marker, such as *wen* or *gon* (*goin*, *going*), as illustrated in (30c) and (30d) above. It can also be preceded by some modals:

- (31) a. *I gotta go rake.* (Lum 1998b: 71)  
 b. *We can go find dah treasure.* (Pak 1998a: 103)  
 c. *You like go see one movie wit your dad?*  
 ‘Do you want to go see a movie with your dad?’ (Kearns 2000: 8)

Another related function of the serial verb *go* (but not *kam*) is that it can emphasize the intention involved in the action of the main verb (as with English *to go and do something*), implying that the person involved goes out of their way to do it:

- (32) a. *Wai yu go du daet?*  
 ‘Why did you go and do that?’  
 b. *Shi go kuk rais evri de.*  
 ‘She goes and cooks rice every day.’  
 c. *So she wen go hug him like that.*  
 ‘So she went and hugged him like that.’ (Labov 1990: 28)

The verb *go* before the main verb can also indicate movement in time, more exactly away from the present. So, like the tense marker *gon* (*goin*, *going*), it can mark a future action or event, as in (33):

- (33) *Ai go kam tumaro.*  
 ‘I’ll come tomorrow.’

It is in this sense of movement away, plus intention, that *go* is used in some commands to indicate an action to be done elsewhere or later:

- (34) a. *Go color one eye fo me.*  
 ‘Color one eye for me.’ (Lum 1998b: 229)  
 b. *Try go read da Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution.*  
 ‘You should read the Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution.’ (Kearns 2000: 30)

But with *go*, as opposed to tense marker *gon* (*goin*, *going*), the action or event is usually one that has not been previously planned, is not immediate, and may be more hypothetical than definite; in fact, the action might be intended but never take place.

- (35) a. *Mobeta wi go tel hr.*  
 ‘It would be better if we tell her.’  
 b. *I wen ask Fahdah Eugene fo go pray fo you every day.*  
 ‘I asked Father Eugene to pray for you every day.’ (Kearns 2000: 34)  
 c. *Maybe das why he got all salty. Nobody pay attention to him. Nobody talk story with him. Nobody go bother him.*



'Maybe that's why he got angry. Nobody paid attention to him. Nobody chatted with him. Nobody would bother him.' (Pak 1998b: 321)

- d. *How you tink one guy goin go bus inside one big moke house...?*  
'How will a guy go and break into a strong man's house...?' (*Da Jesus Book*, 36 [Matthew 12: 29])

When *go* is used in these ways (except in the imperative), it can be preceded by the tense markers *wen*, as in example (32c), and *gon* (*goin*, *going*), as in (35d). Serial verbs can occur either before or after aspect markers. In the following examples, *go* occurs after *ste* (*stei*, *stay*). The sense of movement indicated by *go* and the meaning of the main verb combine to express the progressive:

- (36) a. *Shi ste go bai wan baeg rais.*  
'She's going to buy a bag of rice.'  
b. *Ai ste go si da gai.*  
'I keep going to see the guy.'

In imperatives, *go* may be placed before the auxiliary *ste* indicating a progressive or continuous action to be carried out elsewhere or later:

- (37) a. *Go ste mek da pupus.*  
'Go be making the snacks.'  
b. *Go ste du om.*  
'Go be doing it.'

*Go* can also occur before the auxiliary when it has the function of indicating an unplanned future or hypothetical action, as in the second part of this famous example:

- (38) *Yu go ste go; ai go ste kam.*  
(*You go stay go; I go stay come.*)  
'You go ahead [i.e. keep going]; I'll be coming.'

The serial verb *go* can also be used before or after *chrai* (*try*):

- (39) a. *Ai go chrai du om fo yu.*  
'I'll try to do it for you.'  
b. *Ai laik chrai go kam mek kukiz wit yu.*  
(*I like try go come make cookies with you.*)  
'I want to try and come to make cookies with you.'

Note that, as shown in (39b), there may be two serial verbs used in one verb phrase. Here *go* indicates an unplanned future action, and *kam* indicates motion toward the listener.

2.6. Stative versus active verbs

Hawai'i Creole grammar distinguishes between stative and active verbs. Stative verbs include *kam* (*come*) 'become', *bi* (*be*), *ste* (*stei*, *stay*) 'copula', *luk* (*look*), *fil* (*feel*), *no* (*know*) and *haev* (*have*). The serial verbs *go* or *come* occur only before active verbs. Predicate adjectives occur only after stative verbs, as in (40):

- (40) a. *And den everyting come quiet.*  
 'And then everything became quiet.' (Lum 1999: 19)  
 b. *...I goin be awesome.*  
 '...I'm going to be awesome.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 75 [Matthew 24:30])  
 c. *Make their stomach look mo skinny.*  
 'They make their stomach look skinnier.' (Lum 1999: 19)  
 d. *Dey wen feel real good inside.*  
 'They felt really good inside.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 3 [Matthew 2:10])

2.7. Summary

In summary, the VP in sentences with the structure  $S \rightarrow NP VP$  can be of two types, depending on the main verb aktionsart:

stative main verb:

VP → (tense) (modal) (chrai) (aspect) V (stative) (AdjP) (NP) (PP)

active main verb: (sv indicates the possible position for a serial verb):

VP → (tense) (modal) (sv) (chrai) (sv) (aspect) (sv) V (active) (NP) (PP)

These two types of VP are illustrated in the following diagram. (Note that not all combinations are possible.)

( <i>wen</i> )	( <i>kaen</i> )						stative main verb or	(AdjP)	(PP)
( <i>gon</i> )	( <i>laik</i> )		( <i>chrai</i> )		( <i>ste</i> )			(NP)	
( <i>yus- tu</i> )	( <i>haeftu</i> )				( <i>stat</i> )		active main verb		
-----	( <i>sapo- stu</i> )	( <i>go</i> )		( <i>go</i> )	( <i>pau</i> )	( <i>go</i> )			
	( <i>gata</i> )	( <i>kam</i> )		( <i>go</i> )		( <i>kam</i> )			
	( <i>beta</i> )								

The mesolectal past tense marker *waz* (*was*) is not shown in this diagram. It can also occur in the following environments: before the tense marker *gon*, before the

modal *sapostu* or before the *-ing* form of an active main verb (but then without any other tense-mood-aspect markers).

## 2.8. The verb phrase in subjectless sentences

Both imperative sentences and existential sentences in Hawai'i Creole have the surface structure  $S \rightarrow VP$ . In such sentences, tense markers, modals, aspect markers or serial verbs are not normally used before the verb. Non-past existential sentences in Hawai'i Creole usually begin with the verb *get*:

- (41) a. **Get** *wan nyu bilding ova dea.*  
 'There's a new building over there.'  
 b. **Get** *two problems wit dat translation.*  
 'There are two problems with that translation.' (Kearns 2000: 27)

Past existential sentences begin with *haed* (*had*):

- (42) a. **Had** *dis old green house...*  
 'There was this old green house...' (Lum 1990: 60)  
 b. **Had** *some Pharisee guys...*  
 'There were some Pharisees...' (*Da Jesus Book*, 56 [Matthew 19:3])

## 3. Verbless sentences

### 3.1. Equational sentences

The first type of verbless sentence, equational sentences, are usually formed by joining two noun phrases without a copula:  $S \rightarrow NP NP$ .

- (43) a. *Mai sista wan bas jraiva.*  
 'My sister is a bus driver.'  
 b. *Nau yu da baws.*  
 'Now you're the boss.'

Some speakers, however, use *iz* (*is*) or *waz* (*was*) as a copula:

- (44) a. *Brynie is da Captain.*  
 'Brynie is the Captain.' (Lum 1998b: 223)  
 b. *He was one old guy.*  
 'He was an old guy.' (Lum 1999: 22)

### 3.2. Sentences with an adjective phrase (AdjP)

The second type of verbless sentence is made up of an AdjP and an NP. The structures of the NP and AdjP are given in section 9. below. In such sentences

the AdjP may come after the NP with the structure  $S \rightarrow NP \text{ AdjP}$ ; no copula is required.

- (45) a. *Mai sista skini.*  
           ‘My sister is skinny.’  
       b. *Da buggah brown.*  
           ‘The bugger’s brown.’ (Morales 1988: 72)  
       c. *Da old wine mo betta.*  
           ‘The old wine is better.’ (Matthew 1997: 174)

Furthermore, as mentioned above, the Hawai‘i Creole stative verb *ste* (*stei*, *stay*) may also be used before AdjPs, functioning as a copula. But it can only be used before adjectives or AdjPs that denote a non-permanent or non-intrinsic quality, or a change in conditions:

- (46) a. *hi stey free eswy.*  
           ‘He’s free, that’s why.’ (bradajo 1998a: 19)  
       b. *Shi stei sik.*  
           ‘She is sick.’

But the following example, is not acceptable because the adjective denotes a permanent quality:

- (47) \**Da wahine ste shawt.*  
           ‘The woman is short.’

Again, speakers of mesolectal varieties of Hawai‘i Creole may use *iz* (*is*) or *waz* (*was*) as a copula before the AdjP:

- (48) a. *His one is cool.* (Tonouchi 1998: 251)  
       b. *Tommy Kono was short.* (Lum 1999: 23)

Verbless sentences with an AdjP can also have the AdjP first, followed by the NP with the structure  $S \rightarrow \text{AdjP NP}$ . In such sentences a copula is not normally used.

- (49) a. *Smat da dawg.*  
           ‘The dog is smart.’  
       b. *Ono da malasadas.*  
           ‘The malasadas [local Portuguese doughnuts] are delicious.’  
       c. *Too long da words.*  
           ‘The words are too long.’ (Kearns 2000: 21)

### 3.3. Locational sentences

The last type of verbless sentence is the kind that gives a location, with either an adverb or a prepositional phrase: its structure is either  $S \rightarrow NP \text{ AdvP}$  or  $S \rightarrow NP$

PP. In sentences where the location is *here* or *there* or where there is a phrase giving the location, a copula is usually not used:

- (50) a. *Mai sista hia.*  
 'My sister is here.'  
 b. *Kent dem insaid da haus.*  
 'Kent and the others are inside the house.'

Similarly, *wea* (*where*) questions do not need a copula:

- (51) a. *Eh, wea dis guy from?*  
 'Hey, where's this guy from?' (*Da Jesus Book*, 23 [Matthew 8:27])  
 b. *But where dah bridge?*  
 'But where's the bridge?' (Pak 1998a: 113)

But the copula *ste* (*stei*, *stay*) can also be used with locations:

- (52) a. *He stay inside da coffin.*  
 'He's inside the coffin.' (Lum 1999: 26)  
 b. *Where he stay?*  
 'Where is he?' (Ching 1998: 183)

## 4. Negation

### 4.1. Negative markers

Hawai'i Creole sentences are normally negated by using one of four negative markers: *nat*, *no*, *neva* and *nomo*. Each one has a particular distribution.

*Nat* (*not*) is used in four contexts: (i) in verbless sentences, before the predicate NP, AdjP, AdvP, or PP; (ii) in sentences with a VP, before the tense marker *gon*; (iii) before the *-ing* form of the verb when it is not preceded by the aspect marker *ste*, and (iv) before the modal *sapostu*:

- (53) a. *Mai sista nat wan bas jraiva.*  
 'My sister isn't a bus driver.'  
 b. *Da baga nat braun.*  
 'The guy isn't brown.'  
 c. *Hi nat goin brok om.*  
 'He's not going to break it.'  
 d. *Da gaiz nat wrking.*  
 'The guys aren't working.'  
 e. *Yu nat sapostu du daet.*  
 'You're not supposed to do that.'

*Nat* (*not*) also occurs with the modal *beta* but the order is reversed:

- (54) *Yu beta nat du daet.*  
 ‘You’d better not do that.’

*No* is used in six contexts, all in sentences with a VP: (a) before the unmarked verb; (b) before the tense marker *gon*; (c) before the modals *kaen*, *laik*, *gata* and *haeftu*; (d) before the copula *ste*; (e) before the aspect markers *ste*, *stat* and *pau*; and (f) before the serial verbs *go* and *kam* (*come*):

- (55) a. *Da kaet no it fish.*  
 ‘The cat doesn’t eat fish.’  
 b. *I no goin tell nobody.*  
 ‘I won’t tell anybody.’ (*Da Jesus Book*, 2 [Matthew 1:19])  
 c. *I no can even do twenty [pushups] in da P.E. test in school.*  
 ‘I can’t even do twenty [pushups] in the P.E. test in school.’ (Lum 1999: 22)  
 d. *I no like flunk.*  
 ‘I don’t want to flunk.’ (Kearns 2000: 11)  
 e. *Kaerol no haeftu wrk.*  
 ‘Carol doesn’t have to work.’  
 f. *Da kaet no ste in da haus.*  
 ‘The cat isn’t in the house.’  
 g. *Hi no ste sik.*  
 ‘He isn’t sick.’  
 h. *I like pau by tonight, even if it mean I no go sleep.*  
 ‘I want to finish tonight even if it means I don’t sleep.’ (Kearns 2000: 26)  
 i. *De no ste lisining.*  
 ‘They aren’t listening.’  
 j. *Mai sista no stat pleing saka.*  
 ‘My sister hasn’t started playing soccer.’  
 k. *Ai no pau kuk da rais yet.*  
 ‘I haven’t finished cooking the rice yet.’

Negative imperatives (prohibitives) are also formed by putting *no* before the verb:

- (56) *No mek fan.*  
 ‘Don’t make fun.’

Either *nat* or *no* can be used before the tense marker *gon*, but for some speakers there is a slight difference: *nat* implies a contradiction or change, for example:

- (57) a. *No gon rein tumaro.*  
 ‘It’s not going to rain tomorrow.’

- b. *Nat gon rein tumaro.*  
 'It's not going to rain tomorrow [even though you think it is].'
- (58) a. *Shi no gon ple saka.*  
 'She's not going to play soccer.'
- b. *Shi nat gon ple saka.*  
 'She's not going to play soccer [now that she's changed her mind].'

Also, note that *nat* is quite often used before *pau*, but this is when *pau* is being used as a main verb meaning 'to finish' or an adjective meaning 'finished', rather than as an aspect marker.

- (59) *Ai nat pau yet.*  
 'I'm not finished yet.'

*Neva* (*nevah*, *never*) is used before the verb or aspect marker to indicate negative and past tense simultaneously:

- (60) a. *Ai neva du om.*  
 'I didn't do it.'
- b. *He nevah say nutting.*  
 'He didn't say anything.' (Lum 1999: 24)
- c. *De neva ste lisen.*  
 'They weren't listening.'
- d. *De neva pau tek da tes.*  
 'They didn't finish taking the test.'

*Neva* is also used before the tense marker *yustu* (*used to*):

- (61) *She nevah used to have one big fat turkey fo Tanksgiving.*  
 'She didn't use to have a big fat turkey for Thanksgiving.' (Lum 1998a: 74)

Note that *no wen* is not normally used for past tense negation, and that *neva* does not simply mean 'not ever' as it does in English. For example, the meaning of *I never eat beans* in Hawai'i Creole is 'I didn't eat beans', not 'I don't ever eat beans'.

*Nomo* (*no more*), the last negative marker, is different from the others in that it is not used before a verb, a modal or an aspect marker. Rather, it occurs before an NP in a subjectless sentence to mark negative non-past existential, meaning 'there isn't' or 'there aren't'.

- (62) *Nomo kaukau in da haus.*  
 'There isn't any food in the house.'

It is also used in a negative possessive sentence to mean 'doesn't have' or 'don't have':

- (63) a. *Nau wi nomo ka.*  
 'Now we don't have a car.'

b. *How come I **no more** one real glove?*

‘How come I don’t have a real glove?’ (Chock 1998: 29)

Two other expressions are sometimes also used for negative possessive: *no haev* (*no have*) and *no get*.

*Nomo* can be used to talk about things in the past – for example:

(64) *We **no more** their kind money.*

‘We didn’t have their kind of money.’ (Kono 1998: 210)

But other expressions can also be used: *no haed* (*no had*), *neva haed* (*never had*), *neva haev* (*never have*), and *neva get* (*never get*):

(65) *Neva haed TV.*

‘There wasn’t any TV.’

#### 4.2. Other forms of negatives

Other forms of negatives are used by some Hawai‘i Creole speakers. First there is the set expression *dono* or *donno* (*dunno*) which, like its English origin, means ‘don’t know’ or ‘doesn’t know’:

(66) *I **dunno** who wen’ tell my madda.*

‘I don’t know who told my mother.’ (Yamanaka 1998b: 156)

When *waz* (*was*) is used as a tense/aspect marker or copula, the negative markers *no* or *neva* can be used with it:

(67) a. *Shi **no** waz going.*

‘She wasn’t going.’

b. *Ai wen go fo si om yestade, but hi **neva** waz hom.*

‘I went to see him yesterday, but he wasn’t home.’

Forms of negatives closer to English are used by some speakers of varieties of Hawai‘i Creole more toward the acrolectal end of the continuum. These include: *kaenat* (*cannot*), *don* (*don’t*), *diden* (*didn’t*), *izen* (*isn’t*), *wazen* (*wasn’t*), and *won* (*won’t*).

#### 4.3. So-called double negatives

Like many other languages, Hawai‘i Creole can use a negative marker on both the verb and the noun or noun phrase, for example:

(68) a. *Shi **neva** bring **no** kaukau.*

‘She didn’t bring any food.’

b. *De **no** du **nating**.*

‘They didn’t do anything.’



- c. *Nomo nating insai dea.*  
'There isn't anything in there.'
- d. *Ai no kaen si nobadi.*  
'I can't see anybody.'
- e. *Hi no go nopleis.*  
'He doesn't go anywhere.'

## 5. Relativization

Hawai'i Creole has subject relative clauses similar to those in English. The relative pronouns are *hu* (*who*) and *daet* (*dat*, *that*):

- (69) a. *He coach everybody who come in da weightroom.*  
'He coached everybody who came to the weightroom.' (Lum 1999: 22)
- b. *Get one noddah girl who no can stay still.*  
'There's another girl who can't stay still.' (Kanae 1998: 208)
- c. *Dey even had da funny kine gun dat was fat at da end.*  
'They even had the strange gun that was fat at the end.' (Lum 1998a: 71)
- d. *He not jalike da teacha guys dat teach God's Rules.*  
'He's not like the teachers that teach God's Rules.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 20 [Matthew 7:29])

However, with regard to subject relative clauses, Hawai'i Creole differs from English in two ways. First, the relative pronoun can be omitted:

- (70) a. *You dah one wen show us dah map.*  
'You're the one who showed us the map.' (Pak 1998a: 116)
- b. *I don't know anybody study as much as you.*  
'I don't know anybody who studies as much as you.' (Cataluna 2002: 6)

Second, a regular pronoun such as *hi* (*he*), *shi* (*she*) or *de* (*dey*, *they*) can be used in place of a relative pronoun:

- (71) a. *Aes da kain gaiz de awl tawk onli.*  
'That's the kind of guys who are all talk, no action.'
- b. *And get one skinny boy, he just stare at my braddah.*  
'And there was a skinny boy who just stared at my brother.' (Kanae 1998: 208)

With regard to object relative clauses, Hawai‘i Creole and English are similar in allowing the absence of the relative pronoun. In Hawai‘i Creole, however, the relative pronoun is normally not used in object relative clauses.

- (72) a. *More betta you study dat SAT prep book Auntie K wen loan you.*  
 ‘It’s better if you study that SAT prep book Auntie K loaned you.’  
 (Kearns 2000: 4)
- b. *Dis is dah bridge we standing on right now.*  
 ‘This is the bridge we’re standing on right now.’ (Pak 1998a: 115)

## 6. Complementation

### 6.1. Nominal clauses

Hawai‘i Creole does not have clausal subjects but it does have clausal objects, similar to those of English. They may be introduced by the complementizer *daet* (*dat, that*):

- (73) a. *All I can rememba is **dat** Latin no get one word order.*  
 ‘All I can remember is that Latin doesn’t have a word order.’ (Kearns 2000: 22)
- b. *She tell me she pray **dat** Ah Goong stay okay.*  
 ‘She told me she prays that Ah Goong is okay.’ (Lum 1998a: 73)

### 6.2. Infinitival clauses

Infinitival complements that are introduced by *to* in English are most often introduced by *fo* (*for*) in Hawai‘i Creole:

- (74) a. *My father said **for** tell you.*  
 ‘My father said to tell you.’ (Ching 1998: 187)
- b. *He ask me **fo** cheer you up.*  
 ‘He asked me to cheer you up.’ (Kearns 2000: 13)
- c. *I neva have money **for** buy some mo.*  
 ‘I didn’t have money to buy more.’ (Yamanaka 1998b: 155)
- d. *He teach me how **fo** grip da bar.*  
 ‘He taught me how to grip the bar.’ (Lum 1999: 22)
- e. *I too chicken **fo** say anything.*  
 ‘I was too chicken [scared] to say anything.’ (Lum 1998b: 230)

Hawai‘i Creole also has a type of infinitival clause not found in English. Here the clause functions as the second part of an equational sentence, describing the subject by his or her habitual actions:

- (75) a. *Hr fo tawk enikain.*  
 'She's the kind who'd say anything.'  
 b. *Dem gaiz fo dringk pleni.*  
 'Those guys are heavy drinkers.'

## 7. Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses in Hawai'i Creole are similar to those of English. Examples are given below in different categories with the relevant subordinating conjunctions.

Time: *wen* (*when*), *wail* (*while*), *bifo* (*befo*, *before*), *aefta* (*after*)

- (76) a. *You neva notice someting funny when she talk?*  
 'Didn't you notice something funny when she talked?' (Kearns 2000: 13)  
 b. *And while he wipe his sweat..., da spotters put on two more small weights...*  
 'And while he wiped his sweat..., the spotter put on two more small weights.' (Lum 1999: 22)  
 c. *I get planny Latin vocabalery fo memorize before I go sleep.*  
 'I have a lot of Latin vocabulary to memorize before I go to sleep.' (Kearns 2000: 26)  
 d. *I goin come back alive afta I mahke.*  
 'I'm going to come back alive after I die.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 51 [Matthew 17:9])

Location: *wea* (*where*)

- (77) *Dey live ova dea wea da dead peopo stay buried.*  
 'They live over there where the dead people are buried.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 23 [Matthew 8:28])

Purpose: *fo* (*for*)

- (78) *Everybody come fo see dat house.*  
 'Everybody comes to see that house.' (Lum 1990: 92)

Reason: *kawz* (*coz*, *cause*, *because*)

- (79) *Russo tink he hot stuff cause he stay in high school.*  
 'Russo thinks he's hot stuff because he's in high school.' (Lum 1999: 20)

Manner: *jalaik* (*j'like*, *jalike*, *just like*)

- (80) *God wen make um come back alive, **jalike** Jesus wen say befo time.*  
'God made him come back alive, just like Jesus said earlier.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 93 [Matthew 28:6])

Contrast: *do (though), ivendo (even though)*

- (81) *...he look like one of da Russians **even though** he was Portogee.*  
'...he looked like one of the Russians even though he was Portuguese.'  
(Lum 1999: 24)

Conditional: *if*

- (82) *But nowadays, **if** somebody no can read, everybody feega he stupid, too.*  
'But nowadays if somebody can't read, everyone thinks he's stupid too.'  
(Kearns 2000: 21)

Negative conditional: *o els (or else)*

- (83) *So you bettah behave **or else** I going come sit on you.*  
'So you'd better behave or else I'm going to come and sit on you.' (Lum 1998b: 229)

Negative contrast: *nomaeta (no matta, no matter)*

- (84) *Mo betta you live foeva, **no matta** you no mo hand o leg.*  
'It's better to live forever, even if you don't have hands or legs.'  
(Matthew 1997: 52)

## 8. Sentences linked by adverbial connectors

In addition to subordination, sentences can be linked by adverbial connectors.

Sequence: *den (then), aen den (an then, and then)*

- (85) a. *Fo 'long time wuz quiet. **Den** she wen ax me one weird question.*  
'For a long time it was quiet. Then she asked me a weird question.'  
(Tonouchi 1998: 249)
- b. *...you gotta stand still fo at least one second before you can let um go. **And den**, dey jes drop um on da floor...*  
'...you've got to stand still for at least one second before you can let it go. And then they just drop it on the floor.' (Lum 1999: 21)

Consequence: *so*

- (86) *My little braddah, he not mento. **So** you bettah stop teasing him.*  
'My brother isn't mental. So you'd better stop teasing him.' (Kanae 1998: 208)

Negative conditional: *bambai* (*bumbye*, *by 'm by*); note that *bambai* (*bumbye*, *by 'm by*) also functions as an adverb meaning 'later'.

- (87) a. *Yu beta tek yo ambrella. Bambai yu get wet.*  
 'You'd better take your umbrella. Otherwise you'll get wet.'  
 b. *No get da tomatoes wet, bumbye going get spots.*  
 'Don't get the tomatoes wet; otherwise they're going to get spots.'  
 (Lum 1998b: 225)

Cause or result: *aeswai* (*ass why*), *daeswai* (*das why, dass why, that's why*)

This is one of the most common connectors in Hawai'i Creole, occurring at either the beginning or the end of a sentence. When it is used in initial position, that sentence is the result and the preceding sentence is the cause:

- (88) a. *Ai neva stadi. Aeswai ai wen flang.*  
 'I didn't study. That's why I flunked.'  
 b. *Kennet when he fight, he always try his best. Das why he win.*  
 'When Kennet fights, he always tries his best. That's why he wins.'  
 (Lum 1998b: 227)

When it is used in clause-final position, that sentence is the cause and the preceding sentence is the result.

- (89) a. *she neva lai kaam clos shistey wyle eswy.*  
 (*Shi neva laik kam klos. Shi ste wail aeswai.*)  
 'She didn't like to come close because she was wild.' (bradajo 1998a: 19)  
 b. *Stay ova dea till I tell you fo come back. King Herod, he goin look fo da boy fo kill him, dass why.*  
 'Stay over there till I tell you to come back because King Herod is going to look for the boy to kill him.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 4 [Matthew 2:13])

## 9. Noun phrase structure

Plural marking on Hawai'i Creole nouns is optional, although it is now being used more and more frequently. It is most common when a word ends in a vowel, as in *mai toiz* (*my toys*), and least common when a word is preceded by another word which shows quantity, as in *tu dala* (*two dollar*). When plural marking is used, it follows the morphophonemic rules of English.

However, there are many words in Hawai'i Creole which have plural marking where it is not found in English, like for example: *junks*, *mails*, *furnitures*, *baggages*, *underwears*, *slangs*, *stuffs*, *peoples*, and *corns* ('corn on the cob').

The basic Hawai'i Creole noun phrase has the following structure:

NP → (DET) (QUANT) (AdjP) N (collectivizer)

Determiners include the articles *da* (*the*), *a*, and *wan* (*one*), and the demonstratives *dis* (*this*, *diss*), *daet* (*that*, *dat*) and *doz* (*those*). Quantifiers include *meni* (*many*), *sam* (*some*), and *pleni* (*plenny*) derived from English *plenty of* but used to mean 'many' or 'much', as in *pleni pipo* (*plenny peopo*) 'many people' and *pleni rais* 'much rice'. Another quantifier unique to Hawai'i Creole is *chok* (*choke*) 'very many'. Cardinal numbers, which are also quantifiers, are basically the same as in English. Ordinal numbers may be formed by putting *namba* (*number*) before the cardinal number, as in *namba tu boi* (*number two boy*) 'second son'.

An adjective phrase is made up of an adjective which may be preceded by a degree modifier, such as *mo* (*more*), *tu* (*too*), *so*, and *ril* (*real*) as in *mo big* 'bigger', *tu gud* (*too good*), *so haepi* (*so happy*) or *ril hanggri* (*real hungry*). One difference from English is that *sam* (*some*) can also be used as a degree modifier, as in *dea haus sam smawl* (*their house some small*) 'their house is really small'.

An adjective phrase can also be made up of a group of words followed by the derivational clitic *kain* (*kine*, *kind*) with the meaning '\_\_\_\_\_ kind of':

- (90) a. *De wen bai enikain no nid kain stafs.*  
 'They bought many kinds of things they don't need [i.e. unneeded stuff].'  
 b. *She put her hand by her mout and make geisha-kine giggle, so fake.*  
 'She put her hand by her mouth and made a geisha kind of giggle, so fake.' (Lum 1998b: 227)

Finally, an NP can have one of several enclitics which act as collectivizers. The first is *gaiz* (*guys*). This can function to show plural, as in *da einjol gaiz* (*da angel guys*) 'the angels' and *yo aensesta gaiz* (*your ancestor guys*) 'your ancestors', or to mean something like 'and those associated with the preceding noun and its premodifiers', for example:

- (91) *She axed me where my mom guys went.*  
 'She asked me where my mom and those with her went.' (Tonouchi 1998: 249)

Sometimes *foks* (*folks*) is used in a similar way:

- (92) *Last weekend I was suppose to go wit Vernalani folks to da Pure Heart concert.* (Kearns 2000: 29)

Similarly, *dem* after a noun means 'and other associated people':

- (93) a. *Kaerol dem wen go shaping yestade.*  
 'Carol and the others went shopping yesterday.'

b. *Lata, Jesus dem wen go way from Jericho town.*

'Later, Jesus and his disciples went away from Jericho.' (*Da Jesus Book*, 61 [Matthew 20:29])

Possessive NPs are similar to those of English, except that the possessive clitic 's is not always required. So, it is common to hear possessive NPs such as *Jo haus* (*Joe house*) 'Joe's house' and *da wahine ka* (*da wahine car*) 'the woman's car'.

## 10. Pronominal system

Like English (and unlike other creole languages), Hawai'i Creole has several sets of pronouns: subject, object, possessive and reflexive. The subject and object pronouns are given in Table 1 and the possessive pronouns in Table 2:

Table 1. Hawai'i Creole subject and object pronouns

	subject	object
First person singular	<i>Ai</i> ( <i>A, I</i> )	<i>mi</i> ( <i>me</i> )
Second person singular	<i>yu</i> ( <i>you</i> )	<i>yu</i> ( <i>you</i> )
Third person singular	<i>hi</i> ( <i>he</i> ), <i>shi</i> ( <i>she</i> ) [ <i>him, hr</i> ( <i>her</i> )]	<i>him, hr</i> ( <i>her</i> ), <i>om</i> ( <i>em, um</i> )
First person plural	<i>wi</i> ( <i>we</i> ), <i>as gaiz</i> ( <i>us guys</i> ) [ <i>as</i> ( <i>us</i> )]	<i>as gaiz</i> ( <i>us guys</i> )
Second person plural	<i>yu</i> ( <i>you</i> ), <i>yu gaiz</i> ( <i>you guys</i> )	<i>yu</i> ( <i>you</i> ), <i>yu gaiz</i> ( <i>you guys</i> )
Third person plural	<i>de</i> ( <i>dey, they</i> ), <i>dem gaiz</i> ( <i>dem guys</i> )	<i>dem gaiz</i> ( <i>dem guys</i> ), <i>om</i> ( <i>em</i> )

Table 2. Hawai'i Creole possessive pronouns

	pronominal	independent
First person singular	<i>ma, mai</i> ( <i>my</i> )	<i>mainz</i> ( <i>mines</i> )
Second person singular	<i>yoa, yo</i> ( <i>your</i> )	<i>yawz</i> ( <i>yours</i> )
Third person singular	<i>hiz</i> ( <i>his</i> ), <i>hr</i> ( <i>her</i> )	<i>hiz</i> ( <i>his</i> ), <i>hrz</i> ( <i>hers</i> )
First person plural	<i>awa</i> ( <i>our</i> )	<i>awaz</i> ( <i>ours</i> )
Second person plural	<i>yoa/yo</i> ( <i>your</i> ), <i>yu gaiz</i> ( <i>you guys</i> )	<i>yawz</i> ( <i>yourz</i> ), <i>yu gaiz</i> ( <i>you guys</i> )
Third person plural	<i>dea</i> ( <i>their</i> )	<i>deaz</i> ( <i>theirs</i> )

There are also independent possessive pronouns using *wan* (one): *main wan* (mine one), *mainz wan* (mine's one), *yawz wan* (yours one), *awaz wan* (ours one), *yu gaiz wan* (you guys one), *dem gaiz wan* (them guys one).

As can be seen, most of the Hawai'i Creole pronouns are similar to those of English, but there are some important differences. First, Hawai'i Creole subject and object pronouns most often show plural by adding *gaiz* (guys). Second, *it* is rarely used, except in set expressions, like *Stop it!* Rather, other words, such as *da ting* (< *the thing*) or *da kain*, *da kine* (< *the kind*) are used instead. More commonly, the Hawai'i Creole pronoun *om* (*em*, *um*) is used instead of *it* as the object pronoun. Third, there is a difference in some of the possessive pronouns, such as *yo* or *yoa* for 'your' and *mainz* (*mine's*) for 'mine'. Fourth, sometimes object pronouns appear in subject position, as in *hr sik* (*her sick*) 'she's sick' and *as go* (*us go*) 'we're going'. Also, object pronouns are consistently used in some places where English uses subject pronouns, for example: *hu him?* (*who him?*) 'who is he?' and *huz san him?* (*whose son him*) 'whose son is he?'. Finally, unlike English, Hawai'i Creole sometimes uses the pronouns *hi* (*he*) and *shi* (*she*) to refer to inanimate referents where *it* is required in English, especially as a resumptive pronoun:

- (94) a. *Da stoa hi open nain oklak.*  
'The store, it opens at nine o'clock.'  
b. *Da klaes shi nat daet izi.*  
'The class, it isn't that easy.'  
c. *awl dess tym da saan he shynin da wayv he braykin...*  
(*All this time, the sun, he shining, the wave, he breaking...*)  
'All this time, the sun, it's shining, the wave, it's breaking.' (bradajo 1998b: 171)

The Hawai'i Creole reflexive pronouns are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Hawai'i Creole reflexive pronouns

	reflexive
First person singular	<i>maiself</i> ( <i>myself</i> )
Second person singular	<i>yoself/yuself</i> ( <i>yourself</i> )
Third person singular	<i>himself, hrsself</i> ( <i>herself</i> )
First person plural	<i>awaself</i> ( <i>ourselves</i> )
Second person plural	<i>yoself/yuself</i> ( <i>yourself</i> )
Third person plural	<i>demself</i> ( <i>themselves</i> )



Alternative forms are: *yuselfs* (yourselves), *as gaiz self* (us guys self), *yu gaiz self* (you guys self), *dem gaiz self* (them guys self).

## 11. Focusing

Various types of movement are quite common in Hawai'i Creole for focusing on particular constituents of a sentence. Topicalization occurs as in English for focusing on the object by moving it to the front of the sentence:

- (95) a. *Onli da jangk kain, hi let yu tek.*  
 'Only the junky kinds, he lets you take.'  
 b. *Daet wan, ai si.*  
 'That one, I see.'

Left-dislocation of the subject also occurs:

- (96) a. *Mai fada, hi no laik go wrk.*  
 'My father, he didn't like to go to work.'  
 b. *...my sista, she the boss of the sunflower seeds.*  
 '...my sister, she was the boss of the sunflower seeds.' (Yamanaka 1998a: 153)  
 c. *Weightlifters, dey no do too much.*  
 'Weightlifters, they don't do too much.' (Lum 1999: 19)

Topicalization of the object and left-dislocation of the subject can occur simultaneously:

- (97) *Enikain fud dis gai hi it.*  
 'All kinds of food, this guy eats.'

Left-dislocation of the object or a locational phrase is common as well:

- (98) a. *Dis wan ai wen bai om Longs.*  
 'This one I bought at Longs.'  
 b. *Dis glove, you try bend um, no can.*  
 'This glove, if you try to bend it, you can't.' (Chock 1998: 28)  
 c. *At da Y get plenny guys living ovah dere in da upstairs rooms.*  
 'At the Y, there are lots of guys living there in the upstairs rooms.'  
 (Lum 1999: 25)

Right-dislocation is found in Hawai'i Creole, as in English:

- (99) a. *De get pleni mani, yo faemli.*  
 'They have a lot of money, your family.'  
 b. *Hi wan pis awf бага, daet gai.*  
 'He was a really angry bugger, that guy.'

A sentence can have both object topicalization and subject right-dislocation:

- (100) *Pleni mani de get, sam gaiz.*  
 ‘Some guys have a lot of money.’

Hawai‘i Creole differs from English, however, in that the subject may be moved to the end of the sentence, similar to right-dislocation but without the use of a pronoun in the canonical position of the moved constituent.

- (101) a. *No laik ple futbawl, diz gaiz.*  
 ‘These guys don’t like to play football.’  
 b. *Geting ol, as gaiz.*  
 ‘We’re getting old.’  
 c. *No laik it nating, dis gai.*  
 ‘This guy doesn’t like to eat anything.’

Finally, Hawai‘i Creole has cleft constructions, but unlike English, the anticipatory *it* is not used:

- (102) *Waz as gaiz hu wen laik go.*  
 ‘It was us who wanted to go.’

Hawai‘i Creole also uses cleft constructions involving clausal subjects, but again neither anticipatory *it* nor a complementizer is used.

- (103) a. ...*garans he goin give you guys clotheses.*  
 ‘...it’s guaranteed that he’ll give you all clothes.’ (*Da Jesus Book*, 18  
 [Matthew 6:30])  
 b. *Mo betta I stop now.*  
 ‘It’s better if I stop now.’ (Kearns 2000: 26)

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# Fiji English: morphology and syntax

France Mugler and Jan Tent

## 1. Introduction

The morpho-syntax of Fiji English, like its lexicon and phonology, is heterogeneous, with variations both across speakers with different first languages (primarily Fijian and Fiji Hindi) as well as along a continuum which goes from a heavily substratum-influenced variety – what we have called Pure Fiji English – to one which exhibits maximum pressure from Standard English while still being distinctive – Modified Fiji English (see Tent and Mugler, other volume). We attempt here to describe features typical of Fiji English, many of which are shared by other varieties of English and of English-based pidgins and creoles, while pointing out those which are characteristic of Pure Fiji English and probably most distinctive.

The major source of the data cited in this chapter is Jan Tent's more than 80 hours of recordings of part-European speakers, his observations of spoken Fiji English from Fijian, Indo-Fijian and other speakers, local television news and advertisements, accompanied by quotes from written sources, primarily newspapers, and the plays of Fiji's Larry Thomas, which often feature a low or middle-income multicultural setting where the characters speak Pure Fiji English (see Tent 2000). A few more recent examples, particularly from newspapers, have been collected by France Mugler. When no source is cited after an example, the reference is to Tent (2000).

## 2. The noun phrase

### 2.1. Nouns

#### 2.1.1. *Count and non-count nouns*

One of the most striking features of Fiji English nominals is the status of count and non-count nouns (see also 2.3.). There are a number of distinctive count nouns, preceded by an article in the singular and with a suffixed {-s} in the plural, a feature common to many L2 Englishes (Crystal 2003: 362). Two of the most noticeable such nouns are *slang* 'a slang expression/word', and *swear* 'a swearword' (a count noun as well as a verb):

- (1) a. *He uses a lot of **slangs** in his writing.*
- b. *The **slangs** they always use and the words, I like it.*

- c. Jo: [...] *man you should have heard all the **swears** then she ran up to me and wanted to slap me.* [...] (Thomas 1991: 49)
- d. *Fuck is a very bad **swear**.*

Plural forms of these two nouns are the most common distinctive count nouns in Tent's recorded data. Indeed, his recordings contain relatively few such nouns, while Kelly's spoken data only includes occurrences of *slangs* (1975: 41). Most examples of distinctive count nouns come from print or writing, where this feature seems more prevalent (Tent 2000: 353–354). Other examples of distinctive count nouns include:

- (2) a. *Fiji will draft a **legislation*** [...] (Fiji One Television news, 22/7/1993)
- b. *If I don't give my **solis** [i.e. a donation], there will be **gossips** about me and my family which I wouldn't want to happen.* (Fiji Times, 7/12/1994)
- c. *I was cutting **firewoods** when it happened.* (Fiji One Television news, 31/3/1997)
- d. *The manager of our Petrol Service Station is Mr [X] who claims the taxi union **staffs** are not involved in the dispute with tyre repair boys.* (Letters to the Editor, Daily Post, 8/8/1994)
- e. *We don't really have the resources to accommodate all the necessary training **equipments*** [...] (Fiji Times, 1/2/2003)
- f. *We hope police will be able to arrest the culprits because we have suffered a loss of more than \$80,000 from our belongings and **furnitures**.* (Fiji Times, 17/1/2003)
- g. *Ability to work with new **softwares** required.* (Positions Vacant, Fiji Times 3/2/2003)
- h. *Please go ahead and let staff know you are collecting **feedbacks**.* (Email to France Mugler, 4/3/2003)

There is also the occasional distinctive non-count noun:

- (3) a. *Food included sacks of flour, sugar, tins of **biscuit**, cartons of tea and drums of kerosene.* (Fiji Times, 7/1/1993)
- b. *While we respect other **religion**, this does not give the right to others of other **religion** to disturb people of other denominations.* (Letters to the Editor, Fiji Times, 16/8/1994)

While the absence of an {-s} plural morpheme can in many cases be explained on phonological grounds, i.e. to fit the syllable structure of Fiji English (Tent and Mugler, other volume), the fact that pluralised distinctive count nouns seem less common in speech than in writing suggests that hyper-correction due to the pressure of Standard English may be involved.

2.1.2. *Pluralisation of borrowings*

Count nouns borrowed from Fijian and Fiji Hindi can be pluralised in Fiji English in two ways: with an {-s} or a zero suffix. The following citations include examples of both kinds of plurals in Fijian borrowings:

- (4)
- a. *The tired tourists arrived at Lautoka at noon wearing blankets and **sulu** [i.e. a wraparound] provided by Blue Lagoon. (Fiji Times, 26/5/1999)*
  - b. *Leading the march were elderly men in coats, **sulus**, and sandals. (Subramani 1988: 36)*
  - c. *The redevelopment will have four new accommodation buildings with 160 guest rooms and 47 traditional Fijian-style **bure** [i.e. a house]. (Fiji Times, 27/5/1999)*
  - d. *Eager to test the elements, they descended upon the resort like plunderers, invading the beach, the swimming pool, and the **bures**. (Subramani 1988: 23)*

Here are a few examples of zero and {-s} plural suffixes with Fiji Hindi borrowings:

- (5)
- a. *How many **choli** [i.e. a short sari blouse] does she have?*
  - b. *That shop has the nicest and best **cholis** in Suva.*
  - c. *The majority of ex-**girmitiya** [i.e. indentured labourers], however, remained in agriculture. (Lal 1992: 39)*
  - d. *He reminds us of the Gimit indentured system served by our forefathers. He wants us to learn from the experience of the **Girmitiyas**. (Letters to the Editor, Daily Post, 10/4/1996)*
  - e. *Bhimla prepares a parcel containing two or more **rotis** [i.e. a kind of unleavened bread] with dry curry from the previous evening meal for Hari. (Mamak 1978: 36)*
  - f. *They want a variety because simple **roti** with only one curry doesn't go down with them," she says as she tosses some dalo leaves into a pot. (Sunday Times, 31/8/1997)*

It is worth noting that most count nouns in both Fijian and Fiji Hindi have an invariant form unmarked for number. While one could argue that {-s} plural marking on borrowed count nouns indicates their full nativisation into Fiji English, it does not follow that the same nouns are somehow less nativised when they have zero plural marking instead. In other words, *sulu* and *roti* are fully a part of the Fiji English lexicon, whether they appear in the plural as *sulu* or *sulus*, *roti* or *rotis*, and there are no English-derived alternatives to these borrowings. Rather, the morpho-syntactic variation corresponds to the different lects in the continuum,

with the zero marking being typical of Pure Fiji English and the {-s} marking of Modified Fiji English.

Some Fiji English nouns are derived from English adjectives, such as *plastic* ‘a plastic supermarket bag’:

- (6) “*We really need to relook seriously at the use of **plastics** which makes up a majority of litter;*” *he* [i.e. the Environment Minister] *said.* (*Sunday Times*, 21/9/1997)

## 2.2. Pronouns

### 2.2.1. Gender

Gender is not normally marked in Pure Fiji English pronouns (or in the two main substratum languages) and *he* is often used as a generic:

- (7) a. *My mother, **he**'s a primary school teacher in Labasa.*  
 b. *That woman **he** hit his husband when he cut [i.e. was drunk].*  
 c. *Mrs [X] was called to rest [...]. Always remembered by **his** sons.*  
 (Funeral notice, *Fiji Times*, 15/1/2003)

### 2.2.2. Person and number

The pronoun system of Fijian, like that of many other Oceanic languages, is much more complex than that of English since it distinguishes between singular, dual, paucal, and plural, as well as between inclusive and exclusive for all non-singular pronouns.

In Pure Fiji English, pronouns are marked for singular, dual and plural number, and for inclusivity/exclusivity. They are calqued on the model of Fijian, with the use of the suffixes *-two*, for dual, and *-gang*, for plural. Thus we have *us-two* ‘1dual incl.’ and *us-gang* ‘1pl. (more than two)’, *you-gang* ‘2pl.’ etc. Although the semantic and morpho-syntactic origin of these pronouns is Fijian, they are widely used not only by native speakers of Fijian but by all speakers of Pure Fiji English. Some examples include:

- (8) a. Q: ***Us-two**'s bread?*  
 A: *No, **you people**'s bread.*  
 b. *Hey, how 'bout **us-two** go watch movie tonight?*  
 c. ***Us-gang** own this store.*  
 d. *C'mon **you-gang**, pull on this rope!*  
 e. *So **you-gang** adopt children out to relatives too.*  
 f. *I feel sorry for **you people** because this is one area which is lacking development.* (*Fiji Times*, 26/2/2003)

The plural suffix *-gang* may also occur with demonstratives (e.g. *those-gang* and *that-gang* ‘they’) and seems synonymous with *people* as in *those people*:

(9) *Man, I don't know how **those-gang** [i.e. pilots] can do it.*

Another frequent plural pronominal form in spoken Pure Fiji English is the 2pl. *you-people*(ʒ) ‘you/your (more than two)’:

- (10) a. Margaret: *I just don't know **you people**. Look at all of you. Everytime you are always arguing about the same thing. [...].* (Thomas 1989: 31)
- b. *Everytime her friends visit her, they ask her to cook Chicken in Chili and Plum Sauce. She tells them: “Oilei! [i.e. Oh!] **You people** not sick of this?”* (Sunday Times, 1/9/1997)
- c. *He said **you people's** house is one nice house-ga.*

The structure pronoun + *people* corresponds to the Fiji Hindi pattern, in which postposed *log*, literally ‘people’, pluralises the singular pronouns; e.g. *ham log* 1pl., *tum log* 2pl., *i log/u log* 3pl. (see Siegel 1992). However, the *people* pronoun plural marker is used widely by all speakers of Pure Fiji English, regardless of their first language.

### 2.2.3. Third person singular pronouns

Pure Fiji English has two distinct third person singular pronouns: *fella* for [+human] referents (male or female) and (*the*) *thing* for [-human] referents (i.e. *it*):

- (11) a. ***Fella** was drinking grog [i.e. kava] there, during class. But his teaching is set [i.e. great, good]. But the way fella treat us, no good, èh?*
- b. ***Fella** [i.e. my mother] wake up half-past five in the morning.*
- c. Marika: *Oh Mrs Kumar I'm sorry I forgot. When I come back from school I bring it back to you, **the thing** at home.* (Thomas 1991: 37)
- d. Mrs Kumar: *Well **the thing** take time you know.* (Thomas 1991: 46)
- e. *When we have the tournament coming up, **thing** already finish. The club going on now.*
- f. *When you on the alarm system you press this button. When you off **the thing** you press that one.*

On the use of (*the*) *thing*, Kelly (1975: 29–31) notes that it appears to be a “stronger pronoun than *it*” and “is normally used in the subject of a sentence, or where a noun would occur in [Standard English].” Our data and observations confirm this.



#### 2.2.4. Third person plural

The third person plural object pronoun *them*, preceded by *and*, is added to a singular proper noun to indicate a group of friends or relatives – a very common feature of Fiji English:

- (12) *Jone and **them** coming to the party tonight, èh?*

#### 2.2.5. Who

In Pure Fiji English, the interrogative/relative pronoun *who* sometimes is used when referring to the name of someone or something:

- (13) a. *I can't remember **who** his name is.*  
 b. *Question of the week! **Who** is the dog's name in the Jetson cartoon series? (Sunday Post, 1/9/2002)*

This is calqued on Fijian usage, where *o cei* 'who' is used in questions such as *o cei na yacana?* literally 'who's his/her name?'

### 2.3. Determiners

#### 2.3.1. One

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the Pure Fiji English determiner system is the indefinite article *one*, a typically creoloid and L2 English feature. Note that neither Fijian nor Fiji Hindi has a separate indefinite article, although each of course has a numeral 'one' (*dua* and *ek* respectively):

- (14) a. *Simi: Man you talk like **one** philosopher! (Thomas 1991: 25)*  
 b. *They should have **one** security guard up here at night sitting in **one** shed.*  
 c. ***One** experience cook wanted for Indian Restaurant **one** kitchen hand also required Phone 479540 (Positions Vacant, Fiji Times, 10/9/1994)*

However, as the next two examples show, *one* is not used consistently; *a* is also often used within the same utterance or sentence:

- (15) a. ***One** Fijian man called me and he told me if I want **a** chewing gum [...]*  
 (Daily Post, 27/9/1997)  
 b. *I am informed, the 14-year-old boy was apparently assaulted after **a** heated argument with **one** taxi driver. (Letters to the Editor, Daily Post, 8/8/1994)*

Kelly (1975: 27) argues that *one* seems to be “a more emphatic form” and is generally used in the “[nominal] group forming the subject”. In most cases when *a* is used “the reference is rather general”, compared to *one* where “the reference is usually to a specific person or object”. However, not all examples above fit this description and a more thorough analysis based on a larger sample is needed.

### 2.3.2. Plenty

A common quantifier is *plenty* (+ noun) ‘many, lots (of), much, plenty of’:

- (16) a. Josephine: [...] *You got **plenty** money?* (Thomas 1991: 21)  
 b. *Like **plenty** people think of Raiwai as a criminal place.*  
 c. *He remembers someone came to the village and told everyone there was a place where they could make **plenty** money.* (*Fiji Times*, 2/10/1997)

### 2.3.3. Zero determiner

Zero determiner seems to be more common in written than spoken Fiji English, especially before proper nouns:

- (17) a. *I met them in **Civic Centre** one time.*  
 b. *When clients buy their houses from **Housing Authority**, they enter into a contract to make regular payments for them.* (Letters to the Editor, *Daily Post*, 13/8/1994)  
 c. *“It has now reached **unbearable high percentage**,” he said.* (*Fiji Times*, 1/8/1994)  
 d. *I would like to thank the Public Works Department’s Complaints Section for showing **caring attitude** when houses along Tamavua Road was out of water.* (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 8/9/1994)

The reverse is also quite common, and once again, more so in writing or print than in speech, and again in particular with proper nouns:

- (18) a. ***The Enamanu Road** has been neglected for a long time.* (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 9/8/1994)  
 b. *The methods used in eliciting data is important in any research enterprise and that brings **the credibility** to the merit of the results.* (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 16/8/1994)  
 c. *Senator [X] then said that “In the Indian community it is a shameful act if someone’s wife is fondled by another person and it arouses **the anger** in any man. [...]”* (*Daily Post*, 17/5/1995)

## 2.4. Adjectives

Adjectives derived from past participles often do not carry the {-ed} morpheme of Standard English, as is true of many other varieties of English. This is probably because of the syllabic structure of Fiji English, in which final consonant clusters are avoided (see Tent and Mugler, other volume). The most common examples in our data are: *aircondition room*, *experience driver*, *ice water*, *dry fish*, *tin fish*, and *sugar water*.

- (19) a. Fully **air-condition** computer lab and lecture room. (Advertisement, *Fiji Times*, 3/2/2003)  
 b. Urgently wanted **experience** digger operators [...] (Positions Vacant, *Fiji Times*, 15/2/2003)

On the other hand, {-ed} occurs sometimes in Fiji English where it does not in Standard English, probably as a hypercorrection, especially since it seems more frequent in writing and print. Perhaps the most common example is *matured* (especially in the positions vacant columns of newspapers e.g. *matured housegirl wanted*):

- (20) a. These are children who are exposed to this kind of acts for a period of time until the child would come out in the open "TO TELL" especially when they are socially **matured** and ready to disclose the happenings. (*Daily Post*, 27/9/1997)  
 b. Two bedrooms furnished flat 2 minutes walk to city/CWM, all amenities, quiet, **secured** (To Let, *Fiji Times*, 15/2/2003)

This hypercorrection sometimes extends to nouns, as in:

- (21) An **experienced** of 5 years will be very helpful. (*Fiji Times*, 14/2/2003)

### 2.4.1. Comparatives and superlatives

In Fiji English *more* and *most* are often preposed to the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives respectively – an archaic pleonasm in Standard English:

- (22) a. [...] **most tastiest**, **most tastiest** [...] (Television advertisement, 1994–1995)  
 b. Then only can we promote **more healthier** environment to live in and make Fiji more appealing to tourists as well. (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 28/7/1994)  
 c. [...] the Prime Minister believes there's **more better** players here [...] (Fiji One Television news, 10/4/1996)

Occasionally, *less* also occurs with the comparative form of an adjective:

- (23) *I don't think referees will become **less harsher** in Wellington [...] (Fiji Times. 5/2/2003)*

### 3. The verb phrase

#### 3.1. Verbs derived from nouns and particles

Fiji English has some distinctive verbs derived from English nouns or particles. Examples of verb forms derived from nouns are *schooling*, *broom* and the archaic *pain*:

- (24) a. *Today, there are 620 girls **schooling** at Jasper Williams High School. (Fiji Times, 11/7/1994)*  
 b. *Asha: [...] I wanted to carry on **schooling** but my father told me that I should stay at home and help my mother in the house. [...] (Thomas 1991: 18)*  
 c. *I **broom** your room after lunch, éh?*  
 d. *I was never at work on Wednesday because my back was **paining** very much.*  
 e. *No, my throat doesn't **pain** any more.*

Other examples include:

- (25) a. *Please **attention** it to Bob.*  
 b. *Sometimes, even your friend, she'll try to **crook** [i.e. swindle] you.*

Another such verb is *slang*, which has also undergone a semantic shift, 'to speak in English with an unnatural, i.e. non-Pure Fiji English, accent (a rebuke)'

- (26) a. *We like the way you talk to us, you not **slang** like other palagis [i.e. Europeans] when they talk to us.*  
 b. *You sound stubborn [i.e. snobby] when you **slang** like that; you just wanna be a star [i.e. a show-off].*

Fiji English also has some verbs derived from nouns from languages other than English, e.g. *choro* 'to steal', from Fiji Hindi *chor* 'a thief'. While the final {-o} is an imperative suffix in Fiji Hindi (as well as standard Hindi), in Pidgin Fiji Hindi and in borrowings into Fijian and Fiji English the form with the {-o} is the verb stem:

- (27) *You see those shoes? He **choro-ed** them.*

In the next example, Fiji Hindi *tilak* 'a mark made on the forehead for ornament, or to indicate sect' is used as a verb (in its past participial/adjectival form):

- (28) *Here I am then, garlanded, **tilaked**, poised like a deity. (Subramani 1988: 131)*

Examples of Fijian borrowings include *meke*, a verb and a noun both in Fijian and in Fiji English meaning ‘to perform a traditional dance or action song’ or ‘a traditional dance’, and *lovo* ‘an earth oven’, a noun in Fijian and Fiji English, but also a verb in Fiji English with the meaning ‘to cook in an earth oven’.

- (29) a. *The little girls came and **meked** for the European ladies.*  
 b. *Why don't we **lovo** this stuff?*  
 c. *There's nothing liked **lovo-ed** pork, is there?*

In Fiji English, *on* and *off* are verbs rather than mere post-verbal particles as in Standard English, and mean ‘to switch/turn on/off’:

- (30) *When you **on** the alarm system you press this button. When you **off** the thing you press that one.*

Similarly, *in* can be a verb, meaning ‘to insert something’, as in:

- (31) *Jan, can you help me **in** this key?*

### 3.2. Phrasal and simple verbs

Fiji English has some phrasal verbs which correspond to simple verbs in Standard English. *Cope up*, *discuss about*, and *request for* are the most common ones:

- (32) a. *“We find it extremely hard to **cope up** with repairs costs,” Mr [X] said. (Fiji Times, 11/5/1994)*  
 b. *In this essay, I would like to **discuss about** [...].*  
 c. *The staff who have **requested for** a gown, kindly collect them from me during the following times [...].*

The converse also occurs, as in the frequent *pick* (Standard English ‘to pick up’):

- (33) a. *When [X] returned to the embassy to **pick** the passports he was arrested and charged after being interviewed. (Fiji Times, 28/5/1994)*  
 b. Q: *What is the role of toastmasters at the Hibiscus Festival?*  
 A: *They **pick** the queens to and from home. (Fiji Times, 28/8/1999)*

Other examples include *lock* ‘to lock up’, *throw* ‘throw out’, and *give* ‘give up/over’:

- (34) a. *I used to **lock** my three daughters and go to the fields. (Daily Post, 19/2/1994)*  
 b. *What we should keep and what we should **throw**?*  
 c. *The rebels stopped the carrier and ordered the driver to move out, but he refused and told them he was ready to die but would not **give** his carrier [i.e. truck]. (Daily Post, 10/8/2000)*

Finally, some phrasal verbs have a different particle in Fiji English than in Standard English:

- (35) a. *Man, he was so gone [i.e. drunk] he keep on **throwing out** [i.e. throwing up] all the time.*  
 b. *Villagers from Narai showed their appreciation to the Japanese embassy early this year by **putting up** a feast. (Fiji Times, 23/6/1999)*

### 3.3. Deletion of copula and auxiliary *be*

Equational sentences without a copula and sentences where the auxiliary *be* does not appear, are extremely common in Pure Fiji English, as indeed in L2, colloquial L1 varieties of English, as well as in pidgins and creoles:

- (36) a. Margaret: [...] **You worse than a woman.** (Thomas 1989: 38)  
 b. *We haven't had water for the past two weeks and **this very disgusting** because we all need water every time. (Fiji Times, 24/1/2003)*  
 c. Tom: **Nobody making** any noise, just go back and look after your baby. (Thomas 1989: 19)  
 d. Mereoni: *Ia, I just don't know what **Margaret gonna** say, she will get really wild.* (Thomas 1989: 20)  
 e. *Because **they still** far away.*

### 3.4. Tense and aspect markers

Pure Fiji English has a number of tense and aspect markers, one of which is derived from the English past participle, while others are adverbs or adverbial phrases which have become grammaticalised to various degrees.

The pre-verbal marker *been* indicates past tense:

- (37) a. Josephine: *Man you can really bluff. You **been** tell me you gonna stop drinking grog [kava] because your work is going very badly. And just look at you!* (Thomas 1991: 16)  
 b. Reserve Bank: *You gang **been** open the safe and leave it like that and everybody take the money or what? How come the money gone? [...] NBF [National Bank of Fiji]: Yeah man. Trues God, malik kasam, bulului, cross my heart and hope to die, we **been** open it. That's the open door policy the Government **been** want. (Fiji Times, 23/3/1996)*

The use of *been* as a past tense marker is a typical creoloid feature, widely attested in many varieties of English and in English-based pidgins and creoles. However, *been* is far less frequent in Fiji English, where tense tends to be indicated by con-

text rather than by verb morphology, and it seems to indicate a remote past (as does the Fijian preverbal *ā*).

Among expressions which have their origin in time adverbials, *always* and *all the time* present the clearest cases of grammaticalisation, as preverbal present habitual markers (similar to, and probably calqued on, Fijian *dau* ‘always, habitually, a lot’ – often used to translate the simple present tense). Example (38c) below shows full grammaticalisation of *all the time*, which follows the subject noun phrase and is preposed to the lexical verb. In (38d) however, although it also follows the subject noun phrase, *all the time* does not immediately precede the verb but rather a resumptive subject pronoun, so one can argue that it is not inside the verb phrase and is therefore less grammaticalised. The semantically similar *every time* – sometimes used redundantly with *always* – is also not fully grammaticalised, as it is preposed to the subject. As for *before*, in all likelihood calqued on Fijian *i liu* and indicating a habitual past, it stands well outside the verb phrase and is best considered a sentence adverbial.

- (38) a. *Like before, a lot of fights and that **always** happening on the road.*  
 b. *English here [in Fiji] much more different, ‘cause we **always** put much more slangs in.*  
 c. *Stay away from her, she **all the time** marimari [i.e. cadge] from people.*  
 d. *The next door neighbour **all the time** he bash his wife when he cut [i.e. drunk].*  
 e. *Margaret: I just don’t know you people. Look at all of you. **Everytime** you are **always** arguing about the same thing. [...]* (Thomas 1989: 31)  
 f. *Mrs Kumar: See that is why I don’t like to give my rake to people. **Everytime** I have to ask it back.* (Thomas 1991: 37)  
 g. *He said **before**, many homes did not have burglar bars.* (*The Daily Post*, 10/4/1996)

Two other time adverbials of interest are *one time*, which indicates a punctual past:

- (39) a. *I met them in Civic Centre **one time**.*  
 b. *Because **one time** he come there.*

and the related *sometimes* ‘some time’, which can refer to both past and present:

- (40) a. *SIR – **Sometimes** back I had written a letter to this column about the deteriorating condition of the Vatuwaqa Cemetery Building and the filthy state of the toilets.* (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 20/1/1996)  
 b. *For **sometimes** now I have observed that yaqona [i.e. kava] drinking has been done in some work places on the campus during official work times.*

Note that the use of the pluperfect in (40a) above, where a simple past would be used in Standard English, is particularly common in print.

### 3.5. Subject-verb agreement

Subject-verb agreement is variable. In Pure Fiji English, the verb is often singular regardless of the number of the subject. Agreement is also often with the immediately preceding noun phrase rather than with the grammatical subject.

- (41) a. **Bulk foods is not new in Fiji** [...] *We have it right here at Tropikana* (Advertisement, *Daily Post*, 3/9/1994)  
 b. **Suva rugby and FRL heads for a show-down** (Headline, *Daily Post*, 18/5/1995)  
 c. *I would like to thank the Public Works Department's Complaints Section for showing caring attitude when **houses** along Tamavua Road **was** out of water.* (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 8/9/1994)  
 d. *In the old days, **Hindustani programmes** over Radio Fiji **was** educational and entertaining.* (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 27/8/1994)

In the structure *one of* + noun phrase, the noun phrase has a zero plural marker:

- (42) a. [...] *one of the knife wielding **man**, allegedly grabbed her* [...] (*Fiji Times*, 2/2/2003)  
 b. *Yet when one of our most respected and longest serving **leader** wants a duty free car* [...]. (*Fiji Times*, 2/2/2003)

In Pure Fiji English a pronoun referring to a preceding noun phrase is typically singular, particularly when it is distant from the (plural) noun phrase, in a prepositional phrase or a dependent clause:

- (43) a. *They* [i.e. natural disasters] *devastate the entire population in **its** path.* (*Fiji Times*, 24/1/2003)  
 b. *Movement Chairman [X] said members would continue to raise funds through cultural and social programmes and send **it** to SAHARA for the affected families.* (*Fiji Times*, 29/1/2003)

## 4. Discourse particles

### 4.1. Intensifying adverbials

#### 4.1.1. Full

The archaic intensifier *full* is common, and is sometimes used adverbially:

- (44) a. *He can't hear you. He's **full** concentrating on his play.*



- b. *One top civil servant from Niue who was in Fiji attending a meeting funded by an international organisation was sighted in one of the local hotels early in the morning walking around **full cut** [i.e. very drunk] with his shirt hanging out. Reports from the hotel said the senior civil servant had been up all night partying. (Islands Business 29, 1/1/2003: 11)*
- c. *Oh, I love hockey **full speed**, man.*

*Full* is also used (adjectivally), in the common idiom *full speed* ‘a lot, wholeheartedly’ seen in the title of Sheree Lipton’s book *Fiji, I love you, full speed*.

#### 4.1.2. Ga

In Pure Fiji English, the Fijian intensifier *ga* (and its calque *just*), meaning ‘only, just, nevertheless, all the same, yet, but, however, but only, except’ etc., may also be used adverbially:

- (45) a. *All you allowed in the exam is one page-**ga**.*
- b. *She don’t want to watch-**ga**.*
- c. *Tom: Ah, we just choke [i.e. cadge] **ga**. (Thomas 1989: 8)*

The *ga* intensifier is:

- (46) a. *Hè, you-**ga** get away from there!*
- b. *Fella-**ga** no good, man. Just one thief.*
- c. *She told me and she said that she never want to, but you just force line [i.e. intimidate] her-**ga**.*

In addition, a redundant *just* often accompanies *ga*:

- (47) a. *Q: What do I do with this letter then?*  
      *A: You just fax-**ga**.*
- b. *Oh, I just stay home-**ga**, play sports, go play volleyball, like that, no.*
- c. *We just hang around-**ga**.*

#### 4.2. Prepositional collocations

Prepositional usage often differs from that of Standard English, although the pattern of variation is difficult to assess. Here are some examples:

- (48) a. *The influence of kava **in** these deliberation and decision is indeed mighty. (Letters to the Editor, Daily Post, 8/8/1994)*
- b. *With a multi-religious country such as ours we should be well versed **about** other religions as well. (Letters to the Editor, Fiji Times, 6/8/1994)*

- c. *SIR – I wish to express my appreciation **about** the male staff nurses at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital.* (Letters to the Editor, *Fiji Times*, 20/8/1994)
- d. *Drop completed coupon **to** box provided in all operations.*
- e. *“The vision is that youths [i.e. young people in general] will spend more time to contemplate **on** their life and also sign on later to be crew members,” he said.* (*Fiji Times*, 13/5/1998)

## 5. Syntactic and pragmatic features

### 5.1. Pronominal copying

A frequent type of pronominal copying occurs in basic Subject-Verb-Object clauses, where an appositional pronoun functions as a focus marker for the Subject noun phrase. This structure, better known as *left-dislocation*, occurs of course in a number of other languages (e.g. Chinese, colloquial French), including English. Indeed, the following examples from Fiji English could just as easily have been taken from a number of varieties of colloquial English:

- (49) a. *My dad **he** works for FEA* [Fiji Electricity Authority].  
 b. *Some [i.e. teachers] **they** treat us badly.*  
 c. *FM 96, **they** play plenty music.*

The following examples are more distinctive but this is because of lexical or other grammatical features rather than the pronominal copying per se:

- (50) a. *The grass-cutter, **it** making too much noise, sorry for that.*  
 b. *Sometimes, even your friend, **she**’ll try to crook you.*  
 c. *One teacher, Master Timoci, **fella** punched one boy, whose name Niku, because fella was laughing.*

We think that that pronominal copying may occur more frequently in Fiji English than in other colloquial varieties of English. This may be because it is reinforced by a similar structure in Fijian, which has a pronominal subject co-referent with the subject noun phrase, not only when this noun phrase is fronted but also when the sentence follows the more common Verb-Object-Subject order:

- (51)  
*e            musuka                            na        dovu        o            Tuimasi*  
 3sg subject ‘cut’ + trans. marker {-ka} def. art. ‘sugarcane’ proper art. ‘Tuimasi’  
 ‘Tuimasi cuts the sugarcane’

Kelly’s data (1975: 29) also includes pronominal copying, but she notes it is “never used before the {-ing} form of the verb, and is rarely used in the present

tense”, and adds that “[t]he vast majority of instances occur in the narration of past events, and the verb is most often in the preterite form.” However, the selection of examples above shows that this is not the case. Indeed, Tent’s data shows that pronominal copying occurs with most (if not all) tense/aspect combinations.

Pronominal copying also occurs in relative clauses which include a resumptive pronoun with the same referent as the relative pronoun (as in Fijian):

- (53) a. *You know the software that I left **it**...the box that I left **it** on your desk*  
 b. *Jan, vinaka vakalevu [i.e. thank you very much] for the dalo [i.e. taro] which you brought **it**.*  
 c. *There is another burst which we are still trying to locate **it**. (Fiji Times, 7/3/2003)*

## 5.2. Questions

In Pure Fiji English, all questions have the same word order as declarative sentences. Yes/no questions have a rising intonation contour which, as in many other varieties of colloquial English (as well as in Fijian and Fiji Hindi), indicates the interrogative nature of the sentence.

- (54) a. James: *The mailman come today?* (Thomas 1989: 36)  
 b. *You want me give him one empty [i.e. blank] disc?*

Here are examples of *wh*-questions:

- (55) a. Mereoni: *How I’m going to eat then?* (Thomas 1989: 9)  
 b. James: *Why not allowed to get a letter?* (Thomas 1989: 36)  
 c. *I ask her: “Why you not want to stay in Savusavu?”*

In Pure Fiji English *how come* is frequently used for reason questions instead of Standard English *why*. While this is also found in other colloquial varieties of English (particularly American English), it seems more common in Fiji English.

## 5.3. Directives

The structure of 1st and 2nd person directives in Pure Fiji English often includes a subject pronoun. As Kelly (1975: 23) notes, the hortative intention of the 1st person directive is made quite explicit from both the context and its accompanying intonation.

- (56) a. Margaret: *I haven’t cooked yet, that’s why I want **you call** Raymond so that he can go to the shop.* (Thomas 1989: 40)  
 b. Valerie: [...] *Come, come **we go and spy**.* (Thomas 1989: 43)

- c. **Us-two go** now!
- d. *Master always say like this: “**You not talk** in class!”*

#### 5.4. Negation

In Pure Fiji English, *never* is an emphatic negator, and the phrase *not even* is often used as a general sentence negator:

- (57) a. *“Lucky they **never** hurt anyone else in my family. We fought outside, four against one,” Mr [X] said. (The Daily Post, 23/4/1996)*  
 b. *Some of us **never** always speak English very fluently.*  
 c. Maika: *After his mother died, one day his brain snap.*  
 Teresa: **Not even.** *The way you say it, like his brain a string or what?*  
 (Thomas 1991: 157)

#### 5.5. Introducers

Expressions introducing direct quotations include *go/went/said like this* (Standard English *said*), as noted by Kelly (1975: 34) and Siegel (1991: 666). Some examples from Tent’s data are:

- (58) a. *Then I **say like this**: “Are you okay, or what?”*  
 b. *The teacher, he **go like this**: “What you boys doing here?”*

As in other colloquial varieties of English, *like* is also used as a general sentence introducer, as well as an indicator of a topic shift:

- (59) a. **Like**, *you a part-European, right?*  
 b. **Like**, *I have three sisters and four brothers.*

#### 5.6. Tags and fillers

The most common question tag in Fiji English is *èh* (calqued on Fijian), and others include *na* (calqued on Fiji Hindi), invariant *isn’t it* (particularly among Fiji Hindi speakers), and *or what*:

- (60) a. *Fiji Gold, mokusiga [i.e. is wasting time], **èh** – dead all the time.*  
 b. *Fella was drinking grog [kava] there, during class. But his teaching is set [great, good]. But the way fella treat us is no good, **èh**.*  
 c. *We gave him as much time as the others, **na**?*  
 d. *They don’t really have to do it, **isn’t it**?*  
 e. *Last week’s winners were the Chand family. They won a free weekend at the Regent Fiji. Is that styling it, **or what**?*

- f. Seini: [...] *The way Alipate came in here and gave her a hiding like this was his house or what!* (Thomas 1989: 26)
- g. Sereana: *Aisake, you mad or what, people are sleeping.* (Thomas 1991: 83)

The tag-like *like that/this* is often used as a filler:

- (61) a. *Like when you asking how much for that thing, or like that.*  
 b. *We just stay home-ga and play volleyball, like that, no?*  
 c. *And the bus services, like in the morning like that, thing will come after the other.*

### 5.7. Greeting and leave-taking routines

Fiji English has a number of distinctive greeting and leave-taking routines. Among the most common greetings are: *how's it?* and *how's the life?* The most distinctive is *where you going?* – often shortened to *where to?* – and is used as a greeting made in passing. This formula is probably calqued on the Fijian *o lai vei?*, but it has become common among the general population. The reply is a formulaic *this/that way* or *this/that side*, normally accompanied by an indication of direction, often with a head movement, sometimes by pointing.

Another greeting used in passing is *bye*. Although it is used by all Fiji English speakers, it is more commonly heard from Fijian native speakers as it is a calque on the Fijian *moce*, which means both ‘good-bye’ and a passing ‘hello’.

There are two common leave-taking formulae. The first is simply *okay*, which can both signal the end of a conversation and indicate the intention to leave (‘I’m going now/I have to go now’). The second is *to take the lead* and is normally used when the speaker is heading for a place where the addressee is also expected to go later. This is also calqued on a Fijian formula with the verb *liu* ‘to lead; to go on ahead’. The expression (e.g. *I’ll take the lead/I’m taking the lead*) is used mostly, but not exclusively, by native speakers of Fijian.

## 6. Conclusion

The distribution of these and other grammatical features across the Fiji English lects and speech communities has yet to be established. It is often unclear whether a feature is common to all (or even most) speakers of Fiji English. For instance, the verbs *to on/off* are probably more common than the use of the plural marker *gang*, but whether one can say that the latter is Pure Fiji English whilst the former is Modified Fiji English is still uncertain. Similarly, absence of definite articles and the invariant tag *isn't it?* seem more prevalent among native speakers of Fiji

Hindi, while the use of *us-two* and the *èh* tag are more common among native speakers of Fijian. Yet some features which can be traced to one of the substratum languages have spread to the general population. A finer analysis would need to be based on a large-scale empirical study embracing the entire continuum. In the meantime, any conclusions would be premature.

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Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# **Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English (Pitkern Norfolk): morphology and syntax**

Peter Mühlhäusler

## **1. Introduction**

Details on the history and general nature of the languages have already been given in the chapter on phonetics and phonology (Ingram and Mühlhäusler, other volume) and the reader is referred to these. The reader is reminded again that there is considerable disagreement among the Norfolk islanders as to the spelling system of the language. I have not normalized any of the spellings of the written sources used. As a consequence, the spelling in examples may be different from that given in the text.

The reader is reminded that Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English is not a well-known variety and that the range of linguistic data from which we can make judgments has been quite narrow. Formal interviews and recitation of stories by outsiders or non-speakers have been predominant (in the studies of, for example, Flint [1961], Harrison [1972] and Buffett, who is a native speaker, from the 1980s to the present), and most data collections tend to be heavily focused on decontextualized samples and translations from English. I am in the process of obtaining more natural speech samples, but given the esoteric nature of the language and the shame still associated with it, this is not a straightforward matter, apart from the time it takes to compile a representative sample single handedly. As a consequence, representative information about a number of grammatical and discourse features is not available. The reader is also reminded that the data presented have come from the Norfolk Island variety only (known as Norfuk) as ongoing political problems on Pitcairn Island have made fieldwork there impracticable.

## **2. Morphology**

Norfuk shares the characteristic of many creoles, koinés and mixed languages of not having a great deal of inflectional or derivational morphology: typologically it combines a low level of synthesis with a low level of fusion. Over the years some morphological features have been borrowed from acrolectal (formal or near-Standard) English and analogical extensions of the English model are in evidence.

## 2.1. Inflectional morphology

Nouns are generally not inflected for number, gender or case, as in *wan salan* ‘one person’, *plenti salan* ‘many people’. In more acrolectal speech the English possessive ‘s and the plural -s are encountered though:

- (1) *All Norfolk h 'yu dem two, scream a haed orf right up Peter Buffett's en breech orf a horse.*  
 ‘All Norfolk heard those two screaming their heads off all the way up to Peter Buffett’s [where they] leapt off their horses.’

The emergence of plural marking appears to follow an animacy scale. Words referring to humans frequently take the plural -s. I have observed the same phenomenon in Tok Pisin (Mühlhäusler 1981).

- (2) a. *strienjas*  
 ‘strangers’  
 b. *ijalas*  
 ‘overbearing youngsters’  
 c. *as eyulla lettle screppers a 'wae*  
 ‘as the young striplings awakened’ (Christian 1986)  
 d. *One a dem pigs bit his ear clearn off.*  
 ‘One of the pigs bit his ear right off.’ (Marrington 1981: 3)

A number of Norfolk nouns always appear as English plurals, but are usually neutral with respect to number, including *geese* ‘goose, geese’, *grieps* ‘grape, grapes’, *biens* ‘bean, beans’, and *mais* ‘mouse, mice’.

Possessive -s in Norfolk can be attached to pronouns to create attributive possessive pronouns such as: singular second *yus* ‘your’; singular third male *his*; dual 1+2 *himiis* ‘belonging to you and me’; dual 2+2 *yutuus* ‘belonging to the two of you’; dual 3+3 *demtuus* ‘belonging to the two of them’; plural second *yorlis* ‘belonging to you guys’; and plural third, *dems* ‘belonging to them’.

The -s ending appears to have been formed analogically from nouns with possible reinforcement by English *he – his*; the pattern is not fully regular but exhibits some suppletion (e.g. *her* instead of *his*).

With nouns, possession is signaled in two ways; by means of the preposition *for* (see section 3.7.) and morphologically by adding an -s to the form or noun phrase:

- (3) a. *Tommy Snar was Snar Buffett's son.*  
 b. *Dad's voice cried out.* (Buffett 1999)

A number of suffixes occur with verbs and adjectives including the -en continuous marker (see section 3.1. on aspect), and the affixes signalling stages of comparison:



- (4) *agli – aglia – aglies*  
 ‘ugly, uglier, ugliest’

These can also be added to polysyllabic adjectives, including reduplicated ones:

- (5) *meyameya – meyameyara – meyameyares*  
 ‘withered, more withered, most withered’

Predicative adjectives are followed by *-en* or *-an*, sometimes linked to the base adjectival form by an intrusive segment *-w-* or *-y-*. The conditioning factors are not fully understood and there is speaker variation.

- (6) a. *hi es piyaalian*  
 ‘he is tiny’  
 b. *a horse is roughen*  
 ‘the horse is rough’  
 c. *shi se sleprewan*  
 ‘she is slippery, untrustworthy’

## 2.2. Word formation

For new words Norfuk relies heavily on borrowing from English and its derivational (word-formation) morphology appears to be of limited productivity. The various processes employed to form new words overlap, but are not a subset of, those found in English. They include:

Derivation by zero (conversion, multifunctionality): The lexical item *morga* can mean ‘thin person’ (N), ‘thin’ (ADJ), ‘to make thin’ (V) and ‘daintily’ (ADV) (Buffett 1999: 72). The extent of and constraints on zero derivation in Norfuk remains to be explored, but my own observations suggest that this is one way of making a relatively small lexicon go a long way.

Compounding: No systematic analysis of Norfuk compounding is available. Earlier suggestions that it was uncommon (e.g. Gleißner 1997: 57) reflect the absence of a comprehensive dictionary. Eira, Magdalena and Mühlhäusler (2002) have listed many compounds that do not appear in earlier work including compounds of the endocentric type, i.e. the grammatical (sub)category of the compound is identical with that of the head word:

- (7) N + ADJ  
*baleful*  
 ‘having overeaten’
- (8) N + N  
 a. *bacca stuff*  
 ‘wild tobacco plant’

- b. *baket fish*  
'type of red cod'
- c. *goesbad*  
'ghostbird, petrel'

- (9) ADJ + N  
*big worta*  
'open sea'

Norfolk also has exocentric compounds, where no single part of the compound can be identified as the head word. Examples include:

- (10) N + N  
*faentail*  
'kind of bird, fantail'

- (11) ADJ + N  
*Big Jack*  
'to weep' (in memory of Jack Evans who tended to be weepy)

Whereas Norfolk has borrowed many compounds from English, when it comes to finding names for endemic life forms, compounding is usually employed (cf. Mühlhäusler 2002b). Two examples are particularly noteworthy; compounds with the lexical base 'bastard' in initial position to indicate a less useful or uncultivated variety as in:

- (12) a. *bastard aienwood*  
'sharkwood tree'  
b. *bastard oek*  
'kind of oak tree'  
c. *bastard taala*  
'non edible taro'

The other example worth special mention are compounds beginning with *hoem* 'home' signalling something of Pitcairn origin as in:

- (13) a. *hoem naenwi*  
'dreamfish'  
b. *hoem oefi*  
'Pitcairn variety of the oefi fish'

Reduplication: Mühlhäusler (2003) has provided a detailed analysis of reduplicated forms in Norfolk: most of these are borrowed from Tahitian or are the result of phonological simplification. Productive reduplication is not greatly in evidence, except perhaps in cases such as:

- (14) a. *break break*  
       ‘broken into many pieces’  
       b. *boney boney*  
       ‘full of bones’  
       c. *bitey bitey*  
       ‘kind of biting insect’

Acronyms: Being used mainly as a spoken language, Norfolk does not have acronyms other than those borrowed from English, an exception being the word *lap* for a minimalist from ‘little as possible’.

### 3. Syntax of the Norfolk variety of Pitkern/Norfolk

Norfolk does not have agreement between nouns and verbs, or any other morpho-syntactic agreement phenomena. The basic word order of Norfolk is SVO, just as in English and most creole languages. There are, however, many subtle differences between Norfolk and English, for instance in the placement of the indirect object. Because Norfolk has tended to be described as a dialect of English these have tended to escape earlier observers. There is a great need for detailed analysis of a greater range of texts.

#### 3.1. Tense, modality and aspect (TMA)

TMA has been a diagnostic feature of creole languages ever since Bickerton (1981: 58) postulated his hypothesis of a biological blueprint for human language. Formally, prototypical creoles express TMA by preverbal free morphemes.

Tense: In creoles tense is usually not developed and instead, a distinction between punctual and non-punctual and anterior and non-anterior is encountered. The conventional grammars of Norfolk postulate a tense system, but on closer inspection, there may be grounds for postulating a creole system instead. Gleißner (1997: 61–62) notes that:

Tense in Norfolk is apparently not seen with respect to the moment of utterance, but in relation to the time of the main event that is talked about. In order to express that an event took place prior or later with respect to the time frame – or will take place in the future, if the time frame refers to the moment of speaking, particles are made use of. Like all verbal markers of Norfolk tense markers precede the verb.

In any event, the indication of tense in Norfolk is optional. Past tense is indicated either by a particle *se* from English *has*, as in *hi se miekaut* ‘he has managed’. A second marker of past tense is *bin* which typically refers to past continuous (non-punctual) actions, as in *hi bin aut iin a boet* ‘he has been out in a boat’. With *se*,

note that the infinitive verb form, rather than the past participle, is used. There is an urgent need for an in-depth analysis of tense in Norfuk.

Aspect: The suffix *-en* or *-in*, signalling continuous action, is by far the most common device but *el* (< *able*) is also used for this purpose.

(15) *all dem Real Estate maeken dem's pretty penny* (Norfolk Islander  
September 2000)

(16) *yu tuhituhien*  
'you are swearing' (Buffett 1999)

(17) *all ell doo daan goode fe sullan*  
'they are continually doing good things for people'

Habitual action is marked by the auxiliary *yuus* which signals habitual actions in past or present.

(18) *ai yuus a' tek a' dena d'werk*  
'I [usually] take my lunch to work' (Buffett 1999)

Completed actions are expressed by a preverbal marker *dana* (< *done*) with or without preceding /s/. This construction is found in a number of English Creoles (but not St. Kitts) and in Scottish English (cf. also Kortmann 2004: 252–253) and thus would appear to reflect the influence of the mutineer William McCoy.

(19) *when I dana werk I hurry hom*  
'when I had finished work I hurried home'

Modality: Modality in Norfuk is expressed in various parts of grammar and the choice of the language itself can indicate modality. Traditionally (Buffett 1999: 51), modality is described as being expressed by the preverbal modal auxiliaries *mait*, *orta*, *mas*, or adverbials as *baeta*, *should*, *suuna*, or *rather*.

### 3.2. The copula

The uninflected forms *se(r)*, *s'*, *es* and *is* are all used as equivalents to English forms of *be*, with *se* also overlapping with English *has*. In addition, zero is found frequently where a copula is obligatory in English. As yet no comprehensive account of this aspect of grammar is available. It would require a detailed analysis of the Tahitian substratum, St. Kitts Creole, Melanesian Pidgin English, and English dialectology to provide explanations for the complexities here. The following rough generalization can be made:

1. equative sentences usually require the copula *es*:

(20) *yu es ners*  
'you are a nurse'

2. adjectives frequently are introduced by zero:

(21) *letel salan disdietis daa semiswiah*  
 ‘children these days are so peculiar’ (Flint data)

3. *se(r)* introduces something that results from a previous occurrence, it has perfective meaning:

(22) *ai se fatu*  
 ‘I am exhausted’

(23) *dem plahn is good’un when ser ripe*  
 ‘the bananas are delicious when they are ripe’

### 3.3. Negation

The main difference between acrolectal English and Norfuk is the absence of *do*-support in general negation. Instead the negators *noe*, *nort* or *naewa* (emphatic negator) appear directly before the verb phrase, as in:

(24) *If you no pahahait it good, it a can do.*  
 ‘If you do not pound it well enough it just won’t do.’

(25) *Bligh en eighteen dem one nawa mutiny.*  
 ‘Bligh and eighteen who did definitely not mutiny.’ (Christian 1986)

Negative imperatives are expressed by *duu* or *dan* (both probably derived from English *don’t*).

(26) *du miek agli*  
 ‘don’t pull a face’ (Buffett 1999)

Then there is a number of special negative words, including *ent* (‘is/are/am not’) and *kaa* or *kar* ‘cannot’ as in (27) and (28). The past tense *cried* in (27) illustrates code shifting to English.

(27) *Ent me, dar youngest boy cried out.*  
 ‘It wasn’t me, the youngest boy shouted.’

(28) *He kar dunna laugh.*  
 ‘He couldn’t help but laugh.’ (Harrison 1972)

### 3.4. Relativization

Norfuk does not employ relative pronouns. Restrictive relative clauses are simply inserted after the noun, as in:

- (29) *De es thing in everebohdi lew iin Australia kam fram Norfolk Island.*  
 ‘This is something with everybody from Norfolk who lives in Australia.’  
 (Norfolk Islander May 2001)
- (30) *Tell all ucklun de thing yuu bin think es ‘jes hawen fun.*  
 ‘Tell all of us [islanders] what you meant by “just having fun”.’ (Norfolk  
 Islander May 2001)

In acrolectal varieties, English relative pronouns are sometimes used:

- (31) *to all yorlye who have been so kind*  
 ‘To all of you who have been so kind’ (Norfolk Islander June 2001)

Relative clauses dealing with time or location are typically introduced by *taim/when* ‘when’, *wieh* ‘where’ or *said/side* ‘where’:

- (32) *dem use a go over Rawson Hall dana side Brooky use a play da piano*  
 ‘they are (or were) used to going over to Rawson Hall to there where  
 Brooky [habitually] plays the piano’ (Norfolk Islander January 2001)
- (33) *dae es jess something me and Willie like a larn when wi grow up in Cascade*  
 ‘that is just something Willie and I liked to learn when we grew up in  
 Cascade’ (Norfolk Islander January 2001)
- (34) *ai si said yu kat*  
 ‘show me where you cut yourself’ (literally ‘may I see’)

### 3.5. Complex sentences

Coordination of sentences differs from English only in the strong tendency to omit the conjunction *en* ‘and’. The use of the other two conjunctions *bat* ‘but’ and *ala* ‘or’ is as in English.

A common type of subordination is complementation. The equivalents in Norfolk of the English complementizer *that* are zero or *fe*, as in (35) and (36):

- (35) *Es time Ø we tek notice of dem old sullen.*  
 ‘It is time that we take notice of the old people.’ (Norfolk Islander  
 November 2002)
- (36) *seed se ready jes fe pick*  
 ‘the seeds were ready to be picked’ (Buffett 1999)

There also are a large number of other complementizers to embed clauses. Most of them are used as in acrolectal English, including *anless* ‘unless’, *orlthoe* ‘although’, *wail* ‘while’, *bifor* ‘before’, *kos* ‘because’. But a number of different ones are noted: *dumain* ‘even if’, *spoesen*, *ifen*, *siemtaim* ‘at the time when’, *lorng as*

‘as long as’, *semeswieh* ‘just like’. The noun *said* ‘place, side’ is often used in the sense of ‘because’, as in (37):

- (37) *mied hi klaay iise es said dem yuus’roh’nek*  
 ‘the reason he cries easily is because they pamper him too much’ [literally:  
 ‘treat him like a rotten egg’] (Buffett 1999)

Subordination (particularly non-finite) is often not signalled by any overt markers. Consider (38):

- (38) *Bussen hii f pulloo, one day orf ar Cord, he usen his shet-knife, d pride of his life.*  
 ‘(When he was) crushing periwinkles for bait one day off the Cord, he was using his sheath-knife, the pride of his life.’ (Christian 1986)

### 3.6. Noun phrase structure

The basic NP is a noun without any modifiers, as in:

- (39) *surf se nehse*  
 ‘the sea is rough’

Prenominal modifiers can be added, usually in the order: Determiner, Possessive Pronoun, Number, Adjective, Noun:

- (40) *dies tuu oel giel*  
 ‘these two old women’

- (41) *mais tuu black faul*  
 ‘my two black hens’

Norfolk determiners are unstable and highly variable as an older system involving a specific-non specific distinction interacts with the English acrolectal definite-indefinite distinction. No adjectival postmodifiers occur in Norfolk, but nominal possession is signalled by means of the preposition *fe, f*’ as in:

- (42) *aa kau fe mais bradhas*  
 ‘that cow of my brother’

- (43) *ar pine fer Robinsons*  
 ‘Robinson’s pine’ [a placename]

Note the use of the definite article *ar* in (43).

### 3.7. Pronominal systems

The pronominal system of Norfolk is more complex than that of English. It has singular, plural and dual, as well as an inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first

person, and a special pronoun *aklan* (*uklun*, *ucklan*) which expresses belonging to the Pitcairner descendant community. The possessive forms are either expressed by adding *-s* or by special forms.

The basic paradigm looks as follows:

Table 1. Norfuk personal and possessive pronouns

Subject	Object	Possessive
<i>Singular:</i>		
Ai	mii	mais
Yu	yuu	yus
hi	hem	his
shi	her	her
–	<i>et</i>	–
<i>Dual:</i>		
himii	himii	himiis
miihem	miihem	auwas
miiher	miiher	auwas
yutuu	yutuu	yutuus
demtuu	demtuu	demtuous
<i>Plural:</i>		
wi	aklan	aklan
yorlyi	yorlyi	yorlyis
dem	dem	dems

#### 4. Some research interests

I am currently working on a social history of the languages of Norfolk Island in an attempt to document the interplay between acrolectal varieties of English, contact with dialects of English during the days of the Melanesian Mission (cf. also Mühlhäusler 2002a), the Mota language of the Melanesian Mission which had its headquarters on Norfolk from 1867 to 1920, the Pidgin English spoken by Melanesian students and in the whaling industry, and the role of educational policies in changing the linguistic ecology of Norfolk Island.

Both Pitcairn and Norfolk were uninhabited when the Pitcairners arrived and an important question is how the new arrivals named places, flora and fauna. I have just completed a paper on place names, drawing attention to the dual naming system on Norfolk, where a large number of Norfolk names are used side by



side the official Australian ones. It is remarkable that Pitcairn place names did not travel to Norfolk but that a new system developed there. Further, many place names recall individual islanders or episodes in their lives. For instance *Ar side for Beras* was named after the famous spot of the local fisherman with the nickname "Bera", *Daarneke* refers to a sharp projection rock at a good fishing spot, *Ar side for Honey's* remembers the drowning of Honey Quintal, *Simon's Water* is a non-permanent creek on a property owned by Simon.

Spatial orientation on Norfolk Island appears to follow a system of absolute reference points with two main axes (a) away from main centre and (b) from coast upwards: *Down-A-Town* is *Kingston* and *Up-in-a-Stick* 'up in the woods' is located in *Selwyn Pine Road*, in the remote forested part of the north coast. *Kingston* would also seem to be a reference point for other names. Locations far away from *Kingston* bear names such as *Out ar Mission* 'out on the mission' and *Out ar Station* 'the remote parts on the West Coast where the cable station is located'. The location of *Out Yenna* 'out yonder' is located near *Duncombe Bay*. *Outa Moo-o Stone* is located in the remote North.

The natural kinds that the first settlers encountered on both islands were to a very significant extent unique, endemic species. Information on how they got named provides important evidence for the debate whether names reflect innate cognitive studies or utilitarian factors. The evidence from both islands suggests that the latter is the case, and that many species that have no cultural use remain unnamed, ignored and often mismanaged. An interesting example is the expression *rokfish* 'any fish that can be caught when fishing from a coastal rock'. Ecological management on both islands has been little short of disastrous, and the inability of the new arrivals to talk about their environment may have played a role in this environmental decline (Mühlhäusler 1996). I am in the process of collecting more ethnobotanical information.

Both Pitkern and Norfuk are endangered languages and their speakers have become concerned about declining competence among the younger generation. On Norfolk Island I have been asked to work on a long-term plan to reverse language shift. A draft proposal currently being discussed has been submitted (Mühlhäusler 2002b). Part of the revival process is a syllabus for Norfuk Language which has been designed by Suzanne Evans during 2002 as part of her graduate studies at the University of Adelaide, and it is hoped that it will be implemented from 2004. Working with small languages of necessity is action research and a considerable part of my fieldwork is given to working on matters of concern to the community.

The Pitcairn/Norfuk language has often been labelled a laboratory test case for linguists, but in comparison to its potential very little actual work has been done to date. My own long-term goal is to find an explanation for the still mysterious emergence of the Pitcairn/Norfuk language on Pitcairn Island. In order to do this, it is essential to have a thorough knowledge of the sociohistorical factors that have

driven this process and to employ up-to-date linguistic methods. Past researchers have concentrated on the question of English dialect influence and on the operations of a biological blueprint of creole features (Bickerton 1981). Neither the Tahitian influence nor borrowing from St. Kitts Creole has been given much attention. A main obstacle is the patchy nature of past records and the continuing variability in the language.

Part of the process of making Norfolk a language of education is the provision of teaching materials. An exhaustive dictionary of Norfolk has been prepared at the University of Adelaide (Eira, Magdalena and Mühlhäusler 2002). An outstanding problem is the question of the orthography for the language. The community remains divided as to whether to accept Buffett's proposal (1995, 1999), Nobbs Palmer's orthography (1992), or to develop another system. Because of the potential for conflict, I have judged it as opportune not to get involved in the discussions. Orthographic systems are usually determined by a large number of sociopolitical factors rather than linguistic considerations.

## 5. Conclusions

Reducing an unfocused unwritten language such as Norfolk to a linguistic grammar is not an easy task and potentially a very dangerous one for the small community that speaks it. Language written down can exercise normative pressure and restrict the healthy heterogeneity of language and use of language on Norfolk Island. Once standardized the language will be of far less interest to the linguistic profession and to its speakers. As things stand there is still a great deal of work, not just in the description of this language but also in comparing it to other English Polynesian contact varieties such as Palmerston English, Bonin English or Hawaiian Pidgin.

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# **Africa, South and Southeast Asia**

Rajend Mesthrie (ed.)



# Introduction: varieties of English in Africa and South and Southeast Asia

Rajend Mesthrie

## 1. Historical spread and geographical coverage

The presence of English (and other European languages) in Africa and South and Southeast Asia (henceforth *Africa-Asia*) is due to several historical events: sporadic and subsequently sustained trade, the introduction of Christianity, slavery, formal British colonisation, and influence from the U.S. (in places like Liberia and the Philippines). Furthermore, after colonisation independent “new nations” were faced with few options but to adopt English as a working language of government, administration and higher education. These contacts have seen the development of several types of English:

*ENL* (English as a Native language), spoken by British settlers and/or their descendants, as in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Hong Kong etc. (The variety may be adopted by other groups within a territory as well).

*ESL* (English as a Second Language), spoken in territories like India and Nigeria, where access to English was sufficient to produce a stable second language (L2) used in formal domains like education and government. The ESL is also used for internal communication within the territory, especially as a lingua franca amongst educated speakers who do not share the same mother tongue.

*Pidgin English*, a variety which arises outside of the educational system and is only partly derived from English, especially in its lexicon; though structurally it cannot really be considered an ‘adoption’ of English syntax. An example would be Pidgin English in Cameroon. A pidgin shows equally significant influence from both local languages and common or ‘universal’ processes of simplification and creation of grammatical structure. Some pidgins may turn into a creole (spoken as a first language). In Africa and Asia this is not common, since speakers frequently retain their home and community languages. Some scholars are of the opinion that West African varieties of pidgin have expanded into a creole without necessarily becoming a first language.

These three types are described in the Africa-Asia section of this Handbook. A fourth type *EFL* (English as a Foreign Language) is not considered, since it arises typically for international communication amongst a few bilingual people competent in English in a territory that had not come under the direct influence of British settlement and colonial administration. In such a situation English is learnt in the education system as a “foreign language”, but is not used as a medium of instruction. This is truer of some territories than others: China is clearly an EFL country;

Eritrea less so, in terms of the greater use of English by fluent bilinguals in the domain of education.

British “Protectorates” like Lesotho and Egypt, which were subject to British influence without being formally colonised, also form an intermediate category somewhere between ESL and EFL. It would not be surprising if the current era of globalisation established English more firmly in EFL territories, producing more focussed varieties which could one day be studied in terms of the concepts and categories emphasised in ESL studies.

Finally, there are what I term “language shift Englishes” – varieties which started as ESLs, but which stabilise as an L1. They then develop casual registers often absent from ESLs (since a local language fulfils ‘vernacular’ functions). However, they retain a great many L2 features as well. Amongst the varieties of note here are Indian South African English and, elsewhere, Irish English.

Africa-Asia is distinguishable from the remaining regions covered in this Handbook by the preponderance of ESL varieties, rather than the L1 English which dominates in the U.K., the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In other words, indigenous African and Asian languages have survived the impact of colonisation better than their counterparts elsewhere.

Though English is seen as an important resource for international communication as well as for internal “High” functions (in formal domains like education and government), its hegemony in Africa-Asia is not complete. There are other languages of high status which may function as regional *lingua francas*, for example Swahili in East Africa, Hindi in North India and Malay in Singapore and Malaysia.

At the lower end of the social and educational spectrum it is noteworthy that Pidgin English is spreading rapidly in West Africa. According to Faraclas (this Handbook), Nigerian Pidgin is now the most widely spoken language in Nigeria, with well over half the population being able to converse in it.

Africa’s contacts with English pre-date those of the U.S. and the Caribbean. The earliest contacts were in the 1530s (Spencer 1971: 8), making early Modern English, with accents slightly older than Shakespeare’s, the initial (if sporadic) input. In Asia the initial contacts with English go back to 1600 when Queen Elizabeth I granted a charter to the merchants of London who formed the East India Company.

The full force of English in Africa-Asia was not felt until formal colonisation in the nineteenth century (for example Singapore in 1819, India in 1858, Nigeria 1884, Kenya 1886). A representative selection of the varieties spoken in these territories is given in this Handbook. The geographical coverage is that of West Africa, East Africa, South Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. In addition we have taken on board the South Atlantic island of St. Helena, whose nearest mainland port is Cape Town.



## 2. Second language acquisition

Since the focus in the Africa-Asia section is mainly on ESLs, the dialectological approach has to be supplemented by insights from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory. No ESL variety is uniform; rather it exists as a continuum of varying features, styles and abilities. The terms *basilect*, *mesolect* and *acrolect* are borrowed from Creole studies, where they denote first language varieties on a continuum. The terms *basilang*, *mesolang* and *acrolang* are sometimes used in connection with interlanguage studies, denoting the individual's level of competence in the L2, rather than a relatively focussed group norm (a newcomer in the L1 English metropolis might learn English as a L2 without being part of a group of L2 learners).

Most writers in *New English* studies adopt the Creole-based terms, without serious misunderstandings. However, in principle, there is a need to distinguish between basilect and basilang, because there is a difference between the fluent norms of a basilect and the rudimentary knowledge of an L2 in a basilang. Since the ESL varieties described in this Handbook are relatively focused and stable the labels basilect, mesolect, acrolect will continue to be used.

At one end of the New English continuum are varieties characteristic of beginning L2 learners or learners who have fossilised at an early stage and evince no need or desire to progress further in their interlanguage variety (basilectal speakers). If they are just beginning an acquaintance with the target language, they are strictly speaking basilang speakers. At the other end are speakers who, by virtue of their education, motivation, life-styles and contacts with L1 and educated L2 speakers of English may well become so fluent as to be near-native (or acrolectal) speakers of English.

Situated between these endpoints is the vast majority of ESL users, who speak fluently but whose norms deviate significantly from those of L1 speakers as well as acrolectal ESL speakers. These are the mesolectal speakers, whose norms are the ones most writers in this section have chosen to focus on, since they represent a kind of average value of the ESL. They are not as strongly denigrated as more basilang varieties might be in terms of intelligibility and fluency. They also pose fewer problems about the reliability of data, since a basilang speaker's command might not be fluent enough to decide what norms underlie his or her speech.

Mesolectal ESL varieties display a degree of levelling of the target language (Standard English) in for example tense forms, prepositions, word order and so on. Moreover, many of these features are carried over into the (unedited) written language of individuals. Finally, mesolectal varieties are more representative of the local ethos than acrolectal varieties. The latter are sometimes stigmatised as being affected or representing outside norms.

Phrases like "speaking through the nose" in Nigeria and Zimbabwe or *been tos* ('people who have been abroad') in India and Nigeria reflect this disaffection on

the part of the general populace of the ESL acrolectal elite who might stray too close to the norms of Received Pronunciation (RP). Just as stigmatised is what is described in Ghanaian English terminology as *LAF*A ('Locally Acquired Foreign Accent') – see Huber's article on Ghanaian English Phonology in this Handbook.

The provisos mentioned by other editors in their introductions regarding the nature of dialectal description also hold for the present area. Where an item is described as a feature, it is not claimed to be unique to the variety concerned. Nor is it necessarily the only variant within the ESL being described. The influence of the standard in formal communication makes it likely that the equivalent standard feature is also in use (especially in syntax), and may even be more commonly employed than the item described as a feature.

Several concepts from Second Language Acquisition Studies are an essential part of New English studies, especially *input*, *Foreigner Talk* and *Teacher Talk*, *overgeneralization*, *analogy* and *transfer*. The robustness of the substrate languages in Africa and Asia makes the likelihood of their influence on ESL very great. Indeed, many researchers take substrate influence to be axiomatic in phonology and only slightly less so in syntax, pragmatics and lexis.

For syntax, however, there is reason to be cautious. In some areas it is possible that what is popularly believed to be interference, might be a survival from a non-standard dialect of British English or even a survival of a form that was once standard but was later jettisoned in the history of Standard English (see for example McCormick's account of Cape Flats English in this Handbook). This issue will be discussed in more detail in my synopsis at the end of the Handbook

Many contributors use RP and Standard British English as points of comparison. However, it is important to keep in mind that this is rather a matter of convenience and that RP and Standard British English function as a kind of metalanguage in that respect. RP, especially, would have been, and continues to be, rather remote from the experiences of ESL learners. Especially for the earliest periods in which English was introduced to what were to become the colonies, several non-standard varieties were part of the initial input.

The earliest teachers and providers of input were missionaries (frequently EFL users themselves), sailors, soldiers, hunters, tradesmen, divers and so forth. Teachers with certificates arrived on the scene later. The notion of a target language then should not be construed too literally: more often it was a varied, vexatious and moving target (see Mesthrie 2003).

It is necessary to tackle the prejudice against New Englishes, sometimes evident amongst their own speakers. Although prescriptive-minded critics would prefer to see many of the features identified in this section as errors to be eradicated, their presence must be seen within a broader context. An ESL exists within a local "linguistic ecology". It must therefore become referentially adequate to describe local topography, fauna, customs and so forth. It also has to blend in with the local linguistic ecology by being receptive to favoured turns of phrase, structural pos-

sibilities and habits of pronunciation. That is, for English to function “normally” in a country like India, it has to become Indian – a fact that the work of Kachru (e.g. 1983) constantly reminds us of.

### **3. Resources**

It is only recently that the study of ESLs has come to be seen as a productive sociolinguistic enterprise. Studies of individual varieties have often been based on written sources, both of published writers and of students’ writings at school and university. Convenient though this means of accessing data is, for psycholinguistic veracity it is preferable to focus on the spoken word. Most authors in the Africa-Asia section of this Handbook have based their descriptions on speech samples or a combination of written (especially when summarising previous research) and spoken data. Corpus Linguistics is beginning to make its presence felt in this area. The most influential corpora are the ICE Corpora (*International Corpus of English*) originating at the University of London.

The ICE corpora in East Africa under the directorship of Josef Schmieid and in South Africa under Chris Jeffery have yielded significant data and analyses. Schmieid (this Handbook) describes the potential of the *World Wide Web* in gathering informal written data in the East African context. In India, the Kolhapur corpus is based on written Indian English. Other smaller-scale corpora are mentioned by individual authors.

### **4. The chapters on phonology**

Gut’s chapter deals with the phonological features of L2 English in Nigeria. In such a vast territory with about 500 languages, it is likely that several Englishes coexist: Gut summarizes her own research as well as that of others according to region and the major regional languages – Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. She also summarizes her important investigations into suprasegmental phonology, with the analysis of tone being a major challenge for any student of English in Africa. Elugbe’s article focuses on Pidgin English in Nigeria, one of the fastest growing languages in West Africa. This study offers the opportunity of examining whether the same features of L2 phonology of Nigerian English co-exist in the pidgin, including features of stress and tone. Huber describes the phonology of Ghanaian English, affording opportunities of comparing features of English in a country which prides itself on its education system and in the teaching of English with that of other West African varieties. Huber contributes a second chapter on Pidgin English in Ghana. This chapter again shows the overlap between pidgin and L2 English phonology in West Africa. Singler’s article on Liberian Settler English phonology introduces

the sound system of a variety whose origins lie in the speech of slaves who were returned from the American South in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to found the state of Liberia. Together with Krio, Liberian Settler English is important for its influence on pidgins that developed independently in West Africa. It is also important for historical studies of African American English, since the two varieties are so closely linked. The last two contributions on West Africa are Bobda's comprehensive examination of Cameroon English phonology and Menang's account of the phonology of Kamtok, the name he prefers for Cameroon Pidgin English. His focus is on the reductions to the English vowel system evident in the pidgin.

East Africa is represented by the article by Schmied, which focuses on the similarities between the English varieties spoken in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. South Africa presents special challenges to the descriptive linguist, since several types of English are encountered: ENL, ESL and language-shift varieties. The policy of apartheid created relatively rigid boundaries around people, their languages and dialects. It was accordingly felt that a description of the four major varieties according to ethnicity was preferable to any other forms of segmentation.

Bowerman describes White South Africa English, tracing its roots in Southern British dialects and describing subsequent influences arising either spontaneously or out of contact with Afrikaans. He also briefly points to its relation with other Southern Hemisphere Englishes in Australia and New Zealand. Van Rooy outlines the main phonological features of Black South African English, now a major player in post-apartheid broadcasting, business etc. The article affords significant grounds of comparison with other varieties of English in Africa. Mesthrie provides a description of the phonology of Indian South African English, which had previously been studied mainly for its syntax. Finn provides a detailed description of the phonology of Cape Flats English, the variety spoken by people formerly classified "coloured" in Cape Town and its environs. His paper details the balance between (a) (British and South African) English dialect features, (b) second language interlanguage forms adapted, rather than deriving directly, from English-Afrikaans bilingualism and (c) some spontaneous innovations in the variety.

Wilson provides an overview of the phonology of St Helena English, a variety showing links to British dialects as well as to English-based Creoles.

Gargesh provides an overview of the phonology of Indian English, stressing that it has major regional varieties, especially in the North and South, corresponding to the respective Indic and Dravidian phonological systems. Mahboob and Ahmar describe Pakistani English, which shares many features with the northern varieties of Indian English.

Ahmar's contribution is followed by three articles on Southeast Asian varieties. Lionel Wee describes the phonology of Singaporean English, while Baskaran covers Malaysian English, which has previously been linked with Singapore English on the basis of their common socio-political history. Tayo describes the phonology

of Philippines English, which is targeted towards American rather than British English, the only such L2 (non-creole) variety in Africa-Asia.

## **5. The chapters on morphology and syntax**

Each article in the Africa-Asia phonology section has a counterpart in the morphology and syntax section, except for the Philippines. In addition there is an article on Butler English morphology and syntax, for which no corresponding account of the phonology exists. It would appear that more research is being done on the morphology and syntax of New Englishes than on the phonology.

Alo and Mesthrie summarise the existing research on Nigerian English, showing how it is fairly typical of African English (or more properly, sub-Saharan English). Faraclas offers a detailed overview of Nigerian Pidgin English, focussing to a large extent on its tense-aspect-modality system.

Huber and Dako examine educated Ghanaian English, which has much in common with other West African varieties, though there are noteworthy differences in the area of the ordering of subordinate clauses of time and related constructions.

In his chapter on Ghanaian Pidgin English morphology and syntax, Huber argues that in some respects this variety appears to be a simplified version of other pidgins in the West African area, for example Nigerian Pidgin.

Singler's chapter on Liberian Settler English describes the way in which this variety has retained older features of African American English, and can therefore be used to contribute significantly to the current debate on the origins of African American English. He also details the subsequent influence of local (non-Creole) varieties of English upon Liberian Settler English.

Mbagwana contributes an engaging account of the morphology and syntax of Cameroon English. Whilst a few features (e.g. invariant tags in tag questions) can be considered "garden variety" African English (and New English) structures, a number of the features he describes are not (e.g. an apparent predilection for *wh*-words to be retained in situ in main and subordinate clauses.) The reasons for this innovativeness in the Cameroon have still to be ascertained. Ayafor describes the morphology and syntax of Kamtok, the pidgin English of Cameroon. Unlike its ESL counterpart in Cameroon, as described by Mbagwana, Kamtok does appear to be similar to other varieties of West African Pidgin English. Schmied describes the syntax of East African English (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania). He outlines several general tendencies towards the modification of the grammar of Standard English, often in the direction of simplification.

With respect to the South African varieties, Bowerman outlines the main grammatical features of White South African English, pointing to ongoing debates about the relative significance of retentions from British dialect grammar over language contact with Afrikaans. Mesthrie's overview of Black South African

English shows it to be in most respects similar to the “core” grammar of East and West African Englishes. Mesthrie also contributes a chapter on Indian South African English, showing that whilst the variety has much in common with its antecedent in India, it has innovated a great deal in the process of language shift in the South African environment. McCormick describes Cape Flats English, a variety which shows a fair degree of convergence between the grammars of English and Afrikaans.

Wilson and Mesthrie contribute an overview of St. Helena English, especially of its verb phrase component, which shows a convergence between a pidgin-like system and a more superstratal British English system.

Bhatt provides an overview of the grammar of Indian English, from the viewpoint of modern generative syntax. Hosali gives an overview of Butler English, the minimal pidgin (or fossilised early interlanguage) which originated between domestic servants and their masters in British India. Mahboob covers Pakistani English morphology and syntax, which again has a lot in common with the Northern varieties of Indian English as well as with the New Englishes generally.

Lionel Wee describes the morphology and syntax of Singaporean English, detailing some “positive” innovations, including the addition of new forms of the relative clause and passive. Baskaran describes Malaysian English and focuses on the extent to which substrate languages like Malay and Tamil may have played a role in engendering the typical features of Malaysian English morphology and syntax.

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# Nigerian English: morphology and syntax\*

M.A. Alo and Rajend Mesthrie

## 1. Introduction

Nigerian English (NigE) is a term used to designate the variety of English spoken (and sometimes written) in Nigeria. NigE is an indigenised variety of English, functioning as a second language within the Nigerian linguistic and socio-cultural setting. It therefore has a distinctive local Nigerian flavour, which can be seen at all levels of linguistic organisation. Among the factors that have contributed to this distinctness are the following:

- (a) mode of acquisition primarily via the classroom
- (b) transfer (“interference”) from many of Nigeria’s indigenous languages
- (c) culture contact (including bilingualism and biculturalism)
- (d) sociolinguistic functions (including the high status accorded to English)
- (e) influence of dialectal features from non-Standard British English (StBrE) sources (e.g. recent influence from AmE)

The details of the initial introduction of English in West Africa and its subsequent growth and stabilisation is given in the chapter on Nigerian English phonology (other volume). Certain aspects of that overview pertaining to the sub-varieties of English in Nigeria are worth reiterating in deciding which sub-variety’s features count as part of a “core” syntax of NigE.

Brosnahan (1958) identified four levels of proficiency in the use of English, together with their corresponding levels of education, of typical speakers:

Level 1 (pidgin) :	no formal education
Level 2 :	only primary education completed
Level 3 :	only secondary education completed
Level 4 :	university education completed

According to this scheme, the level of proficiency progresses with educational attainments of users. This assumption is, of course, not infallible. Furthermore, the placement of pidgin in this classification is problematic. Nigerian scholars do not recognise pidgin as a variety of English alone, but rather as an independent code.

Banjo’s (1971) classification, in contrast, is based on the extent of transfer from speakers’ mother-tongues and of approximation to a standard variety of English. In his scale, Variety 1 ( $V_1$ ) exhibits the greatest density of mother-tongue transfer, whilst Variety 4 ( $V_4$ ) exhibits the least. Varieties 2 ( $V_2$ ) and 3 ( $V_3$ ) are intermedi-

ate. See the companion chapter on NigE phonology by Ulrike Gut (other volume) for details. Banjo (1995: 205) remarks that  $V_3$  is a home-grown variety and is accordingly more appropriate as an endonormative standard model than  $V_4$ . The latter is an exonormative variety inculcated by speakers with direct experience of living in Britain. For the purposes of this essay, the features described will be that of  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  rather than  $V_4$ . In this we echo Banjo's (1995) concern for

an appropriate model [...] based on the twin criteria of social acceptability and international intelligibility, on the assumption that such a model, given the second-language situation, should possess a high prestige at home and reasonably easy intelligibility abroad. (Banjo 1995: 209)

One problem with this typology, as pointed out by Bamgbose (1992: 152), is that not all features of Nigerian lexis, semantics and syntax can be accounted for in terms of substrate interference. Many features result from the normal process of language development, including narrowing or extension of meaning and the creation of new idioms.

The last categorisation of relevance is that of Jowitt (1991: vii), who posits two broad poles – Standard English (StE) and popular NigE, and claims that “usage of every Nigerian user is a mixture of standard forms and popular Nigerian English forms, which are in turn composed of errors and variants.” There are critics who deny the existence of Nigerian English, seeing it as a mixed bag of errors, especially in the case of prepositions, articles, concord and the like. As in cases elsewhere, we confine ourselves to identifying recurrent features of syntax in NigE, without prescriptive bias. However, it is necessary to factor out the efforts of “learner language” and focus on the speech characteristics of fluent (and usually educated) speakers, identified by previous researchers – our chief sources being Bamgbose (1992 [1982]), Banjo (1971) and Jowitt (1991). Our examples are also based on data from speech and (where specified) writing drawn from the senior author M.A. Alo. On the whole we concur with Bamgbose's (1992: 154) insistence that “the natural and spontaneous usage of the locally educated Nigerian user of English is a more reliable guide to the identification of typical Nigerian usage.”

## **2. Tense – aspect – modality systems**

### **2.1. Tense**

There is little to be said about tense categories used by educated speakers. Jowitt (1991: 116) notes that errors of inflection are common amongst  $V_1$  and  $V_2$  speakers but are stigmatised by educated speakers. Such stigmatised forms include the occasional use of unmarked verb forms for both present and simple past as in (1), the occasional double marking of the simple past in negatives and interrogatives as in (2) and (3).



- (1) *Yesterday they **go** to your office.* (Jowitt 1991: 117)  
 (2) *He **did** not **went**.*  
 (3) ***Did** she **wanted** him?* (Jowitt 1991: 117)

Other features include the occasional regularisation of past endings like *grinded* for *ground* and *hitted* for *hit* and the occasional lack of third person sg. present tense -s. Further facets of tense formation are given under section 3. on auxiliaries.

## 2.2. Aspect

As in many varieties of English as a Second Language (ESL), the distinction between stative and non-stative verbs is overridden. This applies particularly to verbs of perception like *see, hear, smell, taste, feel* and *recognise*:

- (4) *I am **smelling** something burning.*  
 ‘...smell...’  
 (5) *I am **hearing** you.*  
 ‘...hear/can hear...’  
 (6) *It is **tasting** terrible.*  
 ‘...tastes...’

In Nigerian languages, these examples would be unremarkable since verbs of perception freely take the progressive.

The use of *be* + *-ing* also applies to other stative verbs:

- (7) *We **are having** something to do.*  
 ‘...have...’

## 2.3. Modality

The modal auxiliaries show several differences from StE usage. Jowitt (1991: 122) notes the phrase *can be able*, which, as in other varieties of English in Africa, is an equivalent of *can* or *am/is/are able*. In the expression of politeness the present form of modals is preferred to the standard, (indirect) past forms: thus *will* for ‘would’, *can* for ‘could’, *shall* for ‘should’ and *may* for ‘might’:

- (8) *I **will** be happy, if you can come, please.*  
 ‘...would...’  
 (9) *I **will** like to see you, sir.*  
 ‘...would...’

Jowitt (1991: 120) points to the use of *might have* in a rather complex manner in NigE:

(10) *After the referee **might have** arrived the match will begin.*

This use of modal + perfect is not a direct equivalent of BrE ‘After the referee arrives/will arrive the match will begin’. Sentence (10) does not presuppose the arrival of the referee, rather, it expresses some uncertainty about the matter. Sentence (10) thus does not have a direct equivalent in StE, but would have to be unscrambled and rephrased as (11):

(11) *It is not certain that the referee will arrive, but if he does the match will begin.*

Jowitt (1991: 122) mentions a similar semantics for *must have to*, which corresponds to StE ‘must’ ‘shall have to’ or ‘will have to’.

Jowitt (1991: 124) describes patterns of cliticisation of modals and *be* with pronouns. Forms like *isn’t*, *I’m* and *she’s* are common. However, forms like *I’ve* and *you’re*, involving cliticisation of *’ve* and *’re*, are rarer. Forms like *I’ll* and *I’d* are very rare, even in colloquial speech.

### 3. Auxiliaries

Jowitt (1991: 123) notes that complex auxiliary forms with *have* and *be* tend to be avoided in popular NigE. Thus forms like the future perfect (*will have V*), perfect infinitive (*to have V+ -en*) and the continuous forms of perfect tenses (*to have been V+ -ing*) are rare in lower sociolects, but make an appearance in V<sub>3</sub> speech. Jowitt also notes that the use of present and past continuous tenses for future reference appears to be avoided, as simple future tenses seem to suffice. He links this one-to-one mapping to the needs of learners, who hypothesise that future time always requires a future tense. As far as other auxiliaries are concerned, Jowitt (1991: 123) notes that in popular NigE “*might* seems to have less currency than *must* or *should*, and *needn’t*, *dare* and *be to* in all forms are avoided.”

The use of auxiliaries in response to *yes/no*, tag and echo questions differs from StE. *Yes/no* questions with auxiliary *have* frequently meet with a response that uses some form of *do*:

(12) Q: *Have you been to university of Ibadan, today?*

A: *I **didn’t** go.*

(13) Q: *Have you seen John?*

A: *No, I **didn’t**.*

In (12) and (13) the expected response in StE would involve either a simple affirmative or negative (*yes/no*) and/or the repetition of the auxiliary *have* (*I have/I haven’t*).

As in other parts of Africa and Asia, the invariant tag *isn't it* is favoured by NigE speakers:

(14) *You like that, isn't it?*

The invariant form avoids the complexities of StE tag formation, which requires copying the pronoun form, copying the auxiliary (or adding *do* if no auxiliary exists in the main clause) and reversing the polarity of the main verb (positive to negative or vice versa).

Jowitt (1991: 123) points out that invariant *isn't it* occurs with echo questions too:

- (15) a. A. *He didn't greet his father.*  
       B. (echo question) *Didn't he?* (StE)
- b. A. *He didn't greet his father.*  
       B. (echo question) *Isn't it?* (NigE)

As invariant all-purpose tags and verification questions occur in Nigerian languages like Hausa and Igbo, it is possible that there is a convergent effect between second-language learning strategies and transfer from the mother-tongue.

A related phenomenon – responses to *yes/no* questions couched in the negative – is discussed in the next section.

#### 4. Negatives

Jowitt (1991: 124) notes that contracted negatives, as in (16a), are preferred to contracted verb forms (16b), even when the need for emphasis might make the latter preferable in StE:

- (16) a. *She **won't** come.*  
       b. ***She'll** not come.*

Jowitt (1991: 121) also notes that double negatives are not found in popular NigE. This generalisation holds for educated NigE as well. NigE shows similarities to other varieties of African English in its response to *yes/no* questions couched in the negative. A detailed analysis of the dynamics of this construction occurs in Mesthrie's analysis of Black South African English (this volume). NigE appears to be quite similar. That is, *yes/no* questions posed positively show no differences between NigE and StE:

- (17) Q: *Did Ayo receive his award?*  
       A: *Yes (he did) or No (he didn't).* (NigE and StE)

On the other hand, the same question posed negatively evokes a different response pattern in NigE:

- (18) Q: *Didn't Ayo receive his award?*  
 A: *Yes (he didn't) or No (he did).* (NigE)
- (19) Q: *You don't want this, do you?*  
 A: [*Yes (I don't) or No (I do).*] (NigE)

In (19) NigE speakers appear to respond to the proposition, rather than the operator in the tag. The proposition itself would appear to carry a different presupposition from StE: that is it is biased towards a negative reading ('Ayo didn't receive his award/I don't want this') which is confirmed by the *yes* in the response (or contradicted by the *no*).

## 5. Relativisation

NigE allows resumptive pronouns in non-subject relativisation:

- (20) *The guests whom I invited **them** have arrived.* (Bokamba 1992: 131–132)
- (21) *I know the person who **his** father has died.* (Jowitt 1991: 122)

As Bokamba notes, relative clauses with resumptive pronouns are a typological characteristic of many African languages. It is not surprising that this feature should be reported in L2 English of West Africa, East Africa and southern Africa.

Jowitt (1991: 120) notes that in popular NigE ( $V_1$  and  $V_2$ ) *what* is used as a relative pronoun after *all*:

- (22) *All **what** he said was false.*

In non-restrictive (or appositional) relatives some speakers use *of which* rather than *which* (Jowitt 1991: 122):

- (23) *It was a very horrible experience, **of which** I hope it will not happen again.*

## 6. Complementation

### 6.1. Infinitive without *to*

Bamgbose (1992: 155) cites as a feature of NigE the dropping of *to* from the infinitive after certain verbs:

- (24) *...enable him  $\emptyset$  do it.*  
 '...enable him to do it.'

Jowitt (1991: 115) observes that this phenomenon also applies to *allow*. Conversely, *make*, which doesn't allow *to* in StE active sentences, often co-occurs with *to* in NigE:

- (25) *Make her **to** do her work.*

## 6.2. *To*-infinitives in place of *-ing*

Jowitt (1991: 115) notes that in lower sociolects *to* + infinitive may replace *-ing* in constructions starting with *instead of* + NP:

- (26) *Instead of him **to travel** home for the vacation, he was one of those who travelled to Sokoto for the sports competition.*  
 ‘Instead of him travelling home...’

Jowitt supplies an example from a written source, which implies that the construction may well be more widespread than he claims:

- (27) *He asserted that instead of the press **to highlight** that, it resorted to capitalising on his arrest. (The Triumph, 1/11/1986)*

A related usage avoids the gerund form in *-ing* after *to* in construction with *be used to*, *look forward to* and *object to*. Forms like *is used to go*, *looks forward to go* and *object to go* are common in NigE.

## 6.3. Comparatives

Bokamba (1992: 133–134) analyses sentences involving the comparison of inequality (StE ‘taller than Mary’), in which the comparative form may be marked singly, either by *than* or (less commonly) by the comparative form of the adjective. Example (28) is from Chinebuah (1976, cited by Bokamba 1992: 134):

- (28) *It is the youths who are Ø skilful in performing tasks **than** the adults.*  
 ‘...more skilful...’
- (29) *He has Ø money **than** his brother.*  
 ‘...more money than...’

## 7. Other subordination and co-ordination phenomena

### 7.1. Double conjunctions

Jowitt (1991: 123) mentions the double use of *although* or *though* in a subordinate clause accompanied by *but* or *yet* in the main clause.

- (30) ***Although** he is rich **but** he is stingy.*

### 7.2. Innovations in the form of conjunctions

In addition to double conjunctions, one per clause, NigE occasionally combines two related conjunctions of StE. Thus *should in case* is sometimes used in place

of *should* + S or *in case* + S. Likewise *on my way going* may replace *on my way* [*to* NP] or *going* [*to* NP].

- (31) *He has been in this school for five years, still yet he is not tired.*  
 ‘...still/yet...’

## 8. Agreement

Jowitt (1991: 116) observes that inflectional suffixes give trouble to learners, often when their mother-tongues lack inflections. Errors of inflection, he notes, are common among V<sub>1</sub> speakers, not uncommon among V<sub>2</sub> speakers and stigmatised by V<sub>3</sub> speakers. This applies especially to verb endings of tense and agreement, with V<sub>1</sub> and V<sub>2</sub> speakers using the unmarked verb form in place of past *-ed* and third person singular present *-s*. Further aspects of agreement are discussed in section 10.

## 9. Noun phrase structure

### 9.1. Articles

There is a noticeable tendency towards the omission of articles where StE requires them:

- (32)  $\emptyset_1$  *Depreciating value of the naira and*  $\emptyset_2$  *increase in*  $\emptyset_3$  *cost of wheat in the international market have been identified.*

Variability in article usage shows up well in (32). Although the sentence does contain two standard definite articles and one correct zero form (*of wheat*), it contains three non-standard zero forms, with  $\emptyset_1$  = ‘the’,  $\emptyset_2$  = ‘an/the’ and  $\emptyset_3$  = ‘the’ in StE.

Sentence (33) shows other types of variability in article usage – the occurrence of unstressed *one* as an equivalent of indefinite *a* and occasional substitution of *the* for *a*:

- (33) *Gani is **one** man who does not tell lies, he calls **the** spade a spade.*

Jowitt (1991: 114) notes a tendency, even among educated speakers, to drop the indefinite article before a singular countable noun functioning as the object of certain high-frequency and semantically full verbs. Thus *get*  $\emptyset$  *contract*, *give*  $\emptyset$  *chance*, *have*  $\emptyset$  *bath*, *make*  $\emptyset$  *effort*, *make*  $\emptyset$  *mistake*, *take*  $\emptyset$  *bribe*, *take*  $\emptyset$  *excuse*, *tell*  $\emptyset$  *lie*, *tie*  $\emptyset$  *wrapper* etc. Whether these are due to analogy to StE expressions like *give notice*, *make mischief* etc. or whether the nouns concerned are reclassified as uncountable still needs to be researched.

## 9.2. Adjectives

Jowitt (1991: 111–112) reports on some novel forms of adjectives and some adjectives involved in class (or category) shift. Certain adjectives denoting nationality of a person are made to function as singular nouns. Thus:

(34) *He is a British/English/Irish/French/Dutch/Swiss etc.*

Certain adjectives which function as generic nouns in StE (e.g. *the poor*, *the blind*) take plural forms in NigE (*the poors*, *the blinds*). Jowitt (1991: 118) also notes that the StE distinction between comparative and superlative, like *worse* – *worst*, is frequently ignored:

(35) *His condition is now getting worst.*

The innovations discussed in this section are mostly characteristic of lower sociolects, which also contain neologisms like *insultive* ‘insulting (adj.)’, as well as class shifts from adjective to verb (e.g. *naked<sub>v</sub>*, *pregnant<sub>v</sub>*, *jealous<sub>v</sub>*):

(36) *He **naked** himself.*

(37) *He **pregnanted** her.*

(38) *She **jealoused** her elder sister.*

Ordinal adjectives beyond *third* are avoided even by educated speakers, notably when they feature dates. Jowitt (1991: 124) provides the example of *on the five* for ‘on the fifth’. He suggests that the avoidance may be motivated by phonological considerations notably avoidance of consonant + /θ/ clusters.

## 9.3. Nouns

Bamgbose (1992: 155) considers one of the four main features of educated NigE morphology and syntax to be the fact that “peculiar word formation may occur with plurals”. He supplies the examples *equipments*, *aircrafts* and *deadwoods*. Jowitt (1991: 112–113) adds further examples from popular NigE of pluralisation of what are non-count nouns in StE: *accommodation*, *advice*, *behaviour*, *blame*, *chalk*, *cutlery*, *damage*, *evidence*, *furniture*, *gossip*, *grass*, *information*, *jargon*, *junk*, *machinery*, *money*, *permission*, *personnel*, *stationery*, *underwear* and *wire*. There is thus a general tendency in NigE to treat mass and abstract nouns as count nouns. As Jowitt (1991: 113) notes, the impulse for this regularisation may come from special contexts or usage within StE that allow these nouns to be pluralised (X + -s) if they denote ‘types of X’. Thus, in StE *grasses* may be used to mean ‘different types of grass’. Idiomatic differences also account for this regularisation in NigE – e.g. the distinction in StE between *damage<sub>n</sub>* (mass noun) and *damages<sub>n</sub>* (in its legal/insurance/business context). Jowitt notes a reversal of this tendency

with the noun *fund* in NigE not generally admitting a plural form, contrary to StE *funds*.

## 10. Pronouns

### 10.1. Reflexives

There is a tendency to use plural pronoun + *selves*, not just as a plural reflexive, but as reciprocal too, in place of StE ‘each other, one another’:

(39) *Adebanjo and Suliati love themselves.*

‘...each other’

(40) *After greeting ourselves, Tolu and I started work*

‘...each other’

(41) *James and Lanre like quarrelling with themselves.*

‘...one another’

A sentence like (42) could be ambiguous even in educated NigE:

(42) *The couple bought themselves a nice car.*

Either interpretation ‘for themselves’ (reflexive) or ‘for each other’ (reciprocal) is permissible here.

### 10.2. Indefinite or honorific *they*

NigE favours the use of third person indefinite *they* often with a singular referent, meaning ‘he, she, person(s) unknown’:

(43) *They gave me some money.*

(44) *They are calling you.*

*They* in (43) refers to a singular, definite referent, uttered by a child in response to his mother’s query about the source of his money. Since *they* refers to an elder family member, it can be construed as a polite use of the plural for the singular. In (44) a similarly respectful use of *they* occurs to draw the addressee’s attention to a call by an elderly woman in a market.

*They* also functions as an indefinite pronoun used when the referent is unknown, indefinite or generic (i.e. the specific identity of the individual does not matter). Jowitt (1991: 123) links this usage to the rarity of passives in Nigerian languages and popular NigE: “MTs [mother-tongues] lack inflected passive forms but make use of a third person singular indefinite pronoun in combination with the active forms.”, as in (45):



- (45) *There was a security light outside my house, but **they have stolen it**.*  
 ‘...but it has been stolen.’

However, the passive is used in educated NigE.

## 11. Word order

### 11.1. Demonstratives with possessive pronouns

Bokamba (1992: 133) follows Kirk-Greene (1971) in drawing attention to the Bantu rule that when a possessive and demonstrative pronoun occur in the same NP, they follow the noun in the order (Demonstrative + N + Possessive). This rule has an indirect influence on NigE and West African English generally:

- (46) *I met the **teacher our new**.*  
 ‘...our new teacher.’ (Bokamba 1992: 133)

However, it appears to be just as common to have the order Demonstrative + Possessive + N):

- (47) ***That your brother**, will he come?*  
 ‘Will your brother come?’

- (48) *Saying Amen to **those his prayers**...*  
 ‘saying Amen to prayers/those prayers of his...’ (Kirk-Green 1971:136)

This construction is avoided by some educated speakers.

### 11.2. Left dislocation

As in colloquial varieties of English world-wide and especially other “new Englishes”, left dislocation is commonly used in NigE. Bamgbose (1992: 155) characterises it as a focus construction, involving the subject of the sentence as focus, with an anaphoric pronoun subject:

- (49) ***The politicians and their supporters**, they don't often listen to advice.*

- (50) ***A person who has no experience**, can he be a good leader?*

Bamgbose's examples, reproduced here as (49) and (50), both involve complex NP subjects – a co-ordinated NP in (49) and NP + Rel in (50). In addition, the construction occurs with simple NPs too, as in (51):

- (51) ***The students** they are demonstrating again.*

## 12. Selected salient verb forms

### 12.1. HAVE

Jowitt (1991: 125) notes the rarity of causative *have* constructions as in (52):

(52) *I want to have my hair cut.*

He argues that this is a result of the similarity of such constructions to perfect tenses and the apparent (to second language learners) risk therefore involved in using them.

Jowitt notes the neologism *haven* for *having* which may even occur in writing:

(53) ***Haven*** waged a serious legal battle against Gomwalk ... people felt that Mr Aper Aku will be mindful of whatever policy direction his administration was bound to initiate. (*The Triumph*, 2/4/1986; Jowitt 1991: 117)

The converse process is more common in lower sociolects, with *-ing* replacing *-en* in forms like *giving* and *taking* for 'given' and 'taken'.

### 12.2. Phrasal and prepositional verbs

These admit of considerable variation from the StE idioms. One set involves the addition of a preposition: *cope up* for 'cope', *discuss about* for 'discuss', *voice out* for 'voice', *advocate for* for 'advocate'. Another set, conversely, involves the absence of a preposition where StE requires one: *dispose* for 'dispose of', *operate* for 'operate on', *reply* for 'reply to'. A third set uses a different preposition from that of StE, e.g. *congratulate for* for 'congratulate on'. Perhaps this can be related to a general fluidity of preposition use in NigE, where a number of non-standard usages prevail – e.g. *at* for *in* in expressions like *at my old age* or *at London* (see further Jowitt [1991: 119]).

### 12.3. Other salient verb forms

*Enjoy* and *disappoint* may be used elliptically as intransitive verbs:

(54) *She promised to come, but I don't really expect to see her – she always likes to **disappoint** ∅.* (Jowitt 1991: 115)

A further kind of ellipsis can be observed with certain reciprocals (see *borrow/lend* [55]), passives (see *drop/be dropped/alight* [54]) and causatives (see *back/carry on one's back* [57]):

(55) *Please borrow me your pen.*

(56) *Please, I would like to drop at the next bus stop.*

(57) *Ronke backs her baby to work.*

A final class of verb neologism involves derivation from other parts of speech, especially in lower sociolects. Thus *horn* ‘to hoot’, *jealous* ‘make jealous’, *naked* ‘make naked’. Examples (58)–(60) are taken from Jowitt (1991: 112):

(58) ***Horn** before overtaking.*

(59) *She **jealoused** her elder sister.*

(60) *He **naked** himself.*

### 13. Reduplication

Under the influence of indigenous languages like Yoruba, NigE makes extensive use of reduplication in generating new lexis or creating a particular nuance or emphasis. The main elements reduplicated are adjectives and adverbs:

(61) *He likes to talk about **small-small** things.*  
‘...insignificant things.’

(62) *My friend **before-before**...*  
‘...former friend...’

(63) *Tell Mr Bello to come **now-now**.*  
‘...at once.’

(64) *Labake does her work **half-half**.*  
‘...in halves/incompletely.’

### 14. Lexis

This is an area of considerable richness in NigE, showing a full indigenisation of English to the Nigerian cultural setting. For reasons of space, only the briefest of expositions is given here.

#### 14.1. Verbs of bribery and corruption

In the context of bribery and corruption (usually involving politicians, civil servants or the police) certain verbs are used circumspectly.

(65) *The man **ate** our money.*  
‘...embezzled...’

(66) *Chief Lagbaje can deliver.*  
 ‘...fix/rig an election...’

(67) *He understands.*  
 ‘...is ready to offer a bribe...’

Other verbs used euphemistically in this context are *co-operate*, *enter*, *talk*, *settle*, *perform* and *play*.

## 14.2. Other lexical innovations

### Semantic extension

A number of everyday English terms have a widened meaning in Nigeria. These include a range of kinship terms (e.g. *father* could refer to one’s male parent or any of his brothers) expressions of sympathy or politeness (e.g. *sorry* denotes sympathy for someone’s misfortune or discomfort without a sense blame on the part of the speaker) and anatomical terms used in association with the human spirit, life and destiny (e.g. *head* for ‘one’s essence, destiny, luck’).

### Borrowings

Not surprisingly, a number of words from Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba make an appearance in NigE, either in noun switching or as borrowings, for example *akara* ‘beancake’, *akwete* ‘type of cloth’ and *bolekajia* ‘bus with tightly packed seats’.

### Idioms, neologisms and semantic shifts

A small selection of these items which give NigE its lively flavour is given here:

<i>been-to</i>	‘one who has been abroad on an extended stay’
<i>cash madam</i>	‘wealthy woman’
<i>bottom power</i>	‘undue influence of females using sex’
<i>chase</i>	‘to woo’
<i>move with</i>	‘to associate with’
<i>to take in</i>	‘to be pregnant’
<i>not on seat</i>	‘not available in one’s office’
<i>long leg</i>	‘use of undue influence to reach a goal’
<i>national cake</i>	‘the common wealth belonging to all Nigerians’

## 15. Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to give an overview of the main lexical and (especially) syntactic features of NigE. It is obvious that further work has to be done in terms of relating the different sub-varieties to each other and in comparing NigE to other West African varieties of English. We do not wish to impose a static view of NigE,

which like all varieties of English is subject to growth and change. One change that has become prominent over recent years is the influence of American English, due to American broadcasts (*CNN* and *Voice of America*), American music, cinema and contact with American-trained professionals.

This influence shows up in many ways, for example in the pronunciation of words like *schedule* (now pronounced with initial /sk/), in idioms like *what's up*, in business terms like *Monday through Friday* (versus *Monday to Friday*), in lexical choices and doublets (e.g. *nursery* and *day-care*, *flashlight* and *torch*) and in verb sub-categorisations like *to protest* + direct object, rather than *to protest against*. Nevertheless, Jowitt's (1991: 109) remark about the overall structure of NigE seems appropriate: "it is important to realize that while (popular NigE) syntactic errors are numerous and often glaring, the gap between NigE syntax and BrE syntax, when each is considered in its entirety, is narrow, not wide."

\* Our debt to previous writers on this topic, especially David Jowitt, is immense.

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# **Nigerian Pidgin English: morphology and syntax**

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## **1. Introduction**

Nigerian Pidgin (NigP) is the dialect of Afro-Caribbean English Lexifier Creole which is spoken in Nigeria as well as in parts of Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon and Ghana. The other major dialects of Afro-Caribbean English Lexifier Creole include Cameroonian Pidgin, Sierra Leonian Krio, Jamaican Creole and the English Lexifier Creoles spoken in the Lesser Antilles, and along the coasts of South and Central America. Afro-Caribbean English Lexifier Creole possibly also includes Liberian English, Ghanaian English, Bahamian Creole, Gullah and African-American Vernacular English. Well over half of the 140 million inhabitants of Nigeria are now fluent speakers of the language, making NigP the most widely spoken language in Nigeria, as well as the indigenous African language with the largest number of speakers. Given the rapid spread of NigP among younger Nigerians, this proportion should increase to over seventy or eighty percent by the time the present generation of children reaches adulthood. There is no Creole language worldwide with nearly as many speakers as NigP.

In its basilectal varieties, NigP is still undergoing pidginization, with substrate languages continuing to exert an important influence. In its mesolectal varieties, NigP can be considered to be functionally a creole, given the fact that it is used by a great number of people as their principal means of communication in all of their daily activities. In its acrolectal varieties, NigP is decreolizing under the influence of English. There is a substantial and rapidly growing number of people who speak NigP as their first language or as one of their first languages. The NigP substrate languages at present include the 400 languages of Nigeria, a number of which had developed pidginized varieties for interethnic contact and trade before the colonial period.

The features and constructions identified in this chapter as typical of NigP are those found in the speech of mesolectal speakers of the language in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The database used comes from transcripts of tape recordings of at least one hour of spontaneous speech from each member of a sample group of 30 speakers. Sample group members belonged to a network of friends, family members and associates, who were chosen on the basis of ethnolinguistic background, sex, age, amount of formal education, whether NigP was learned as a first or second language, and the extent to which NigP was used by each speaker in day to day interactions, so that the samples would represent a rough cross section of the

NigP speaking community in Port Harcourt. A systematic comparison of NigP features with those of its substrate languages was also conducted as part of this study, and the results appear in Faraclas (1990) and (1998). Numerous studies of NigP exist as well as a comprehensive grammar (Faraclas 1996). A detailed list is given in the CD-ROM accompanying the text.

The following abbreviations are used in the examples in the text: ANT = Anterior Sequence Auxiliary; +C = Completive Aspect Auxiliary; -C = Incompletive Aspect Auxiliary; COMP = Complementizer; COP = Copular Verb; HL = Highlighter; ID = Identity; LOC = Locative; NEG = Negative; PFUT = Proximal Future Auxiliary; +R = Realis Modality Auxiliary; -R = Irrealis Modality Auxiliary; REL = Relative Pronoun; SBJV = Subjunctive Marker; SRPRO = Subject Referencing Pronoun.

## 2. Unmarked verbs

### 2.1. Stative verbs with non-past reference

- (1) *A sabi yu.*  
 I know you  
 'I know you.'

In NigP, verbs do not take inflectional affixes to show tense, aspect or modality. As in most NigP substrate languages, stative verbs are assumed to be non-past, unless marked otherwise by an auxiliary, an adverbial or by context.

### 2.2. Stative verbs with past reference

- (2) *A sabi yu bifo yu kɔm wɔk fɔr Pitakwa.*  
 I know you before you come work LOC Port Harcourt  
 'I knew you before you came to work in Port Harcourt.'

As in most NigP substrate languages, stative verbs can be interpreted as past tense, if accompanied by the appropriate contextual cues.

### 2.3. Non-stative verbs with past reference

- (3) *A bay egusi fɔr maket.*  
 I get pumpkin seed paste LOC market  
 'I bought egusi at the market.'

As in most NigP substrate languages, non-stative verbs are assumed to refer to events which occurred in the past, unless marked otherwise by an auxiliary, an adverbial, or by context.

## 2.4. Non-stative verbs with non-past reference

- (4) A: *Dis taym yu chɔp weting?*  
 this time you eat what?  
 A: 'What are you eating now?'  
 B: *Dis taym a chɔp lɔylɔy.*  
 this time I eat cassava fufu  
 B: 'I'm eating cassava fufu.'

As in most NigP substrate languages, non-stative verbs can be non-past for tense if accompanied by the appropriate contextual cues.

## 3. Anterior tense/sequentiality

## 3.1. Stative verbs with past reference

- (5) *A bin sabi yu.*  
 I ANT know you  
 'I knew you.'

While anterior sequence is usually signalled or inferred by contextual cues, adverbials or by the use of unmarked non-stative verbs, the anterior preverbal auxiliary *bin* may also be used for this purpose.

## 3.2. Non-stative verbs with (past-before-) past reference

- (6) *Di taim yu (bin) rich ma ples, a (bin) (dɔn) go tawn.*  
 the time you (ANT) reach my place I (ANT) (+C) go town  
 'When you arrived at my village, I had (already) gone to town.'

As in the case of past tense, the pluperfect is usually signalled or inferred by contextual cues, adverbials, or the use of unmarked non-stative verbs. Again, the anterior auxiliary *bin* with or without the completive aspect markers *dɔn* and/or *finish* may be used as well.

## 3.3. Anterior = counterfactual

- (7) a. *If a go tawn a go bay gari.*  
 If I go town I -R buy gari  
 'If I go to town, I will buy gari.'
- b. *If a bin go tawn a fɔr (dɔn) bay gari.*  
 If I ANT go town I should (+C) buy gari  
 'If I had gone to town, I would have bought gari.'



As shown in (7a) the conditional is usually expressed by the construction: *if* + rest of protasis + *go* + rest of apodosis. For past conditional constructions such as (7b), the anterior auxiliary *bin* is usually inserted into the *if*-clause. Additionally, the modal auxiliary *fɔr* 'should', optionally followed by the completive aspect marker *dɔn*, is used in the matrix clause.

### 3.4. Anterior with an adjectival verb

- (8) *(Yestade) di sɔn (bin) hot wɛlwɛl.*  
 (yesterday) the sun (ANT) hot thoroughly  
 'The sun was very hot yesterday.'

The category adjective is a weak one in NigP and most of its substrate languages. Most of what are considered to be adjectives in languages like English are expressed by adjectival verbs in NigP. Adjectival verbs can take the full range of auxiliaries that normally occur with other verbs in the language. As noted above, past tense can be marked or inferred in a number of ways, including: (a) by context (in which case all of the optional elements in 8 could be eliminated), (b) by the use of an adverbial such as *yestade*, or (c) by the use of the anterior auxiliary *bin*.

### 3.5. Anterior with locative

- (9) *Im (bin) de (fɔr) haws (yestade).*  
 s/he (ANT) COP (LOC) house (yesterday)  
 'S/he was at the house yesterday.'

The copula *de* can be used with a locative or an existential meaning. *De* can be used with any of the tense/aspect/modality markers that normally occur with NigP verbs. As noted above, past tense can be marked or inferred by context, through the use of an adverbial such as *yestade* or by using the auxiliary *bin*.

## 4. Incompletive aspect

### 4.1. Indicating the incompletive aspect

- (10) a. *A sabi se yu (de) waka.*  
 I know that you (-C) walk  
 'I know that you are walking.'

Incompletive aspect can be signalled or inferred by contextual cues, adverbials, or by the use of unmarked stative verbs. Other ways to mark the incompletive aspect include the incompletive preverbal auxiliary *de* (as in the NigP substrates, the incompletive marker is related to the locative/existential copula *de*). In (10a)

the verb *sabi* is stative, and therefore has incomplete aspect unless otherwise marked, while the verb *waka* is non-stative and is therefore more likely to take the incomplete marker *de*.

#### 4.2. Incomplete to indicate the future

- (10) b. *A de kɔm.*  
 I -C come  
 ‘I am coming.’ or ‘I will come.’

In the isolated case in (10), the incomplete can be used to indicate future meaning.

#### 4.3. Anterior plus incomplete

- (11) *Taym a rich, im (bin) (de) ple.*  
 time I reach s/he (ANT) (-C) play  
 ‘When I came, s/he was playing.’

In a clause containing the incomplete marker *de*, anterior sequentiality can be marked or inferred in a number of ways, including (a) by context, (b) through the use of an adverbial and (c) by using the auxiliary *bin*.

#### 4.4. Incomplete with adjectival verb = inchoative

- (12) *Im de yɛlo.*  
 it -C be yellow  
 ‘It is getting yellow.’

The incomplete marker *de* may be used with some adjectival verbs to indicate the inchoative.

## 5. Habitual aspect

### 5.1. Zero marker for the habitual aspect

Habitual aspect cannot normally be expressed by zero marking in NigP.

### 5.2. Incomplete marker for the habitual aspect

- (13) *A de chɔp fɔr maket.*  
 I -C eat LOC market  
 ‘I (habitually) eat in the market.’

Habitual aspect can be expressed by the incomplete marker *de* in NigP.

5.3. Marker for the habitual aspect only

There is no marker in NigP whose sole function is to signal habitual aspect.

5.4. Anterior plus habitual

- (14) *Di pikin dem (bin) de kray evritaym.*  
 the child them (ANT) -C cry often  
 ‘The children used to cry all the time.’

In a clause containing the incomplete auxiliary *de*, anterior sequentiality can be marked or inferred in a number of ways, including (a) by context, (b) through the use of an adverbial or (c) by using the auxiliary *bin*. When used as a habitual auxiliary, *de* can also be used in the same clause with the irrealis marker *go*. Habitual *de* is not normally found in the same verb phrase with any of the other auxiliaries.

6. Completive aspect

6.1. Completive only before verb

- (15) *A don sabi finish se yu kom.*  
 I +C know +C say you come  
 ‘I already know/knew that you came.’

Completive aspect can be signalled or inferred by contextual cues, adverbials, or by the use of unmarked non-stative verbs. The completive aspect may also be marked by the auxiliary *dɔn* which precedes the verb and/or by the postverbal auxiliary *finish*, which is related to the verb *finish* ‘to finish’ (as in most NigP substrate languages). In (15) the verb *kom* is non-stative, and therefore completive unless otherwise marked, while the verb *sabi* is non-stative and is therefore more likely to take the completive markers *dɔn* and/or *finish*.

6.2. Completive with adjectival verb

- (16) a. *Im dɔn yelo finish.*  
 it +C be yellow +C  
 ‘It is completely yellow.’
- (16) b. *A dɔn taya finish.*  
 I +C be tired +C  
 ‘I’m completely exhausted.’

Either one or both of the completive markers *dɔn* and *finish* may be used with adjectival verbs to indicate achieved as opposed to inceptive states. *Finish* can also

be used to emphasise the high degree to which the state of affairs expressed by the verb has been accomplished.

### 6.3. Anterior (or other verbal markers) plus completive

- (17) a. Anterior plus completive (*dɔn* and/or *finish* possible here)  
*Bifo im kɔm rich, a bin dɔn chɔp finish.*  
 Before s/he +R reach I ANT COMP eat +C  
 ‘Before s/he arrived, I had already eaten.’
- b. Irrealis plus completive (*dɔn* and/or *finish* possible here)  
*Di taym we yu go rich, a go dɔn chɔp finish.*  
 the time that you -R reach I -R +C eat +C  
 ‘When you arrive, I will have already eaten.’
- c. Realis (narrative) plus completive (*finish* only possible here)  
*Im kɔm rich finish.*  
 s/he +R arrive +C  
 ‘(It came to pass that) s/he arrived.’

## 7. Irrealis mode

### 7.1. Future

- (18) a. *A go waka.*  
 I -R walk  
 ‘I will walk.’
- b. *A wan waka.*  
 I PFUT walk  
 ‘I am about to walk.’

Verbs are assumed to be realis, unless otherwise marked. In narratives, the truth value of a statement can be emphasised by using the preverbal realis auxiliary *kɔm*, which is related to the verb *kɔm* ‘to come’ (see [17c] above). Irrealis modality is sometimes signalled or inferred by contextual cues and/or adverbials, but in most cases irrealis is marked by the use of the preverbal irrealis marker *go* (see [17b] above) or the preverbal proximal future auxiliary *wan* (which is related to the verb *wan* ‘to want/desire’, see [18b] above). As in most of the NigP substrate languages, the irrealis marker is normally used to mark the future tense.

7.2. Anterior plus irrealis = conditional

- (19) *A (bin) wan rich, bɔt di rot dɔn spoil.*  
 I (ANT) PFUT reach but the road +C be spoiled  
 'I would have made it, but the road was no good.'

In a clause containing the irrealis marker *go* or the proximal future auxiliary *wan*, anterior/past tense can be marked or inferred by context or through the use of an adverbial. The meaning conveyed by such sentences has a conditional flavour, to the extent that it expresses an event that almost occurred. While the anterior/past auxiliary *bin* may occur in the same clause with the proximal future auxiliary *wan*, it does not normally occur with the irrealis marker *go*.

7.3. Anterior plus irrealis = future in the past

Combinations of *bin* and *wan* discussed in section 7.2. above could be considered to convey future in the past meanings as well as conditional meanings.

7.4. Anterior plus irrealis = past in the future (future perfect)

Constructions containing the irrealis marker *go* and the completive auxiliary *finish* are utilised to express the future perfect in NigP (see [17b] above).

## 8. Other combinations of verbal markers

8.1. Irrealis plus incomplete

- (20) *A go de wet.*  
 I -R -C wait  
 'I will be waiting.'

8.2. Proximal future plus irrealis plus incomplete

- (21) *A go de wan wɔk, bot a no go fit.*  
 I -R -C PFUT work but I NEG -R be fit  
 'I will be about to work, but I won't be able to.'

8.3. Other auxiliary-like elements

Preverbal modality markers include *fit* 'be able, be fit', *wan* 'desire, wish', *mɔs* 'must', *fɔr* 'should' and *traɪ* 'try'.

## 9. Complementizers

### 9.1. No infinitive marker

- (22) *A go (fɔr) baf.*  
 I go (COMP) bathe  
 'I went to bathe.'

In some constructions and with some verbs, complementizers are optional.

### 9.2. *Fɔr* (general adposition) as infinitive marker

- (23) *A de redi fɔr go.*  
 I -C ready LOC go  
 'I am ready to go.'
- (24) a. *Im go (fɔr) baf, bɔt im no fit.*  
 s/he go (LOC) bathe but s/he NEG be able  
 'She went to bathe but she wasn't able to.'
- b. *Im go (fɔr) baf, and im kɔm riton.*  
 s/he go (LOC) bathe and s/he +R return  
 'He went to bathe and she came back (from washing).'

The general adposition *fɔr* in NigP, which is found in a number of Atlantic and Pacific pidgins and creoles, is commonly used as a complementizer (see 20.1 below). The use of *fɔr* and other complementizers in NigP does not depend on whether the events referred to by the verbs in the clauses that they introduce are actually completed or not.

### 9.3. *Fɔr* as a quasi-modal

*Fɔr* can have a modal or quasi-modal function in NigP (see section 3.3. above):

- (25) *Dem fɔr fray di planten.*  
 They should fry the plantain  
 'They should fry/should have fried the plantain.'

### 9.4. *Fɔr* introducing a tensed clause

*Fɔr* is not normally used to introduce an overtly tensed clause in NigP.

### 9.5. Subordinator from superstrate *that*

There is no subordinator in NigP that can be readily recognised as being derived from *that* in its lexifier language English.

9.6. Distinct subordinator after verbs of speaking/thinking

- (26) *Dem tel mi (se) dem no si yu.*  
 they tell me COMP they NEG see you  
 ‘They told me that they didn’t see you.’

The complementizer *se*, which is derived from the verb *se* ‘to say’ is utilized rather than other subordinators such as *wε* after verbs of communication and cognition. The use of *se* is often optional.

9.7. No subordinator

- (27) *A tink (se) im redi fɔr kɔm.*  
 I think (COMP) s/he be ready COMP come  
 ‘I think that she is ready to come.’

As noted in sections 9.1. and 9.6. above, subordinate constructions with no overtly marked subordinator are very common in NigP.

## 10. Dependent clauses

10.1. Subordinate clauses (non-embedded)

- (28) a. *If yu rich maket, mek yu bay kokonyam.*  
 If you reach market SBJV you buy Singapore taro  
 ‘If you go to the market, buy Singapore taro.’  
 b. *Mek yu bay kokonyam if yu rich maket.*  
 SBJV you buy Singapore taro if you reach market  
 ‘If you go to the market, buy Singapore taro.’

A non-embedded subordinate clause introduced by an adverbial like *(di) taym* ‘when’ or *if* ‘if’ may either precede or follow its main clause.

10.2. Subordinate clauses (embedded)

- (29) *A hapi se yu fit kɔm.*  
 I be happy COMP you be able come  
 ‘I’m happy that you were able to come.’

Subordinate clauses introduced by *se* can function as objects of adjectival verbs and as objects of verbs of communication and cognition (see section 9.6. above).

## 10.3. Relative clauses (relative pronoun = subject)

- (30) *Di pikin wε (i) sik (im) go haws.*  
 woman DEM REL (SRPRO) be ill s/he go house  
 ‘The child who has a cold went home.’

The relative pronoun *wε* may serve as the subject of a subordinate clause, in which case it may be optionally followed by the subject referencing pronoun that corresponds to the subject of the main clause. If *wε* is deleted, the subject referencing pronoun must be included.

## 10.4. Relative clauses (relative pronoun = direct object)

- (31) *Di pikin (wε) yu bin bit(-am) (im) dɔn go haws.*  
 the child (REL) you ANT beat(-him/her) (s/he) +C go house  
 ‘The child whom you beat went home.’

The relative pronoun *wε* may refer to the object of a subordinate clause. In such cases, an anaphoric object pronoun optionally follows the verb in the relative clause and the use of *wε* is optional.

## 10.5. Relative clauses (relative pronoun = object of an adposition)

- (32) *Di moto (wε) injin no de for-am de for yad.*  
 the vehicle (REL) engine NEG LOCCOP LOC-it COP LOC yard  
 ‘The vehicle which has no engine in it is in the yard.’

The relative pronoun *wε* may refer to the adpositional object of a subordinate clause. In such cases, an anaphoric object pronoun must follow the adposition in the relative clause and the use of *wε* is optional.

## 10.6. Relative clauses (no relative pronoun)

As shown in sections 10.3., 10.4., and 10.5. above, the inclusion of relative markers in relative clauses is optional, except in relative clauses where the relative marker has the subject role and no other subject marker is present. In relative clauses whose adpositional objects are coreferent to main clause nouns, object pronouns obligatorily follow the adposition.



## 11. Negation

### 11.1. Single negation (verbal)

- (33) A: *Yu no go maket?*  
 you NEG go market?  
 A: 'Didn't you go to the market?'  
 B: *Yes. A bin wan go, bɔt a neva rich.*  
 no I ANT want go but I NEG reach  
 B: 'No. I wanted to go, but I couldn't.'

The verbal negative marker *no* occurs before the verb, following the subject, the subject referencing pronoun and preceding all preverbal tense aspect modality markers, except the completive auxiliary *dɔn*, with which it combines to form the completive negative marker *neva*. Other constituents are also negated by the marker *no*. Responses to negative questions are logical, as in the NigP substrate languages. Note that discontinuous double negation constructions do not exist in NigP. Furthermore, there is no evidence for negative concord in NigP.

## 12. Passive

### 12.1. Passive construction

There is no passive construction in NigP. There are, however, a few idiomatic constructions using the role reversal verbs *kach* 'catch' and *du* 'do' that convey meanings similar to the passive in English:

- (34) *Hɔngri kach mi.* or *Hɔngri du mi.*  
 hunger catch me      hunger do me  
 'I'm famished.'

### 12.2. Passive equivalents

- (35) *Chɔp dɔn finish.*  
 food +C finish  
 'The food is finished.'
- (36) *Dem kɔm kɔl yɔ nem.*  
 they +R call your name  
 'Your name has been called.'

Constructions that approximate the semantics of agentless passives include the passive use of verbs such as *finish* 'finish' and the generic use of the third person plural pronoun *dem*.

**13. Adjectives = verbs**

## 13.1. Tense/aspect/modality markers with adjectival verbs

- (37) *A go hot di wota sote im go dɔn hɔt finish.*  
 I -R be hot the water until it -R +C hot +C  
 ‘I will heat up the water until it is completely hot.’

As in the NigP substrate languages, adjectival verbs normally occur with any tense/aspect/modality marker. In some cases, adjectival verbs can take objects as well. Adjectival verbs can be used as nouns without any additional marking. See also sections 3.4. (anterior), 4.4. (progressive), 6.3. (completive) and 14.3.

## 13.2. Tense/aspect/modality markers with nouns

- (38) *A neva sabi se im dɔn kɔm ticha finish.*  
 I NEG+C know that s/he +C +R teacher +C  
 ‘I never knew that you were already a teacher.’

In some constructions, nouns may occur with a number of tense/aspect/modality markers. See also section 14.1.

## 13.3. Tense/aspect/modality markers with locatives

- (39) a. *A go de (fɔr) haws.*  
 I -R COP (LOC) house  
 ‘I will be at home.’
- b. *Moni go de mi fɔr hand.*  
 money -R COP me LOC house  
 ‘I will have money.’

The locative copula *de* can occur with most tense/aspect/modality markers. In some cases the locative copula can take objects as well. See also 3.5.

## 13.4. Predicate clefting (adjectives or adjectival verbs)

- (40) *Na taya (wɛ) a dɔn taya.*  
 HL be tired (REL) I +C be tired  
 ‘It’s tiredness that tires me.’

The highlighter *na* obligatorily precedes a fronted constituent in a cleft construction, while relative markers follow optionally.

13.5. Predicate clefting (other verbs)

- (41) *Na chɔp (wɛ) a dɔn chɔp.*  
 HL eat (REL) I +C eat  
 ‘It’s eating that I ate.’

The highlighter *na* obligatorily precedes a fronted constituent in a cleft construction, while relative markers follow optionally.

13.6. Comparison with ‘pass’

- (42) a. *Ma haws fayn pas. or A waka pas.*  
 My house be fine pass I walk pass  
 ‘My house is better/best.’ or ‘I walked more/most.’
- b. *Ma haws fayn pas yɔ on. or A waka pas yu.*  
 My house be fine pass your own I walk pass you  
 ‘My house is better than yours.’ or ‘I walked more than you.’
- c. *Ma haws fayn pas ol. or A waka pas ol.*  
 My house be fine pass all I walk pass all  
 ‘My house is the best.’ or ‘I walked most.’

Comparative and superlative constructions usually include the verb *pas* ‘surpass’ in a serialized verb construction (see section 15.5.). Without an object, *pas* conveys either a comparative or superlative meaning. With the object *ol* ‘all,’ *pas* expresses the superlative, while it signifies the comparative with any other object.

13.7. Comparison as in the superstrate

- (43) a. *Na beta nyam bi dat.*  
 HL better yam COP that  
 ‘That’s better (high quality) yam.’
- (43) b. *Im go yelo moa.*  
 S/he -R be pale more  
 ‘S/he will get even more pale.’

While no superstrate-like comparative construction exists in NigP, some items from superstrate comparative constructions such as *beta* ‘better’ and *moa* ‘more’ are occasionally used in related constructions.

**14. Copula**

## 14.1. Equative copula (before NP)

- (44) *Uche bi ticha.* or *Uche na ticha.*  
 Uche COP teacher Uche HL teacher  
 ‘Uche is a teacher.’

Either the identity copula *bi* or the highlighter *na* may be used in equative constructions. In a restricted set of equative constructions, tense/aspect/modality markers can be used with nouns without a copular verb (see section 13.2. above).

## 14.2. Locative copula (before expressions of place)

- (45) A: *Uche de we?*  
 Uche COP where  
 ‘Where is Uche?’
- B: *Uche de (fɔr) haws.*  
 Uche COP (LOC) house  
 ‘Uche is at home.’

The locative copula *de* can be used with a locative or an existential meaning (see section 14.3. below). *De* can be used with any of the tense/aspect/modality markers that normally occur with NigP verbs (see section 3.5. above). In some cases, *de* can take an object (see section 13.3. above).

## 14.3. Copula before ‘adjectives’ (see section 12.1.)

- (46) a. A: *Haw yu de?*  
 how you COP  
 ‘How are you?’
- b. B: *A hapi.* or *A de hapi.*  
 I be happy I COP happiness  
 ‘I am happy.’
- c. C: *A de layk a no de.*  
 I COP like I NEG COP  
 ‘I exist as if I weren’t existing.’ or ‘I am on the edge of existence.’

As in most NigP substrate languages, adjectives usually function as verbs and therefore are not normally preceded by copulas. Nominalized adjectival verbs may, however, be found in zero equative copular constructions (see example [46b] above).

14.4. Highlighter with question words

- (47) *Na hu tek solt kɔm spoil di styu?*  
 HL who take salt +R spoil the stew  
 ‘Who is it who put too much salt in the stew?’

The highlighter *na* may sometimes be used before question words. See also sections 13.4. and 14.5.

14.5. Highlighter with other structures

- (48) *Na Halima dem mek-am, no bi mi o.*  
 HL Halima they do-it NEG IDCOP me +R  
 ‘It was Halima and her people who did it, it wasn’t me.’

The highlighter *na* can be used to introduce a wide range of fronted topicalized constituents. See also sections 13.4. and 13.5.

14.6. Existential (‘have’ = ‘there is’)

- (49) *I get tu moto fɔr rod.*  
 SRPRO have two vehicle LOC road  
 ‘There are two vehicles on the road.’

In the affirmative, the verb *get* ‘have’ is normally preceded by a dummy subject to express existential ‘there is.’ In the negative, the use of the dummy subject with *get* is optional.

**15. Serial verbs**

15.1. Directional with ‘go’

- (50) *Kari buk go.*  
 take book go  
 ‘Take the book away.’

As in most NigP substrate languages, *go* ‘go’ is commonly used in serialized verb constructions to indicate motion away from the speaker.

15.2. Directional with ‘come’

- (51) *Kari buk kɔm.*  
 take book come  
 ‘Bring the book.’

As in most NigP substrate languages, *kɔm* ‘come’ is commonly used in serialized verb constructions to indicate motion toward the speaker.

15.3. Serial ‘give’ meaning ‘to, for’

- (52) *Kari buk giv mi.*  
 take book give me  
 ‘Give the book to me.’

As in many NigP substrate languages, *giv* ‘give’ can be used in serialized verb constructions to introduce indirect objects.

15.4. Serial ‘say’ meaning ‘that’

As in many NigP substrate languages, *se* ‘say’ can be used in a serialized verb construction as a complementizer after verbs of communication or cognition (see sections 9.6. and 10.2. above).

15.5. Serial ‘pass’ meaning ‘more than’

As shown in 13.6 above, the verb *pas* ‘to surpass’ is used in serialized verb constructions to express the comparative in NigP.

15.6. Three serial-verb construction

- (53) *Kari buk kɔm giv mi.*  
 take book come give me  
 ‘Bring the book to me.’

As in most NigP substrate languages, serialized verb constructions containing three verbs are not uncommon in NigP.

15.7. Four or more serial-verb construction

- (54) *Im bay nyam kari-am go rich haws kuk-am chɔp.*  
 s/he buy yam take-it go reach house cook-it eat  
 ‘She bought yams and took them home and cooked and ate them.’

Four or more verbs may occur in the same serial verb construction in NigP.

## 16. Noun phrases

### 16.1. Bare nouns

- (55) *Im kari buk kɔm.*  
 S/he take book come  
 ‘S/he brought a/the book.’

Bare nouns are normally interpreted as definite or indefinite by the context, without the use of articles.

### 16.2. Indefinite article

- (56) a. *Wɔn man de slip.*  
 one man -C sleep  
 ‘A man is sleeping.’  
 b. *Sɔm man de slip.*  
 some man -C sleep  
 ‘Some men are sleeping.’

*Wɔn* ‘one’ marks indefinite nouns in the singular (as in most NigP substrate languages), while *sɔm* ‘some’ marks indefinite nouns in the plural.

### 16.3. Definite article

- (57) *Di man de slip.*  
 the man -C sleep  
 ‘The man is sleeping.’

The definite article *di* ‘the’ is used to mark the definiteness of nouns.

### 16.4. Plural marker = ‘they’

- (58) *Di man dem de slip.*  
 the man they -C sleep  
 ‘The men are sleeping.’

As in most NigP substrate languages, *dem* ‘they’ is used both as the third person plural pronoun and as the plural marker for nouns, in which case it follows the noun that it modifies.

## 16.5. Personal noun plus plural marker

- (59) *Shehu dem de slip.*  
 Shehu they -C sleep  
 ‘Shehu and his people are sleeping.’

As in most NigP substrate languages, *dem*, which is both the third person plural pronoun and the plural marker for nouns, may follow a personal noun to refer to people associated with the person whose name is mentioned.

## 16.6. Demonstratives

- (60) a. *Dis man de slip.*  
 this man -C sleep  
 ‘This man is sleeping.’  
 b. *Dat man de slip.*  
 that man -C sleep  
 ‘That man is sleeping.’

In NigP, the proximal demonstrative is *dis* ‘this,’ while the distal demonstrative is *dat* ‘that.’

## 16.7. Demonstrative plus definite or plural

- (61) a. *Dis man dem de slip.*  
 this man they -C sleep  
 ‘These men are sleeping.’  
 b. *Dat man dem de slip.*  
 that man they -C sleep  
 ‘Those men are sleeping.’

The plural marker *dem* may be used with the demonstratives *dis* ‘this’ or *dat* ‘that’ to express the plural ‘these’ and ‘those’ respectively. Demonstratives cannot be used with the definite article *di*.

## 16.8. Relative clauses plus definite or plural marker

- (62) *Di man (dem) (we) (dem) de slip (dem) neva chop.*  
 the man (they) (REL) (they) -C sleep (they) NEG+C eat  
 ‘The men who are sleeping have not eaten.’

Neither the definite article nor the demonstratives have a relativizing function in NigP. No conclusive arguments have as yet been put forward as to whether *dem*



functions as a plural marker or as a pronoun when it is found at the head of a relative clause.

#### 16.9. Prenominal adjective

- (63) *Di yɛlo wɛ di yɛlo man de yɛlo go yɛlo moa.*  
 The palor REL the pallid man -C be pale -R be pale more  
 ‘The paleness that the pallid man is pale by will be even more pale.’ or  
 ‘The pallid man will be getting a lot paler.’

As explained in section 13.1. above, adjectival verbs can be used as nouns without any additional marking. Nominalised adjectival verbs are placed before nouns in a possessive construction (see section 17.1. below) when they are used as prenominal ‘adjectives’.

#### 16.10. Postnominal adjective

- (64) *Adeola sik.*  
 s/he be sick  
 ‘Adeola is sick.’

Adjectival verbs normally occur after the subject to which they refer.

#### 16.11. Gender agreement

As in most of its substrates and superstrates, there is no gender agreement within noun phrases in NigP.

### 17. Possession

#### 17.1. Unmarked noun plus noun constructions

- (65) *di pikin plet*  
 the child plate  
 ‘the child’s plate’

When nouns are juxtaposed without any overt markers indicating the relationship between them, the usual order in NigP is modifier noun + head noun: *Nayjirya wuman* ‘a Nigerian woman.’ The same pattern applies to unmarked possessives in NigP as well, where the noun which refers to the possessor precedes the noun that refers to the possessed entity: possessor + possessed.

## 17.2. Noun plus noun constructions containing adpositions

- (66) *nayf fɔr Chinyere*  
 knife LOC Chinyere  
 ‘Chinyere’s knife’

A marginal noun + noun construction containing the adposition *fɔr* exists in some lects of NigP. In this construction, the usual order is head noun + *fɔr* + modifier noun *tebol fɔr rayt* ‘writing table’ or possessed + *fɔr* + possessor.

## 17.3. Noun plus noun constructions containing possessive adjectives

As shown in 17.4. below, possessive adjectives are normally placed between two nouns in NigP possessive constructions, yielding the following structure: possessor + possessive adjective + possessed entity.

## 17.4. Possessive adjectives

- (67) a. *Chinyere im nayf*  
 Chinyere her knife  
 ‘Chinyere’s knife’

Possessive adjectives precede the nouns that they modify. The possessive adjectives in NigP include the following:

- b. *ma* ‘my’  
*yɔ* ‘your (singular)’  
*im* ‘his/her/its’  
*awa* ‘our’  
*una* ‘your (plural)’  
*dɛm* ‘their’

## 17.5. Possessive pronouns

- (68) *Ma on fayn pas yɔ on.*  
 My own be fine pass your own  
 ‘Mine is better than yours.’

Possessive pronouns are formed by using the particle *on* ‘own’ after a possessive adjective (see section 13.6. above).

17.6. Possessive pronouns as emphatic possessive adjectives

- (69) *Ma on haws fayn pas yɔ on.*  
 My own house be fine pass your own  
 ‘My (emphasis on my) house is better than yours.’

In some lects of NigP possessive pronouns may be used as emphatic possessive adjectives.

**18. Pronouns**

18.1. Personal pronouns: first person singular

- (70) *mi* (high tone) ‘I (emphatic)’  
*a* (low tone) ‘I (SRPRO)’  
*mi* ‘me’

The emphatic first person singular subject pronoun *mi* carries a high tone, while the subject referencing first person singular subject pronoun *a* carries a low tone. The first person singular object pronoun is *mi*. See also sections 17.4. and 17.5. above.

18.2. Personal pronouns: second person singular

- (71) *yu* (high tone) ‘you (singular, subject, emphatic)’  
*yu* (low tone) ‘you (singular, subject, SRPRO)’  
*yu* ‘you (singular, object)’

The emphatic second person singular subject pronoun *yu* carries a high tone, while the subject referencing second person singular subject pronoun *yu* carries a low tone. The second person singular object pronoun is *yu*.

18.3. Personal pronouns: third person singular

- (72) *im* (high tone) ‘he/she/it (emphatic)’  
*im~i* (low tone) ‘he/she/it (SRPRO)’  
*-am* ‘him/her/it (object)’

The emphatic third person singular subject pronoun *im* carries a high tone, while the subject referencing third person singular subject pronoun *im* (which may be shortened to *i*) carries a low tone. The third person singular object pronoun is the clitic *-am*.

## 18.4. Personal pronouns: first person nonsingular

- |      |                       |                 |
|------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| (73) | <i>wi</i> (high tone) | ‘we (emphatic)’ |
|      | <i>wi</i> (low tone)  | ‘we (SRPRO)’    |
|      | <i>ɔs</i>             | ‘us’            |

The emphatic first person plural subject pronoun *wi* carries a high tone, while the subject referencing first person plural subject pronoun *wi* carries a low tone. The first person plural object pronoun is *ɔs*.

## 18.5. Personal pronouns: second person nonsingular

- |      |                           |                                   |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (74) | <i>una</i> (low-low tone) | ‘you (plural, subject, emphatic)’ |
|      | <i>una</i> (low-low tone) | ‘you (plural, subject, SRPRO)’    |
|      | <i>una</i>                | ‘you (plural, object)’            |

Both the emphatic second person plural subject pronoun *una* and the subject referencing second person plural subject pronoun *una* carry a low-low tone sequence. The second person plural object pronoun is *una* as well.

## 18.6. Personal pronouns: third person nonsingular

- |      |                        |                   |
|------|------------------------|-------------------|
| (75) | <i>dɛm</i> (high tone) | ‘they (emphatic)’ |
|      | <i>dɛm</i> (low tone)  | ‘they (SRPRO)’    |
|      | <i>dɛm</i>             | ‘them’            |

The emphatic third person plural subject pronoun *dɛm* carries a high tone, while the subject referencing third person plural subject pronoun *dɛm* carries a low tone. The third person plural object pronoun is *dɛm* as well.

## 18.7. Reflexive pronouns

- |      |    |                                 |
|------|----|---------------------------------|
| (76) | a. | <i>A si ma sef for glas.</i>    |
|      |    | I see my self LOC glass         |
|      |    | ‘I saw myself in the mirror.’   |
|      | b. | <i>A si (ma) bɔdi for glas.</i> |
|      |    | I see (my) body LOC glass       |
|      |    | ‘I saw myself in the mirror.’   |

Reflexive pronouns are formed by using the words *sef* ‘self’ or *bɔdi* ‘body’ after a possessive adjective. *Bɔdi* may be used as a reflexive pronoun alone without the possessive adjective as well.

18.8. Interrogative pronouns and other question words  
(see also section 14.4. above)

<i>wating, weting</i>	‘what, which’
<i>hu, huspesin</i>	‘who, whom’
<i>haw mɔch, haw meni</i>	‘how much, how many’
<i>haw, wichwe</i>	‘how’
<i>way, weting mek</i>	‘why’
<i>wɛ, wɛples</i>	‘where’
<i>wichtaim, hustaim</i>	‘when’
<i>abi, no bi so</i>	‘yes-no question tag’

18.9. Relative pronouns (see also section 10.3. above)

(77) *wɛ* ‘what, which’

**19. Coordinating conjunctions**

19.1. Clause coordination

(78) *A go go maket and yu go go haws.*  
I -R go market and you -R go house  
‘I’ll go to the market and you’ll go home.’

The conjunctions *and* ‘and’, *ɔ* ‘or’ and *bɔt* ‘but’ are used to join full sentences.

19.2. Constituent coordination

(79) *Mi and yu go go maket.*  
me and you -R go market  
‘I and you will go to the market.’

*And* ‘and’ and *ɔ* ‘or’ may be used to join a wide variety of constituents.

**20. Adpositions**

20.1. General locative preposition

(80) *A kɔm fɔr haws witi yu and Okon.*  
I come LOC house with you and Okon  
‘I came home with you and Okon.’

Following a pattern typical of both the NigP substrates and the Atlantic creoles, *fɔr* ‘at, in on, to, etc.’ is the general adposition in NigP. *Fɔr* may be followed by loca-

tional nouns to further specify its function, *for insayd* ‘inside of’, or it may be used as a subordinator or as a modal (see sections 9.2. and 9.3. above). A few other secondary prepositions occur in NigP, including *ɔf* ‘of,’ *wit(i)* ‘with’ and *sote* ‘until.’

## 20.2. Zero preposition between motion verb and destination

- (81) *A go maket witi yu and Okon.*  
 I go market with you and Okon  
 ‘I went to market with you and Okon.’

It is not always necessary to include *for* before the destination of a verb of motion.

## 21. Miscellaneous

### 21.1. Word order: questions

- (82) *Yu chop weting?* or *(Na) weting yu chop?*  
 you eat what? (HL) what? you eat  
 ‘What did you eat?’

In questions, interrogative words (see section 18.8. above) normally occupy the position of the constituent they question. There is no special inversion process or other obligatory word order modification in interrogative constructions. All interrogative words, however, may be fronted, in which case the highlighter *na* (see section 14.4. above) may be used with all except the *yes-no* question tags *abi* and *no bi so*, which may occur either immediately before or after the constituent or construction that they question.

### 21.2. Sentence-final *o*

- (83) *A neva ring yu o. Sori o.*  
 I NEG+C ring you +R sorry +R  
 ‘I didn’t get a chance to call you. Sorry.’

As in most of its substrate languages, the sentence-final realis modality particle *o* is used with a range of meanings in NigP, from solidarity and empathy to stressing the realis (truth value) of the entire proposition.

### 21.3. Ideophones

- (84) *A go slap yu zaway!*  
 I -R slap you ideophone  
 ‘I’m going to slap you so that it really hurts!’

As in most of its substrate languages, an open and productive class of onomatopoeic words called ideophones may be used at the end of NigP utterances (and sometimes elsewhere in a sentence) to punctuate or dramatize the event expressed by a verb.

### **Selected references**

Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# Ghanaian English: morphology and syntax

Magnus Huber and Kari Dako

## 1. Introduction

As in the field of phonology, the morphological and syntactical differences between Ghanaian English (GhE) and British English (BrE) are variable rather than categorical. They are more strongly present in spoken varieties than in the written mode and also depend on the degree of formality, with conversational GhE showing more Ghanaianisms than more formal styles.

Tingley (1981) investigated the English of Ghanaian newspapers in the period between 1976 and 1977 and found significant deviances (Tingley 1981: 40) in the domain of (a) articles (omission, insertion and diverging use), (b) prepositions (omission, insertion and substitution), (c) phrasal verbs (omission, insertion, substitution), (d) mass nouns (used as count nouns), (e) concord (verbs, nouns, personal pronouns), (f) modal auxiliaries (use of past tense forms where BrE has present tense forms, substitution), (g) infinite verb forms (infinitive for *-ing* form and vice versa), (h) intransitive uses of transitive verbs, (i) omission of the coordinator *and*, (j) change in the sequence of premodifiers, and (k) adjective forms used adverbially.

In spite of this variety of differences, the overall syntax of GhE is rather close to BrE and intelligibility for the native speaker is generally maintained. Note also that many of these characteristics are not specific to GhE but can be found in many English as a Second Language (L2) varieties of English around the world.

## 2. Verb phrase

In the domain of phrasal verbs three basic patterns of substitution, insertion and omission of the particle can be observed. Particle substitution is illustrated in (1)–(3):

- (1) *Put off the gas before you leave.*
- (2) *The audience is invited to cheer their favourite team up.*
- (3) *He was charged for stealing a goat.*

A sentence like (3) may even be used by senior judges and professors of law. In some verbs a particle is inserted, as in (4) and (5):

- (4) *They requested for higher pay.*



(5) *We were encouraged to voice **out** our opinion.*

In other cases the particle is omitted, as in (6):

(6) *The man they arrested answers  $\emptyset$  the description of the armed robber.*

The intransitive use of some transitive verbs and the transitive use of intransitive verbs is relatively common. The verb *reply*, for instance, is consistently used in the same structure as *answer*, that is, as a transitive verb, as in example (7) taken from a newspaper:

(7) *The counsel ... will today **reply an argument** ... by the Acting Attorney-General.*

On the other hand, *afford* is often used intransitively:

(8) *Few people go to hospitals at all. They cannot just **afford**.*

*Award* is often used for *reward* or *award with/reward for*:

(9) *So this man was **awarded**. But nobody in the whole town liked him.*

Stative verbs are often used progressively, as in (10)–(12):

(10) *She **is having** a child with a certain man from Ho.*

(11) *I **am having** a book.*

(12) *The rural areas **are not having** access to higher education.*

The *to*-infinitive and the *-ing* form are often used interchangeably, as in (13) and (14):

(13) *He **considered to leave** before sunrise.*

(14) *The government **wishes eradicating** poverty.*

## 2.1. Tense-aspect-modality

There is a certain tendency to substitute the past perfect for the present perfect and to use the present perfect with reference to a completed action. Examples are given in (15) and (16):

(15) *The Government will have to take sterner measures than it **had** hitherto **done**.*

(16) *It **has been established** hundreds of years ago.*

Especially in spoken GhE, *be coming to* and *be going to* are used interchangeably to encode (proximate) future or ingressiveness:

- (17) *I am coming to cook your meal.*  
 ‘I am about to cook your meal’.

This appears to be a calque on the equivalent Akan structure: in the Twi dialect, for example, ingressive constructions are formed with the prefixes *be-* or *ko-*, derived from the verbs meaning ‘come’ and ‘go’ as in (18):

- (18) *ɔ- kɔ-/be- fá n' adé.*  
 he- go-/come- take this thing  
 ‘He is about to take his property’.

There is also a proximate ingressive in Twi, where these prefixes combine with the progressive marker *re-* as in (19):

- (19) *ɔ-re- kɔ-/be- fá n' adé.*  
 he-PROG- go-/come- take this thing  
 ‘He is (just) about to take his property’.

At times, *never* expresses negative completive aspect:

- (20) *I never knew you were in town.*  
 ‘I didn’t know you were in town’.

## 2.2. Auxiliaries

*Would* commonly expresses definite future, as in (21). A similar trend, albeit on a lesser scale, can be observed in *could* for *can*, as in (22):

- (21) *We hereby wish to inform you that the meeting would take place on Thursday.*  
 (22) *We are hoping that he could finish it by tomorrow.*

A much lower rate of the politer modal forms than in BrE can be observed. Polite requests such as *could I/you*, *might I*, *would it be possible* and others are relatively rare. What is viewed as a polite request in Ghana is often what a native speaker of Standard British English (StBrE) would consider an order with the addition of *please*. (23), addressed to a lecturer in his office, illustrates this use:

- (23) *I want to borrow your book, please.*

Tagging is relatively rare in GhE. If it is used at all, it tends to be added in the invariant form *isn't it?* as in (24) and (25):

- (24) *He lives in Kumasi, isn't it?*  
 (25) *Kwadwo left early for work, isn't it?*

## 2.3. Negation

A constant source of confusion for the overseas visitor is the fact that Ghanaians (like other West Africans) answer to the form, not the contents of *yes-no* questions. This can create serious misunderstandings as far as negative questions are concerned:

- (26) Q: *Isn't your mother at home?*  
 A: *Yes.*  
 '(What you say is true,) she is **not** at home'; or  
*She is there.*  
 'She is at home'

Tagging is hardly used in responses:

- (27) Q: *You didn't find the book, did you?*  
 A: *Yes.*  
 'I didn't'. (*Yes, I did* is rare); or  
*I found it.*  
 'I did'

The distribution of the indefinite pronouns *some/none/any* and their compounds is sometimes different from that in BrE, in that they appear to be in free variation. Compare (28) and (29) taken from the recording accompanying this text:

- (28) *He is not supposed to mention **nobody's** name.*  
 (29) *You are not supposed to mention **somebody's** name.*

In negative sentences, the indefinite adverb *either* is at times replaced by *too*, as in (30):

- (30) *You didn't have enough rest **too**.*

*Please* collocates with *no* or *not* to indicate polite negative sentences and denials:

- (31) Q: *Have you seen my red pen?*  
 A: ***Please, no.***

- (32) ***Please, I cannot** come to class tomorrow.*

*Please* is a general politeness marker, also used in sentences with positive polarity:

- (33) Q: *Did you drop Seedu in Madina?*  
 A: *Yes, **please.***

### 3. Relativization and complementation

Relative clause formation closely follows StBrE, both in the choice of the relativizer (*who, which, that*) and the syntax of the subordinated clause (post-nominal, no inversion of word order). However, particularly in conversational varieties of GhE, there is a tendency for the underlying nominal of the relative clause to surface as a resumptive pronoun, especially in non-subject positions, as in (34) and (35):

(34) *The book that I read **it**.*

(35) *The old woman who I gave **her** the money.*

For a discussion of the complementizer *that* see section 2.3. on suprasegmentals in the companion chapter on GhE phonology (other volume).

### 4. Adverbial subordination

Especially in the more informal range of conversational GhE, some adverbial subordinators show slight difference in usage. For example, *if* tends to be replaced by *suppose(ing)*:

(36) ***Suppose** I put the wire this way it won't be a problem.*

There is a preference for relating events in the order that they actually occurred. The resulting iconic syntax requires subordinators that are different from the ones used in StBrE, as illustrated by (37):

(37) *The man came there, **before** one of the Muslims went there.*

StBrE would have something like (38):

(38) *One of the Muslims went there **after** the man had come.*

The tendency towards syntactic iconicity also results in constructions like the one in (39):

(39) ***Unless** you speak loud **before** he can understand.  
'He can (only) hear you if you speak loud'.*

Probably on the basis of such uses, *unless* frequently signals a state or an action that is perceived to precede another either temporally or logically, as in (40):

(40) A: *I want some tea*  
B: ***Unless** I boil some water first.  
'Let me boil some water for you'.*

## 5. Agreement

With a few minor exceptions, Ghanaian languages do not morphologically encode gender. Therefore the pronominal distinctions present in BrE sometimes break down in GhE, even among the most highly educated users as in (41) and (42):

(41) *He is called Mary.*

(42) *When he wanted to marry him she said he would wait till he had finished her education.*

However, variation is not completely random, since there appears to be a tendency for the pronominal determiner to select the gender of the noun it modifies:

(43) *He was looking for her aunt.*

(44) *She thought his husband had travelled.*

Such variation can also be observed with biological gender in nominals: *Master* is often found in free variation with *Madam* (the deferential address for a female boss), or *nephew* with *niece*, regardless of the sex of the referent.

Many GhE speakers do not maintain the distinction between *this* and *these*, realizing both as [ðis/dis]. The result is that there seems to be no agreement between the proximate demonstrative and a plural noun. To a native speaker of BrE, GhE [dis bɔis] sounds like *this boys*. Note that this erosion of the number distinction may possibly have its explanation in phonology rather than morphology: GhE neutralizes the length and quality distinctions of BrE [i: – ɪ] to [ɪ] and tends to devoice final obstruents, yielding [-s] for BrE [-z], which results in [ðis/dis] for both demonstratives.

Notional subject-verb concord accounts for examples like (45):

(45) *The burial of dead bodies are becoming expensive.* (Gyasi 1991: 30)

## 6. Noun phrase structure

One of the most frequent differences between BrE and GhE concerns the use of definite and indefinite articles. GhE omits articles that are required in BrE, inserts articles where there are none in BrE, and also ignores distinctions of definiteness that are made in BrE.

The omission of the definite article in the names of national and international bodies is very common:

(46) *She just arrived from ∅ United States of America.*

(47) *The representative of ∅ World Health Organisation visited the facility.*

However, if the noun is the name of a commercial establishment or public facility, the article is often inserted:

- (48) *He was appointed sales representative at **the** Nestlé, Ghana Ltd.*  
 (49) *They are supposed to arrive at **the** Kotoka International Airport this evening.*

The definite article also tends to be deleted where the head of the NP is post-modified with an *of*-phrase, as in:

- (50) *He called for Ø abolition of the death penalty.*  
 (51) *...when Ø remuneration of health workers needs to be addressed.*

Even the most highly educated speakers of GhE sometimes omit the indefinite article, as in (52):

- (52) *I want to buy Ø car.*

Often, this happens by analogy with similar collocations, as in (53):

- (53) *My sister became Ø teacher in Achimota.*  
 (analogous to StBrE *My sister became chairperson*).

This can also be observed with the definite article:

- (54) *She was on her way to Ø bank.*  
 (analogous to StBrE *She was on her way to church*).  
 (55) *When we talk of the freedom of Ø press.*  
 (analogous to StBrE *When we talk of the freedom of speech*).

The omission of an article in *majority (of)/minority (of)* can be described as default usage in Ghana. These forms are used extensively in the printed press, in news broadcasts and in official speeches:

- (56) **Majority of** *Ghanaians live in rural areas.*  
 (57) **Minority of** *those present voted for him.*  
 (58) *The ruling party hoped for **majority** when the House voted.*

Analogy also accounts for the levelling of the definiteness distinctions to be found in BrE. GhE has

- (59) *He started at **an** early age of 15.*  
 (analogous to StBrE *He started work at an early age*).  
 (60) *I had **a** shock of my life yesterday.*  
 (analogous to StBrE *I had a shock yesterday*).

*Few/a few* are often used interchangeably, as illustrated by (61), spoken with some variations on the weather forecast every evening:

(61) *There will be  $\emptyset$  **few** scattered showers over the country.*

The use of the prenominal *a certain* for *some* or *a* generally indicates that the modified element is not to be named, as in the following examples from newspaper articles:

(62) *A “**certain** somebody” – as we say in these parts – intimated that it was unnecessary to stage a peaceful demonstration.*

(63) *This landfill project serves as ample evidence of the failure of **certain** people, and institutions.*

In addition to article usage, the treatment of non-count nouns as count nouns is another salient feature of GhE (and of other Englishes around the world). A number of non-count nouns are persistently used as count nouns in Ghana. These include *accommodation*, *advice*, *correspondence*, *equipment*, *furniture*, *luggage* and *work*.

(64) *We see the students looking for **an accommodation** anywhere they can find.*

(65) *She gave me **many advices** before she left.*

(66) *I have to do **the correspondences** before I leave.*

(67) *The firm donated **equipments** worth 5 mill. cedis to the university.*

(68) *You should have seen **the furnitures!***

(69) ***Five luggages** were left unclaimed at the State Transport.*

(70) *Congratulations for **a good work** done!*

Conversely, count nouns are sometimes treated as mass nouns, as in (71):

(71) ***This spaghetti** is thicker small.  
‘These spaghetti are a little thicker’.*

The use of prepositions constitutes another area of common divergence between BrE and GhE. Written and spoken varieties of GhE are characterized by the replacement, omission and insertion of prepositions vis-à-vis BrE. Apart from the area of phrasal verbs mentioned above, substitution can be observed in combinations of noun + preposition (e.g. *insistence at*, *contender to*), of adverb + preposition (e.g. *unworthy for*, *conducive for*) and of preposition of place + noun (*at the boiler room*, *on the stadium*). In addition, we find *of*-deletion in partitive constructions (*five bags rice*, *six bottles Schnapps*), while *of*-insertion occurs in

phrases like *many of such cases* or *one of such organisations*. Structures of the form *in Ghana here* ‘here in Ghana’ appear to be calqued on Akan *wo Ghana ho*.

## 7. Topicalization and focus constructions

Spoken GhE in particular has a strong tendency towards left-dislocation, realized through topicalization and focus constructions as in (72) and (73):

(72) *After church I'll come.*

(73) *That teacher in Achimota, is he your uncle?*

Left-dislocation is also achieved through pronominal apposition, that is the insertion of a copy pronoun of the noun phrase:

(74) *That woman **she** cheated me.*

Constructions like these are very common, but restricted to the first person singular if the copied noun phrase is a pronoun:

(75) *Me **I** cannot come.*

The rather frequent topicalizing construction *as for...*, for example *As for me, I won't like it*, can also be interpreted as an instance of left-dislocation and possibly constitutes the source of the pronominal apposition of the *Me I...* type (through deletion of *As for*). Cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions are also much more common than in BrE. See (76)–(78):

(76) *It is here that I live.*

(77) *It was then that she came.*

(78) *Is it me you are looking for?*

Spoken GhE is also marked by the frequent presence of topicalizers, most of which are borrowed from local Ghanaian languages. The most common are *a:*, *diɛ*, *kɔra:*, *nɔ*, *pa:*, *wa:* and *tu* (the latter derives from English *too*).

(79) *But the rumour **too** in town is that...*

(80) *So she decided **nɔ** to report him.*

(81) *As for me **diɛ** me I don't understand.*

Note the triple topicalization in the last sentence: *As for me* + *diɛ* + pronominal apposition *me I*.



Sentence coordination is often achieved by *and then* in informal spoken GhE, especially where there is a perceived temporal order or causal relationship between the coordinated sentences:

(82) *I woke up **and then** found that the television was still on.*

By analogy, the use of *and then* is sometimes extended to constructions where there is no obvious temporal or causal relationship between the coordinated sentences or constituents, as in (83):

(83) *You take beans **and then** plantains.*

Alternatively, NPs can also be conjoined by the coordinator *plus*:

(84) *Rice **plus** beans.*

## 8. Lexicon

Dako (2001; 2003) has documented some 3,000 borrowings in constant use in GhE writing. The number is considerably higher in spoken discourse, but includes a less fixed vocabulary. About 60 percent of these Ghanaianisms derive from English and have undergone semantic change. Most conspicuous among these are the items *fool(ish)*, *mad*, *insane*, *silly*, *stupid* and *nonsense*, which are considered translations of local taboo words and are highly insulting.

The same processes that other varieties of English undergo in their word-formation processes can be discerned in GhE, including semantic extension (for example *musical* ‘musical interlude on the radio’), restriction (*chock* ‘heavy wooden wedge used as brake for older lorries’), shift (*mineral* ‘soft drink’), pejoration (*silly* ‘[taboo] stupid’), and amelioration (*trinkets* ‘gold jewellery’). *Sorry* is an expression of commiseration and thus the response to mishaps, caused by the speaker or not:

(85) *I am sorry to tell you that the slaves were kept in these dungeons  
(a guide on a tour of a trading station).*

Some frequent idiomatic expressions are:

(86) *I am coming* or *I am going to come.*  
‘I will be back.’ (said when leaving)

(87) *I met your absence.*  
‘You were not there.’

(88) *I am taking the lead.*  
‘I’ll go ahead (and you will follow later).’

The following word-formation categories can be observed:

- Functional shift (e.g. *to outdoor* ‘the bringing out of doors of a new-born after seven days, or of a child after puberty rites’)
- Compounding of English items (*blowman* ‘hero in film, strong man’)
- Compounding of English item + local item (*jollof rice* ‘West African risotto’ < Wolof + English)
- Compounding of local item x + local item y (*koko sakora* ‘porridge without milk’ < Akan + Hausa)
- Reduplication (*red-red* ‘fried plantains and bean-stew’)
- Affixation (*confusionist* ‘someone causing confusion’)
- Clipping (*colo* ‘old, old fashioned, from the colonial period’ < *colonial*)
- Blending (*shoogle* ‘shake’ < *shook* + *wriggle*)
- Neologism (*akatomansonian* ‘supporter of the National Democratic Congress party’ < Akan + English affixation)
- Coinage (*kalabule* ‘black market business/prices’ < ?Hausa *kere kabure* ‘keep it quiet’)
- Idiomatic expressions (*item thirteen* ‘refreshment’, i.e. item not on the agenda)

Borrowings from local languages can be classified semantically according to the following categories

- abstract concepts (e.g. *Kofe Ne/and Amma* ‘day-name collection in church’)
- references/appellations for persons (*magajia* ‘woman, wife’ < Hausa)
- food and drink (*kokonte/nkonkote* ‘fufu made from cassava flour’ < Akan)
- interjections/exclamations (*tsoo boii/tsooboi/chooboi* [battle cry] < Ga)
- cultural concepts (*adowa* [Akan dance] < Akan)
- religion and beliefs (*Asaman* ‘land of the dead’ < Akan)
- clothes and ornaments (*fugu* ‘northern smock’ < Moore)
- gadgets/tools/implements (*g(a)rawa* ‘kerosene tin container, capacity measure’ < Hausa)

Culture-specific borrowings in particular retain their original phonological contour. Thus, the tones of *nananom* ‘chiefs’ are always LLH. A similar tendency can be observed in grammatical adaptations. Borrowed nouns usually maintain their original plural markers, for example singular *okyame* ‘chief’s spokesman’ (< Akan) – plural *akyame* and singular *togbe* ‘grandfather (and appellation for chief in Ewe)’ – plural *togbuiwo*. While the plural is not encoded by English -s alone (*\*okyames*, *\*togbes*), a combination of the Akan plural marker *a-* and English -s is possible (*akyames*).

*Since* at times replaces *on* + definite time as in (89), at times *for* as in (90) and at times *in* as in (91):

(89) *It was deposited **since** February 6, 1989.*

(90) *We have been friends **since** three years.*

(91) *The opposition alliance which he started championing **since** 1989.*

*Last* + time reference is used as time reference + *ago* as in (92), while *next* + time reference means *in* + time reference as in (93):

(92) ***Last two days** I met my sister on campus.*

‘Two days ago...’

(93) *I expect him **next two weeks**.*

‘...in two weeks’.

*Whiles* for *while/whilst* is very common. Some newspapers use only this form:

(94) *A train and a car used by him **whiles** alive.*

### Selected references

Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# Ghanaian Pidgin English: morphology and syntax

Magnus Huber

## 1. Introduction

Ghanaian Pidgin English (GhP) is part of the West African Pidgin (WAP) continuum, which includes the varieties spoken in Sierra Leone (Krio), Ghana, Nigeria, and Cameroon. There are many similarities between the restructured Englishes spoken in these countries, which can to a large part be explained by the fact that the pidgins spoken in Ghana, Nigeria, and Cameroon are offshoots of Krio (see Huber 1999: 75–134 for details). For this reason, the following sections will place special emphasis on those aspects where GhP differs from the other WAPs, in particular Nigerian Pidgin (NigP). Readers are therefore advised to consult the articles by Elugbe and Faraclas (this volume) to get a full contrastive view of NigP and GhP.

Abbreviations used in this chapter are as follows: ABIL = ability (mood); CAUS = causative; COMPL = completive aspect; COP = copula; COMP = complementizer; DEF = definite article; DEM = demonstrative; EMPH = emphazier; FOC = focus marker; INCOMPL = incompletive aspect (progressive, habitual); INDEF = indefinite article; INT = intentionalis; IRR = irrealis mood (future, conditional); NEG = negator; PLF = plural free subject pronoun; PLB = plural bound subject pronoun; PL = nominal plural; PLOB = plural bound object pronoun; SGB = singular free subject pronoun; SB = singular bound pronoun; SEQ = sequential tense; SGOB = singular bound object pronoun; SGPOSS = singular possessive pronoun; SGREFL = singular reflexive pronoun; TOP = topicalizer.

## 2. Syntax and morphology

In comparison to other WAPs, GhP is notable for its lack of some of the more central grammatical morphemes and in some areas of grammar it looks like a simplified version of e.g. NigP. Nevertheless, the structure of GhP is still complex enough for it to be called a creole, even though it is not used as a mother tongue. The following will place special emphasis on GhP's major divergences from NigP.

2.1. Verb phrase

GhP, like the rest of the WAPs, is characterized by preverbal markers that express modal and aspectual meanings. Bickerton (1980: 5–6) outlined the following prototypical Creole TMA system, which he claimed to be universal in Creole languages:

- (a) the zero form marks simple past for action verbs and non-past for state verbs.
- (b) a marker of anterior aspect [sic] indicates past-before-past for action verbs and simple past for state verbs.
- (c) a marker of irrealis aspect [sic] indicates ‘unreal time’ (= futures, conditionals, subjunctives, etc.) for all verbs.
- (d) a marker of non-punctual aspect indicates durative or iterative aspect for action verbs.

The following table is a contrastive overview of these Bickertonian tense-mood-aspect markers in NigP and GhP (grave accent = low tone):

Table 1. The NigP and GhP core TMA systems

Tense		Mood		Aspect	
NigP	GhP	NigP	GhP	NigP	GhP
<i>bìn</i> anterior	∅	<i>gò</i> irrealis	<i>gò</i> irrealis	<i>dè</i> incompletive	<i>dè</i> incompletive

2.1.1. Tense

GhP lacks the marker for anterior tense (*contra* Turchetta 1996: 124). Therefore, relative tense (past for stative verbs and past-before-past for action verbs) can only be inferred from the context or from time adverbials. Also, since there is no formal way of marking anteriority, the Bickertonian default tense allocation for active and stative verbs (point [a] above) plays a less prominent role in GhP. In fact, unmarked verbs, stative or active, are equally open to a non-past, past, or past-before-past reading in GhP.

Although GhP shares the incompletive (= nonpunctual) aspect marker with other WAPs, another central aspectual auxiliary is absent from its TMA inventory: in NigP the completive marker is preverbal *dɔ̀n*, and its negative counterpart is *neva*. *Dɔ̀n* is unknown in GhP (*contra* Amoako 1992: 73). However, GhP shares with other WAPs an alternative strategy to encode completion: serialized *finif*, which follows the verb marked for completiveness:

- (1) *à baf finif, à dè kom ma he o.*  
 1SGB bathe COMPL 1SGB INCOMP comb 1SGPOSS hair TOP  
 ‘I had finished my bath and was combing my hair’.

Other TMA markers that are shared by NigP and GhP will only be illustrated here by one example each:

- (2) *afta skul à tek hε as ε gelfrɛn bifo wì kam*  
 after school 1SG take 3SG as a girlfriend before 1PLB SEQ  
*bɔn.* (kam – sequential tense)  
 give-birth  
 ‘She became my girlfriend after school and then we got a child’.

### 2.1.2. Mood

- (3) *jù no gò fit slip.* (gò – irrealis, fit – ability)  
 2SG NEG IRR ABIL sleep  
 ‘You won’t be able to sleep’.
- (4) *wì fɔ̃ giv àm tʃans.* (fɔ̃ – deontic mood)  
 1PLB DEO give 3SG chance  
 ‘We should/have to give her/him a chance’.
- (5) *dε fait ì wan tʃɔp-tʃɔp a: frɔm dat ples tu aʃanti*  
 DEF fight 3SG INT eat(x2) TOP from DEM place to Ashanti  
*ridʒɛn o.* (wan – proximate future)  
 region TOP  
 ‘The fighting was about to spread from that place to the Ashanti Region’.

The NigP infinitive marker *fɔ̃* is not attested in GhP.

### 2.1.3. Aspect

- (6) *dε tin ì no dè go fɔwad.* (dè – incomplete)  
 DEF thing 3SG NEG INCOMP go forward  
 ‘The thing was not moving forward’.

### 2.1.4. Copula verbs

GhP does not have the positive equative copula/highlighter *na*, common in other WAPs. Instead, GhP makes use of *bì* (7), which is also used in cleft sentences (8). In both cases, NigP, Camp, and Krio use *na*.

- (7) *wì tɪŋk se ì bì bad tɪŋ.*  
 1PLB think COMP 3SG COP bad thing  
 ‘We thought it was something bad’.

- (8) *ì b̀ì so f̀es ̀nkruma wan mek àm.*  
 3SGB COP so first Nkrumah INT make 3SGOB  
 ‘That’s how Nkrumah wanted to do it first’.

Although existential *get* ‘there is’ is attested in GhP, it is not used in the impersonal *i get* (3sg *get*) construction as in NigP. Rather, speakers of GhP prefer *ẁì get*:

- (9) *ẁì get s̀om lokal lamp.*  
 1PLB get INDEF local lamp  
 ‘There are local lamps’.

### 2.1.5. Comparison

Comparison is usually achieved by serialized *pas*. In other WAPs, the omission of the object of comparison in such constructions conveys a comparative or superlative meaning. In GhP, however, deletion of the object (bold in the following example) is not possible.

- (10) *ì luk f̀ain sef pas **dis** **aua** **eria** sef.*  
 3SGB look fine FOC pass DEM 1PP area FOC  
 ‘It even looks nicer than our area’.

## 2.2. Noun Phrase

### 2.2.1. Articles

Non-specific (generic) nouns, both countables and uncountables, are not accompanied by an article:

- (11) *ǹomali ẁì d̀è bai Øfip kil àm.*  
 normally 1PLB INCOMP buy sheep kill 3SGOB  
 ‘Normally, we buy a sheep and kill it’.

Specific singular and plural nouns can be marked by the invariant definite article *dɛ*, corresponding to NigP *di*:

- (12) *j̀ù g̀ò fit stan en luk insai **dɛ** sinema sef.*  
 2SGB IRR ABIL stand and look inside DEF cinema FOC  
 ‘You would have been able to stand (on a heap) and look into the cinema’.
- (13) ***dɛ** traib we à kɔl fɔ j̀ù ì b̀ì dem.*  
 DEF tribe COMP 1SGB call for 2SGOB 3SGB COP 3PLF  
*dɛa tʃiʃs de*  
 3SGPOSS chiefs COP  
 ‘The chiefs of the tribes that I enumerated are around’.

The GhP indefinite articles are different from those of NigP. In GhP, *sɔm* is usually used in the singular (PL in NigP):

- (14) *wì get sɔm ɛria dè dè kɔl àm kaokodi.*  
 1PLB get INDEF area 3PLB IRR call 3SGOB Kaokodi  
 ‘There is an area that is called Kaokodi’.

Only occasionally does *sɔm* occur in plural contexts, its common environment in NigP:

- (15) *à si sɔm smɔ-smɔ pikins.*  
 1SGB see INDEF small(x2) child-PL  
 ‘I saw small children’.

Note that in these cases, plurality of the noun is always also indicated by other means such as reduplication of an attributive adjective and/or an *-s* suffix. In more acrolectal varieties, *sɔm* varies with the StGhE *ɛ* in the singular:

- (16) *à de as ɛ batʃɛla ap til nau.*  
 1SGB COP as INDEF bachelor up till now  
 ‘I have been living as a bachelor until now’.

In the singular, *sɔm* is occasionally replaced by *wan*, the NigP indefinite singular article:

- (17) *àm draivin wan alahadʒi.*  
 I’m driving INDEF Hadji  
 ‘I’m driving a Hadji’.

Article + noun + article structures occur in the student variety (i.e. an informal, spontaneous spoken but nevertheless educated subset of English in Ghana) and are calqued on the respective structure in Akan (i.e. one of the major languages of Ghana). (18) illustrates the postposed Akan specifier *bi*:

- (18) *a dʒas de insai sɔm smɔl ʃɔts bi.*  
 1SGB just COP inside some small shorts [Akan specifier]  
 ‘I was only wearing shorts’.

Note that the use of all overt articles is optional if the context provides sufficient information concerning the definiteness of the noun.

Table 2. The GhP article system

		Non-specific	Specific Indefinite	definite
Countables	singular	Ø	<i>sɔm</i> , <i>ɛ</i> , ( <i>wan</i> ), Ø	<i>dɛ</i> , Ø
	plural	Ø	( <i>sɔm</i> ), Ø	<i>dɛ</i> , Ø
Uncountables		Ø	<i>sɔm</i> , Ø	<i>dɛ</i> , Ø



2.2.2. *Number*

GhP does not have the postposed plural marker *dɛm* found in Krio, CamP, and NigP. However, there are several ways to indicate nominal plurality. First, plural nouns may remain unmarked, so that number has to be inferred from the context. In the following example, the plurality of *wumã* can be deduced from the fact that the resumptive pronoun in the relative clause is third person plural:

- (19) *wì get sɔm wumã we dè dè kuk.*  
 1PLB get INDEF woman COMP 3PLB INCOMP cook  
 ‘There were women who cooked (for us)’.

By far the most common plural marker in GhP is the *-s* suffix, as in StGhE. The *-s* may occur on its own or combine with other pluralization strategies, such as reduplication (21):

- (20) *dis tʃɪfs ì bì dɛm get nima.*  
 DEM chief-PL 3SGB COP 3PLF get Nima  
 ‘It is these chiefs who rule Nima’.

- (21) *fufain-fufain bɔis*  
 shoe-shine(x2) boy-PL  
 ‘Shoe-shiner boys’

For the expression of plurality through reduplication of nouns see 2.4.1. below.

2.2.3. *Personal pronouns*

GhP has two sets of pronouns: free and bound. Free pronouns bear a high tone (marked with an acute accent) and cannot directly precede a verb. They occur in emphatic or contrastive contexts, e.g. in the focussed position of cleft constructions, while the low-toned bound pronouns (glossed B) always precede the verb slot. In (22) the focussed 3SG pronoun occurs in the free form *in*, whereas the one in the following relative clause is the bound form:

- (22) *ì bì in [we ì mek gɔvɔnment no put mɔ  
 3SGB COP 3SG [COMP 3SGB CAUS government NEG put more  
 prɛfa fɔ wi ].*  
 pressure for 1PLF]  
 ‘That is what prevents the government from using more pressure on us’.

Free subject pronouns cannot directly precede the verb but must be separated from it by an intervening bound pronoun:

- (23) *mi à no gò fit bai àm.*  
 1SG 1SGB NEG IRR ABIL buy 3SGB  
 ‘I won’t be able to buy it’.

Tables 3 and 4 give an overview of the GhP subject and object pronouns:

Table 3. GhP subject pronouns

	<i>Subject pronouns (free)</i>		<i>Subject pronouns (bound)</i>		
	<i>sg</i>	<i>pl</i>	<i>sg</i>	<i>pl</i>	
1	mi	wi	1	à	wi
2	ju	ju	2	jù	jù
3	in	dèm	3	i	dè, dèm

Table 4. GhP object pronouns

	<i>Object pronouns (free)</i>		<i>Object pronouns (bound)</i>		
	<i>sg</i>	<i>pl</i>	<i>sg</i>	<i>pl</i>	
1	mi	wi, ɔs, es, as	1	mì	wi, òs, ès, às
2	ju	ju	2	jù	jù
3	am	dèm	3	àm	dèm

Like in other WAPs, there is variation in the first person plural between basilectal *wi* and the successively more acrolectal forms *ɔs*, *es*, *as*.

The major characteristic that distinguishes the GhP pronominal system from that of the other WAP dialects is the absence of the second person plural form *una*. Instead, GhP has *ju*, a form identical with the StGhE pronoun. Further, the educated variety of GhP has two possessive pronouns that to my knowledge do not occur anywhere else in West Africa: *wana* ‘our’ and *dema* ‘their’.

#### 2.2.4. Noun + bound pronoun constructions

A construction that is similar to the free + bound pronoun sequence mentioned in the previous section can be found with nouns in subject position. In principle, all nouns can directly be followed by a verb (24) or may optionally be separated from it by a bound pronoun (25):

- (24) *wɔta kari dèm ɔl insai de gɔta.*  
 water carry 3PLOB all inside DEF gutter  
 ‘The flood washed them all into the drain’.

- (25) *mà sɔfa ì plenti hié.*  
 1SGPOSS suffer 3SGB be-plenty here  
 ‘My suffering is a lot here’.

However, noun + bound pronoun constructions are especially frequent in emphatic environments, e.g. in focus or emphasis through *sef*, or topicalization through e.g. *die* or *no*:

(26a) *fɔreɛ sef ì dè wɔkɔ*.  
 foreigner FOC 3SGB INCOMP walk  
 ‘Even foreigners walk around’.

(26b) *smɔl bebi die ì plenti*.  
 small baby TOP 3SGB be-many  
 ‘There are many small babies’.

Abstracting from these examples, any separation of the subject noun from the verb through intervening material favours the insertion of a bound pronoun. For example, relative clauses modifying a subject head are in almost all cases followed by a bound pronoun.

(27) *dɛ bɔs [we ì de dɛ] ì bì mà ɔŋkɛl*.  
 DEF boss [COMP 3SGB COP there] 3SGB COP 1SGPOSS uncle  
 ‘The boss there is my uncle’.

### 2.2.5. Prepositions

*Fɔ* is the main general locative/directional preposition in GhP. As in NigP, locative *fɔ* can be followed by *insai* or *outsai* (< *inside*, *outside*) to express location in or outside the point of reference. The *insai/outsai* + noun construction following the preposition resembles a possessive noun phrase – ‘the inside of Accra’ in (28). The uneducated variety prefers constructions where *insai* and *outsai* precede the possessed. The preposition may be omitted:

(28) *jù de go [fɔ [insai akra]]*.  
 2SGB INCOMP go for inside Accra  
 ‘You go to the centre of Accra’.

In student pidgin, an informal variety spoken in a more or less educated context, *insai* and *outsai* follow the reference point:

(29) *dè go tek kɔva [fɔ [buf insai]]*.  
 3PLB go take cover for bush inside  
 ‘They went and took cover in the bush’.

Another characteristic of the student variety is the use of *plas* ‘with’:

(30) *ì kam plas sɔm big taim raid*.  
 3SGB come plus INDEF big time ride  
 ‘He came with a flashy car’.

## 2.3. Conjunctions

*Den* ‘and’ is used in the educated variety to conjoin words and phrases, as in:

(31a) *mi den de tʃik gò tɔk smɔ nɔ.*  
 1SG and DEF chick IRR talk small TOP  
 ‘The chick and I will talk a little’.

(31b) *à fɔ trai den tɔk sɔm dʒɛman.*  
 1SGB DEO try and talk INDEF German  
 ‘I should try to speak some German’.

Very occasionally *plas* ‘and, with’ is heard in the uneducated variety:

(32) *dɛ mɔni we ì tek bì ĩ ò plas dɛ bet.*  
 DEF money COMP 3SGB take COP 3SGPOSS own and DEF bet  
 ‘The money that he took was his own and the bet’.

## 2.4. Reduplication

Reduplication is very frequent in GhP. It affects verbs, nouns, attributive adjectives (predicative forms are verbs in GhP), time and manner adverbials, adverbs, and numerals. The prototypical function of reduplication is the expression of plurality (verbs, nouns, numerals) or intensity (adjectives, adverbials). As to the formal characteristics of the process: GhP reduplicates the whole word stem without changing its phonological or tonemic form. For a more exhaustive treatment of reduplication in GhP, see Huber (2003).

## 2.4.1. Reduplication of nouns

Apart from *-s* suffixation, reduplication of nouns is another strategy to indicate the plural. Noun reduplications carry with them a dispersive (‘here and there, all over the place’) or sometimes an iterative (‘again and again, i.e. nothing but’) meaning, as exemplified in (33):

(33a) *wì no dè si sɔm lait-lait-lait-lait-lait-lait* (dispersive).  
 1PLB NEG INCOMP see some light(x6)  
 ‘We did not see any lights (here and there)’.

(33b) *fɛs jù dè tʃɔp ɔiɛl-ɔiɛl* (iterative).  
 first 2SGB INCOMP [eat] oil(x2)  
 ‘First, you eat oil (again and again, i.e. nothing but nice food)’.

Plurality of the noun can also be expressed by reduplicating an attributive adjective (34). This is often accompanied by an *-s* suffix on the noun (35):

- (34) *ì kari smɔl-smɔl bebi.*  
 3SGB carry small(x2) baby  
 ‘It carried small babies away’.
- (35) *dè dè giv òs sɔm smɔ-smɔ-smɔ tables.*  
 3PLB INCOMP give 1PLOB INDEF small(x3) tablet-PL  
 ‘They gave us small tablets’.

Since reduplicated adjectives can also signal intensity – see (38)–(39) below – the first example in (34) has two potential meanings: (a) simple plural – ‘small babies’, and (b) intensive – ‘very small babies’.

Reduplication as a word-formation strategy appears to be restricted to the derivation of deverbal nouns. As a rule, GhP verbs can be used as nouns without reduplicating them – as in e.g. *dɛ sɔfa dɛ* (DEF suffer COP) ‘there is suffering around’. What reduplication adds is a dispersive/iterative meaning, e.g. ‘recurring births here and there, in different families’ (36a) or ‘poverty everywhere you look’ in example (36b).

- (36a) *dɛ bɔn-bɔn ì plenti* (verb → noun).  
 DEF give-birth(x2) 3SGB be-plenty  
 ‘The births are many’.
- (36b) *ì bì puɔ-puɔ dè mek jù dè*  
 3SGB COP poor(x2) INCOMP CAUS 2SGB INCOMP  
*go bus* (adjective → noun).  
 go booze  
 ‘It is poverty that makes you go and drink’.

#### 2.4.2. Reduplication of adjectives and adverbials

Reduplicated time and manner adverbials express precision (37) or intensification (38):

- (37) *ì bì nau-nau-nau if jù go ritf dea...*  
 3SGB COP now(x3) if 2SGB go reach there...  
 ‘Even at this very moment, if you go there...’
- (38) *à tɔk tu dem wɛl-wɛl.*  
 1SGB talk to 3PLOB well(x2)  
 ‘I talked to them very sensibly’.

The function of adjective reduplication is also intensification:

- (39) *à go tek jù dip-dip-dip-dip-dip-dip plesis we*  
 1SGB IRR take 2SGB deep(x6) place-PL COMP

*ju jòsef gò dè si.*  
 2SG 2SGREFL IRR INCOMP see  
 ‘I’ll take you to very remote places where you will see with your own eyes’.

### 2.4.3. Reduplication of verbs

Reduplication of verbs expresses plurality of action. This can either be iterative/habitual (repeated or regularly recurring actions) or dispersive (several actions performed by one or more individuals, affecting several objects or different locations). One of the principal differences between iterative and dispersive aspect is whether or not the actions are performed at recurring intervals or more or less synchronically.

#### (a) Iterative or habitual

In GhP, the iterative aspect of the reduplicated verb is often emphasized by the non-punctual (habitual or progressive) marker *dè*. An example of iteration is given in (40):

(40) *ì bì biko we ì de de we ì dè*  
 3SGB COP Biko COMP 3SGB COP there COMP 3SGB INCOMP  
*vɔmit-vɔmit den fit-fit.*  
 vomit(x2) and shit(x2)  
 ‘It was Biko who (was there and) kept on vomiting and shitting’.

#### (b) Dispersive

Examples are (41) with a singular subject and (42) with a plural subject:

- (41) *mà tao ì tia-tia.*  
 1SGPOSS towel 3SGB tear(x2)  
 ‘My towel is all torn (i.e. torn here and there)’.
- (42) *dos pipu dè de insai dè haid-haid dèmsef.*  
 DEM people 3PLB COP inside 3PLB hide(x2) 3PR  
 ‘Those people who were inside hid themselves (i.e. individually in different places)’.

## 2.5. Focus

Sentence constituents can be focussed through the insertion of emphatic particles after the focussed element. The most common focus particle is *sef* ‘even’, which not only focalizes individual nouns, verbs, or adverbs, but also entire noun phrases, verb phrases, or adverbial phrases:

- (43a) *nau à fít wɔka sɛf kã fít.*  
 now 1SGB ABIL walk FOC come shit  
 ‘Now I am even able to walk (here) to ease myself’.
- (43b) <sub>NP</sub>[*dɛ rum [wɛ mi à dɛ insai]*] *sɛf kɔlapst.*  
 DEF room COMP 1SG 1SGB COP inside FOC collapsed  
 ‘Even the room in which I lived collapsed’.

## 2.6. Topicalization and emphasis

The two major topicalization strategies in GhP are the use of particles after the topicalized element and left-dislocation. The most common topic particles are *a*, *diɛ*, *kɔra*, *nɔ*, *pa*, *tu*, and *nau*. Topicalization will be illustrated with sentences containing the two most common particles, *nɔ* and *diɛ*:

- (44) [[*dat big gɔta*] *nɔ wɛ wì get àm hiɛ*] *nɔ.*  
 DEF big gutter TOP COMP 1PLB get 3SGOB here TOP  
 ‘That big drain that we get here’ (topicalization of NP and sentence).
- (45) [*dɛ tin [wɛ wì dè tʃɔp nau]*] *diɛ, ì no*  
 DEF thing COMP 1PLB INCOMP [eat] now TOP 3SGB NEG  
*gò fít.*  
 IRR ABIL  
 ‘She will not be able (to eat) what we eat now’ (complex NP).

The particle *o* is found in sentence-final position and adds emphasis to the whole sentence. It signals emotional involvement on the part of the speaker or appeals for hearer empathy:

- (46) *mà fren, jù gò pe fɔ dis wan o.*  
 1SGPOSS friend, 2SGB IRR pay for DEM one EMPH  
 ‘My friend, you will (have to) pay for this one!’

The other major topicalization strategy is left-dislocation. This moves the topicalized element to the beginning of the sentence and fills the element’s original position with an anaphoric pronoun. Left-dislocated elements may optionally be introduced by *fɔ* ‘as for’:

- (47) (*fɔ*) *kliniks, wi get àm nau.*  
 for clinic-PL 1PLB get 3SGB now  
 ‘As for clinics, we now have them’.

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# **Liberian Settler English: morphology and syntax\***

John Victor Singler

## **1. Introduction**

The Liberian Settlers of today are the descendants of the 16,000 African Americans who immigrated to Liberia in the years from 1821 to 1872, with the largest numbers immigrating in the period from 1848 to 1854. The present examination of the syntax of Liberian Settler English (LibSE) focuses on the speech of the Settlers of Sinoe County, specifically on the speech of elders who lived in the upriver settlements above Greenville, the county seat (see chapter on LibSE phonology, other volume). Several factors point to the LibSE of Sinoe as especially likely to provide information about the history of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). To begin with, most of the immigrants to Sinoe came from the Lower South, primarily Georgia and Mississippi, but also South Carolina, Louisiana, and Alabama. Further, factors that might have pushed the Settlers' language towards standard English, e.g. government support of education or the presence of missionaries, were virtually non-existent in Sinoe before the middle part of the twentieth century. At the same time, chronic hostility between the Sinoe Settlers and the indigenous people of Sinoe likely served to limit local influence upon the Sinoe Settlers' LibSE.

The discussion that follows is divided into seven sections. First, the following aspects of LibSE grammar are addressed in sections 2. – 5.: the verb phrase, adjectives, the noun phrase, and relativization and complementation. Then, the position of LibSE within the African American Diaspora is considered, with reference not only to its status as a modern descendant of the speech of agricultural workers in the lower South of the US around 1850 (section 6.), but also to its status as a Liberian speech variety and the possible influence upon it of contact with other Liberian speech varieties (section 7.). The final section 8. assesses the future of LibSE.

## 2. The verb phrase

### 2.1. Tense – aspect

#### 2.1.1. *Completive, perfective, and perfect aspect and the past tense*

There is an extensive overlap in function among verb suffixes and preverbal auxiliaries in LibSE. Accordingly, while one can provide a characterization of a given form, that characterization will not necessarily be discrete and is not necessarily part of a simple opposition to some other form or forms.

The treatment of the completive – perfective – perfect range is a case in point. Definitions of the three concepts can make them sound distinct, but the reality is that there is often extensive overlap among them. The distinction between the concepts of completive and perfective with reference to actions illustrates this. Completive focuses on the completion of an action, while perfective presents the action as an unanalyzed whole. Since ordinarily one cannot present an action as an unanalyzed whole until after its completion, completive and perfective are hard to distinguish (cf. Singler 1984). The LibSE auxiliaries *feni* (< *finish*) and *done* would seem, on the surface, to focus on the endpoint of an action or state. Yet they can be used with reference to actions where the endpoint – as opposed to the action as a complete entity – is trivial or irrelevant. This is the case in (1).

- (1) *Now I got a son, that my first child, a son till he **done born** child now.*  
 Now I have a son—he’s my first child—a son who’s big enough that he has now fathered a child.’

Similarly, there are contexts when an action is of extremely short duration and its internal constituency irrelevant. In such cases, it is the complete action – rather than the act of completing it – that is temporally relevant. In (2), for example, the emphasis is on the act of telling, not on the endpoint of the act of telling.

- (2) *In that time, the old people, if you go, when you get to they place, time you get there, “What you ma send you for?” You better tell ‘em quick. And when you **feni telling** them, [they say,] “All right, come on, go home.”*

The markers in question can function to signal the perfect aspect as well, as in (3):

- (3) *I **done forget** the year I born.*

The choices open to speakers include the auxiliaries *done*, *feni*, *na*, and *have/had* as well as the verb suffix *-ed*. *Done* is the single most salient affective marker of Settler identity. Non-Settlers do not use it, and Settlers and non-Settlers alike identify it as signalling Settlerhood. Within the Sinoe Settler corpus, there is a three-way social distinction that consistently signals linguistic difference, namely whether an individual held a government job as a teacher, held some other government job

(such as a justice of the peace or janitor), or never worked for the government at all. A part of the significance of this division is that those who never held a government job are the ones most likely to display vernacular LibSE features in the course of sociolinguistic interviews, with teachers the least likely to do so. The distribution of the use of *done* is a case in point. The speakers in the corpus who never held a government job use the auxiliary *done* quite frequently, while teachers use it rarely if at all. The middle group – those who held government jobs other than teacher – pattern in the middle, using *done* occasionally but not frequently.

In contrast (as discussed in Section 7. below), *feni* has entered LibSE from Vernacular Liberian English (VLE), the pidginized variety that most non-Settler speakers of English use. Here, too, the distribution is tied to questions of contact: Settlers who lived or worked as adults in Greenville, the more integrated county seat, use *feni* while other Sinoe Settlers do not.

The third option, the auxiliary *na*, illustrated in (4) and (5), is used less frequently, and its provenance is not so straightforward.

(4) *I swear, Sarah, they na stay long o.*  
‘... they’ve been gone a long time.’

(5) *Like we sitting down here talking, me and my children and my wife, we sitting down talking, the moment we see a friend coming to me and my wife, as that man or that woman reach in the house and speak, “Yall, hello,” before we feni greeting them when, to say, “Take seat,” those children na get up long time and gone.*

‘The way we’re sitting down here talking now, if it were me and my children and my wife and we were sitting down talking, the moment we saw a friend coming to me and my wife, when the man or that woman entered inside the house and spoke, “Yall, hello,” by the time we had greeted them and told them to have a seat, those children would have gotten up a long time ago and left the room.’

*Na* is an auxiliary in VLE as well as in LibSE. Singler (1987) presents various scenarios for its origin, arguing ultimately that it represents a phonological adaptation of *done* (the Kru languages along the coast not making a distinction between /dṼ/ and /nṼ/). The Sinoe Settlers do not use *na* a lot, but they perceive it as theirs rather than as a recent borrowing like *feni*. (On the basis of homophony, Liberians analyze it as deriving from the temporal adverb *now*.) The auxiliaries *feni* and *done* can co-occur (as in [6]), as can *na* and *feni* (as in [7]), and any of the three can co-occur with a form of *have*. However, *na* and *done* cannot co-occur. This would seem to constitute evidence that *na* does come from *done*.

(6) *We two, we get to sewing them, we feni done sew it, then I join it up.*  
‘The two of us, we get to sewing quilt pieces, and when we finish, then I join the pieces up.’

- (7) *We **na feni** do the work.*  
 ‘We’ve done the work.’

Forms of *have* are also used frequently, serving to signal present perfect and past perfect. The form of the auxiliary is very often *ha*, with the final consonant absent on the surface. In those cases it is not always clear whether the intended form is *have*, *had* or *has*.

The addition of the *-ed* suffix is variable. Its principal semantic function is to signal past tense, with perfective aspect often but not always inferable. Whether or not speakers use the *-ed* suffix is sensitive to semantic factors and phonological constraints. In the course of sociolinguistic interviews with elders, a lot of questions arise as to how things used to be. When LibSE speakers respond with non-specific examples or how things used to be or describe past procedures that no longer obtain, they do not use the past-tense suffix. (8) illustrates this:

- (8) JVS: *When you were a young boy, did you use to fight with the other boys?*  
 Ishmael: *Oh, when I wa young boy?*  
 JVS: *Yes.*  
 Ishmael: *Well, yeah. Because ... sometime we goes to play ... and fuss **come** there. You **pick** fuss at me, I **pick** fuss, we **fight**. [laughs] That’s all.*

On the other hand, a LibSE speaker who is describing an actual event or state is likely to use the past-tense suffix if the verb is perfective, somewhat less likely if it is imperfective. Moreover, speakers are most likely to mark past tense overtly if a strong verb is involved, e.g. *took* for *take*, and quite likely to do so if the verb, while weak, takes a syllabic ending, e.g. *reported* for *report*. They are far less likely to mark the past tense overtly if the verb takes a non-syllabic weak ending, especially if the stem ends with a consonant. In such a case, the addition of the suffix creates a coda cluster, and these are disfavored in LibSE (see the article on LibSE phonology, other volume).

### 2.1.2. Imperfective aspect

While the past-tense suffix is reasonably robust and will ordinarily be present if the semantic and phonological conditions are right (see 2.1.1. above), the same does not hold for the third person singular *-s*. A crucial difference between *-ed* and the third person singular *-s* is that there are a number of irregular verbs, so that the existence of past tense marking does not depend solely on the saliency of a coda consonant. One might make the same point about plural marking (discussed below in 4.1.). Here, too, there are commonly occurring irregular forms. In contrast, there is nothing like that for the third person singular *-s*. The copula aside, the only stem change

that accompanies the addition of third person singular *-s* is the vowel change that occurs in the shift from *do* to *does*, from *have* to *has*, and from *say* to *says*. Speakers of LibSE rarely use the third person singular *-s*. When they use it at all, it is likely to be to mark habitual occurrence, to be with the verb *go*, and/or to be with reference to religion. The example in (9) illustrates all three of these.

(9) *Every Sunday we **goes** to church.*

Even when these favouring conditions hold, the use of the third person singular *-s* is infrequent.

Progressive aspect is routinely signalled by the *-ing* suffix (pronounced [ɛ̃]). In standard English, the appropriate tensed form of *be* co-occurs with *V-ing*, e.g. *it's raining* and *I was just leaving*. In LibSE, on the other hand, it is relatively rare for a tensed form of *be* to co-occur with *V-ing* in a non-past environment. A tensed form of *be* does co-occur with *V-ing* when the verb has specific reference (as opposed to a hypothetical example or non-specific instantiation, as discussed in 2.1.1.). An exception to this characterization of *be* involves *when* clauses; invariant *be* often co-occurs with *V-ing* in them, like in (10):

(10) *Even much, my little son, I was teaching him how to make quilt but this young generation, they like to laugh at the children **when they be turning** toward these thing.*

Habitual and iterative actions can be marked by zero, by the third person singular *-s*, by *də*, by *de*, or by *usetə*. *Də*, discussed below in Sections 5. and 6., is illustrated in (11), and *de* in (12). Each of them is tenseless and occurs in non-past and past environments alike.

(11) *Every time I see someone from America I **də ask** them say, "Yall hear talk of any Walkers?"*

(12) *Cash bag, I **de tote** the cash bag on my head, to carry it from the pay ground, to, to the waterside.*

'The bag containing the payroll, I used to carry it on my head from the pay ground to waterside.'

The tenselessness may follow from the strong tendency in LibSE for overt past-tense marking to be largely restricted to specific events rather than the habitual, non-specific ones that *də* and *de* characteristically mark. *Də* ordinarily is restricted in distribution to habituals; moreover, it occurs with the bare verb. In contrast, *de* can occur with states, too (13), and it can occur either with the bare verb or with *V-ing* (14).

(13) *I went and sat for the examination because I **de want** to be a travelling elder.*

(14) *He **de try/trying** to find a job.*

As noted in Section 6. below, while virtually all LibSE speakers use *də*, it is used most by the people who live in the upriver settlements, the speakers of what appears to be the most conservative variety of LibSE. In contrast, *de* is used primarily by speakers with extensive formal education. In the phonology chapter on LibSE (other volume), the point was made that formal education serves an integrative function in Liberia. *De* is an imperfective auxiliary in VLE (and in the English pidgins of West Africa more generally). Within VLE, *de* is a basilectal feature, indeed a stigmatized basilectal feature. It is ironic, then, that the Sinoe settlers who use it are the ones with more education, not less.

LibSE also makes use of the past habitual AUX *useta*, which can mark past states as well. It is subject to phonological reduction, occurring as *stə* and even as *sə*. In Standard English (StE), *used to* alternates with *would*, with *used to* marking the first of a series of past habitual events, and *would* marking the rest of them. While that alternation also occurs in LibSE, it does not happen often. Instead, *useta* is used repeatedly, as in (15).

- (15) *We useta go to dances, we useta play music box, and guitar. We useta come, when we come, see us dancing, man. We useta dance. When we finish dancing, then we go home.*

## 2.2. Mood

The future is expressed both by *will* ([we]) and *gan*. (16) illustrates the use of *gan*.

- (16) *How he gan come back home today?*

*Would* and a range of English modals do crop up in LibSE, but only *can* and *must* occur with any frequency. *Must*, frequently pronounced [mə], has a wider semantic range in LibSE than it does in American vernaculars. One common use of it is in questions like the one in (17).

- (17) Q: *And how they can dance that one there?*  
 A: *I must dance it?*  
 ‘Should I dance it?’

## 2.3. The copula

A great deal of attention has been directed toward the copula in AAVE and in diaspora varieties, including LibSE (Singler 1991a). In his classic study of the copula, William Labov (1969) argued that AAVE was like other American vernaculars in having an underlying full copula and an optional rule of contraction that acted upon the copula in non-past contexts. He claimed that AAVE departed from the

other vernaculars in having an additional rule of deletion that acted upon the output of the contraction rule. Romaine (1982) argued for a different relationship for the three surface variants. Like Labov, Romaine posited an underlying full copula. However, she posited an optional rule of deletion; then, for full forms that had not undergone the deletion rule, she posited an optional rule of contraction.

The LibSE of Sinoe is crucially different from the other varieties under consideration and is indeed different from other varieties of LibSE. In the LibSE of Sinoe, the choice is binary, between a zero variant and a surface variant. When one organizes the data by subject type, there is no category for which a three-way division exists. Instead, the surface forms are the following:

<b>subject</b>	<b>copula</b>
<i>I</i>	<i>'m</i>
<i>he, she, it, that, what</i>	<i>'s</i>
<i>here, there, where, this</i>	<i>is</i>
Singular full NP	<i>is</i>
<i>these, those, they, we, you, yall</i>	<i>are</i>
Plural full NP	<i>are</i>

Singler (1993) proposes to account for the variation with a rule of insertion rather than deletion. There is one exception to the assertion that no three-way division exists. While ordinarily the choice for *he/she* is either *'s* or zero, *he* (or *He*) *is* and *she is* do occur when the topic is God or religion.

Labov (1969) asserts that deletion of the AAVE copula is restricted to non-past copulas (and not even to all of those, in that *I'm* and *it's/that's/what's* are categorical in AAVE). However, in LibSE zero copulas sometimes show up in past-tense environments, as in the lower clause of the second sentence in (18). The person being described in (18) is the elderly speaker's grandfather, dead for more than sixty years at the time of the interview.

- (18) *So they came out now, and he drew about 61 acres of land in Bluntsville. There where he at.*  
 'So they came out to Liberia now, and he was given about 61 acres in Bluntsville. That's where he was.'

Another copula worthy of mention is *sə*, discussed in Section 6. and illustrated in (19) and (20).

- (19) *But still we sə hard up.*  
 'But still we're hard up.'
- (20) JVS: *And only boys would play [the game]? Or boys and girls?*  
 Claudius: *Sə only boy. Only boy play Bantu. The girls got they own play to play.*

## 2.4. Negation

As noted in Section 6. below, the use of *ain't* in place of *didn't* is a common occurrence in LibSE. *Ain't* can occur with past preterits (as in [21]), as well as with verbs that are arguably present perfect (as in [22]):

(21) *I telling you what the old people told me now. Because that one I ain't see with my own eye.*

(22) *Sister Rose ain't come yet o.*

The negative auxiliary, whether *ain't*, *didn't*, or *don't*, is subject to extreme reduction. In the examples in (21) and (22), taken from sociolinguistic interviews, *ain't* is pronounced with a full vowel, i.e. as [ɛ̃]. At other times, speakers use the full forms *didn't* (pronounced [dɛ̃]) or *don't* [dɔ̃]. However, the usual pronunciation of the negative auxiliary consists simply of a high-toned nasalized copy of the vowel preceding it, like in (23) – (25):

(23) *He n't [hĩ̃] tell me that.*

(24) *Slipper self, I n't [aĩ̃] use to wear.*  
'I didn't even use to wear slippers.'

(25) *It n't [eĩ̃] been paying me from that time.*  
'It hasn't been paying me since that time.'

Negative concord is a regular feature of LibSE, as illustrated in (26) and (27).

(26) *Churchy and myself, I n't never do nothing to him.*

(27) Q: *What happen you be walking and the night catch you, catches you on the road? What yall do?*

A: *I n't gan never tamper to go long distance, I know night gan catch me on on the road, I n't gan get to no house.*

'I would never attempt to go a long distance if I knew darkness was going to catch me on the road and I wouldn't be able to get to a house.'

In AAVE and other American dialects that have double negation, the usual site for additional markers of negation is an indefinite NP. While LibSE can place *no* in front of an indefinite noun, it also permits the emphatic use of negation in front of adjectives (28) and definite nouns (29).

(28) *When I look at it, they say these is modern day, the thing better, but I n't see no better, I see worse.*

(29) *Oh, and my heart don't tell me to go to no Monrovia.*



In StE, when the subject phrase of a sentence is negative, the verb is not. LibSE speakers vary as to whether they place negation in the verb phrase in such cases, as illustrated in (30) and (31).

(30) *No organization in the church **can't** do without me.*

(31) *At that time **no** doctor was here.*

In general, LibSE speakers tend to use the pattern in (31), i.e. confining negation to the subject phrase, rather than that in (30). They perceive the sentence in (30) as more formal, hence more appropriate with outsiders than in in-group conversation (The Rev. Hosea Ellis, p.c.).

### 3. Adjectives

#### 3.1. The status of adjectives

While there are Niger-Congo languages for which adjectives are syntactically a type of verb and while there has been an ongoing controversy in creole studies regarding the status of adjectives in particular creoles, there is no doubt that LibSE has true adjectives. At the same time, it is still the case that there are times when LibSE speakers treat adjectives like verbs. Specifically, speakers place preverbal auxiliaries immediately before adjectives, as in (32) – (34).

(32) *Next morning, the soap **done hard**.*  
‘By the next morning, the soap will have hardened completely.’

(33) *But now, everybody **na kwi**.*  
‘But now, everybody has become westernized.’

(34) *So he said this S.A. Ross, he **da friendly** with the Dutch agent.*  
‘So he said this S.A. Ross used to be friendly with the Dutch agent.’

#### 3.2. Comparatives and superlatives

It was noted above that preverbal auxiliary *done* is the linguistic badge of Settler identity par excellence. A further signal of Settler identity is the use of doubly marked comparatives (and superlatives), as in (35) and (36):

(35) *But they are **more wiser** than what we are.*

(36) *I would like it **more better** if I could see more change.*

In the case of double comparatives, the association of the construction with Settlers is reinforced by a fixed phrase used by Liberians generally. In the exchange of greetings, a jocular way of saying that things are going badly is to say:

- (37) *Congo man say “**worser.**”*  
 ‘As Settlers say, “The situation is worser.”’

(The use of *Congo* to refer to Settlers is discussed in the chapter on LibSE phonology.)

#### 4. The noun phrase

##### 4.1. Plural marking

If a noun is semantically plural and morphologically irregular, it will be marked for the plural. In contrast, semantically plural *regular* nouns are variably marked, with overt marking occurring less than half the time. Whether or not a regular noun will be overtly marked is sensitive to a number of factors, including the final segment of the noun. If it is a sibilant and therefore the plural suffix is syllabic, overt marking is highly likely. In contrast, if the final segment is a non-sibilant consonant and therefore the plural suffix will create a coda cluster, then overt marking is far less likely. Particular semantic categories pattern in surprising ways, with units of time likely to be overtly marked while plants, crops, and units of money are extremely unlikely to take an overt suffix. More general syntactic-semantic categories fall in between. Generic plurals are also unlikely to receive plural marking (since they are not truly plurals). As with many other elements of the grammar, the likelihood that a form will appear is sensitive to a speaker’s background. Thus, among the Sinoe Settlers, there is much less likelihood of overt plural marking if the speaker comes from an upriver settlement and/or has never held a government job. The relevance of a government job is that the speakers who are the most insularly Settler in their language tend to be those who never held government employment; the correlation between job status and frequency of overt plural forms suggests that wide scale marking of the plural is not a traditional feature of vernacular LibSE.

In the VLE basilect, as in West African pidgins more generally, the plural can be marked by placing *them* (pronounced [dẽ]) after the head noun. Settlers don’t use *them* to mark the simple plural. They do, however, use it to signal the associative plural, as illustrated in (38) and (39).

- (38) *David Mitchell **them** use to draw their music box.*  
 ‘David Mitchell and his group used to play their concertinas.’
- (39) *So with that **my old lady them** reared plenty boys and girls to learn the Christian way of living.*  
 ‘So in that way, my mother and her generation trained many boys and girls in the Christian way of living.’

## 4.2. Possession: pronoun choice

Possession is ordinarily expressed by word order, with the possessor preceding the possessed, e.g. *his aunty husband*; *the people cows*. Among the speakers in the Sinoe Settler corpus, those who are teachers sometimes insert possessive *'s*, e.g. *my father's mother*; but other speakers do not. The possessive adjectives are the following:

<i>my</i>	<i>our</i> (or, infrequently, <i>we</i> )
<i>you</i>	<i>yall</i>
<i>his, her</i>	<i>they</i>

As the table suggests, *we* sometimes appears rather than *our*, as in (40):

- (40) *When we done make **we farm**, we n't know nothing about sell, we keep it, to have to eat.*

'After we made our farm, we didn't think at all about selling [the produce]; we kept it so that we would have something to eat.'

The modern distribution of *we* within the Sinoe community suggests that it is a feature of long standing within LibSE; what is not clear is whether the Sinoe Settlers brought *we* with them from the US or only adopted it after arriving in Liberia. The same uncertainty regarding provenance within LibSE applies to *we* as an object pronoun, as in (41):

- (41) *Our people didn't learn **we** how to swim.*

## 4.3. Prenominal elements: demonstratives

The usual plural demonstratives are *these* and *those* (pronounced [di(z)] and [do(z)]). In addition, some upriver speakers use preposed *them* in place of *those*, as in (42) and (43):

- (42) *But all **them big meats and thing**, they gone.*

- (43) ***Them** days we had plenty rice.*

At least among younger speakers in Greenville, preposed *them* marks one as being upriver and, therefore, "country".

## 5. Relativization and complementation

### 5.1. Relativization

LibSE uses the restrictive relative pronouns *who*, *what*, and infrequently *that*. *What* may be used with either human or non-human nouns. Examples of its use with human nouns are given in (44) and (45).

(44) *They were the first immigrant **what** come out in Liberia.*

(45) *Those Morris children **what** in Monrovia now and myself we grow together.*

For nonrestrictive relatives, LibSE uses *who*, *what* and infrequently *which*. While the use of *who* is confined to human nouns, *what* and *which* can be used with either human or non-human nouns.

### 5.2. Complementation

The usual complementizer is *that*:

(46) *But our mother told us **that** he say **that** he want to come to Liberia to find his people.*

With verbs of speaking and communication, *say* is also used, as in (47) – (50).

(47) a. *So I went to the ... hospital and I **told** the people **say**, “Well, two months I n’t get my check, and I still working.”*

b. *So I went to the ... hospital and I **told** the people **I say**, “Well, two months I n’t get my check, and I still working.”*

(48) *He went to Samuel Ross and Samuel Ross **promise** him **say**, “O.K, I will take you to the Dutch agent.”*

(49) *They went, they **də** write to the people **say**, “... “*

(50) *If you see the eggplant and pepper in Louisiana, Bluntsville, and Lexington, you will **swear say** that in the country.  
‘... you will swear that you are in the country.’*

Arguably *swear say* has been both lexicalized and frozen. Thus, it seems unlikely that a speaker would use *swear* without *say*, e.g. *you will swear that in the country*, or would inflect *swear*, e.g. *You swore say that you were in the country*. Sometimes, speakers insert a subject pronoun before *say*, as in (47b). The structure of (47b) represents a step towards standard English and may occur more often in formal contexts.

Speakers can use *say* to signal a direct quotation, even when the preceding verb is not a verb of saying and when *say* does not itself have an overt subject, as in (51) and (52):

- (51) *They all got there, and they all sit down now say, "Let's put idea together now."*
- (52) *If you playing in the road and a older person meet you say, "What you doing down here? You better go to you ma," we fool to retaliate say, "What you got to do with me"?*  
*'... would we be foolish enough to retaliate and say, "what do you have to do with me?"'*

It is possible to use *say* to signal a direct quotation even when it is not attached to a higher sentence, as in (53) and (54):

- (53) *In the process of time they got dissatisfy. Say, "Well, our denomination, we can't let it down."*
- (54) *They come inside, they beg the people. Beg all the civilize people. Say, "We beg yall, we grant arm."*

## 6. Liberian Settler English in the African American diaspora

In considering the history of African American English, scholars have turned in recent years to examining the language of communities whose founders were African Americans who left the United States in the period between the American Revolution (1775–1781) and the American Civil War (1861–1865). Such studies attempt to extrapolate an earlier stage of African American English, especially AAVE, from the current grammar of the transplanted community. Thus, Poplack and Tagliamonte's *African American English in the diaspora* (2001) represents the culmination of more than a decade's study of the language of the Samaná community in the Dominican Republic and two Afro-Nova Scotian communities in Canada.

Poplack and Tagliamonte (2001) and other authors working with them find the language of these varieties to be more similar to white vernaculars than is modern AAVE, leading them to argue both that core features of African American English come from British regional dialects (theirs is a re-invigoration of the anglicist position advocated by McDavid and McDavid [1951]) and also that modern AAVE features that differ from white vernaculars represent a recent divergence. However, others who have studied Samaná English, notably DeBose (1996) and Hannah (1997), do not reach the same conclusion as Poplack and Tagliamonte.

The data from the LibSE of Sinoe also push towards a different conclusion, indicating instead that many of the prominently unique features of AAVE are actually features of long standing. Myhill (1995) presented eight features of modern AAVE as putative post-Civil War, i.e. relatively recent, innovations in AAVE: omission of verbal *-s*; omission of possessive *-s*; copula absence, specifically *is* deletion; the use of *ain't* for *didn't*; the use of *be done*; the semi-auxiliary *come*; the auxiliary *steady*; and stressed *been*.

However, Singler (1998b) was able to draw on evidence from LibSE and elsewhere to show that seven of them are not innovations but are instead features that were part of AAVE well before the American Civil War. The following examples illustrate the non-standard features in the list (as opposed to instances where the innovation was the absence of a standard feature):

The use of *ain't* for *didn't*:

- (55) *I telling you what the old people told me now. Because that one I ain't see with my own eye.*

The use of *be done*:

- (56) *You be done crack you palm nut, palm kernel, everything, then you make you palm butter and set it down.*  
 '(By that time) you would have cracked all your palm kernels, and then you would make your palm butter [a stew made from palm nut pulp] and set it down.'

The semi-auxiliary *come* (to signal disapproval):

- (57) *We talking about ending the war, and you come talking about Sinoe Defense Force. You not serious.*

The auxiliary *steady*:

- (58) *When I go to school, when the teacher beat me, I run, man, I (be) steady halling all the way home.*  
 'When I went to school, if the teacher beat me, I would run, man, I would be hollering non-stop all the way home.'

The only one of the features on Myhill's list that Singler (1998b) was not able to locate in LibSE was stressed *been*. However, subsequent research has shown that the feature is a part of LibSE grammar. There as in AAVE stressed *been* is used to express temporal remoteness (and extent of duration) or, less frequently, intensity. The use of *BIN* (stressed *been* in Rickford's [1975] notation) to focus upon a state's duration can be illustrated with the following set of sentences involving the adjective *greedy*. In the unmarked case in LibSE, being *greedy* refers specifically to food. One who is *greedy* eats too much and, crucially, does not readily share food with others. The interpretations of the sentence were provided by the Rev. Hosea Ellis.

- (59) a. *He been greedy.*  
 'Many people know about his greediness.'  
 b. *He BIN greedy.*  
 'He has long been known for greed. It's not just now he started being greedy. Since people got to know him, he has been like that.'

c. *He been GREEDY.*

‘He is excessively greedy.’

While (59b) can also emphasize the extent of the subject’s greediness, an intensive sense is more likely to be expressed by (59c). Thus, all eight of the features on Myhill’s list are features of LibSE.

In discussing the eight features on Myhill’s list, it is appropriate to separate the positive features, i.e. those that involve a non-standard form, from the negative features, those that involve the absence of a standard form. With the exception of the highly infrequent use of *ain t* in place of *didn t*, none of the positive features obtain in modern Samaná English (Shana Poplack, p.c.). Inasmuch as the positive features occur in LibSE and AAVE but do not occur in Samaná English, the more parsimonious account is that they are old and Samaná English has either lost them or never had them.

Singler (1998a) proposes that the differences between Samaná English and LibSE in their relationship to modern AAVE are to be accounted for in part by differences in provenance between the original settlers of the respective communities, with those who settled in Samaná coming in large part from in and near Philadelphia at a time when Philadelphia was the most important city in the US for free people of color. As noted, the Sinoe Settlers came overwhelmingly from the Lower South of the US. Poplack (2000: 27n) and Poplack and Tagliamonte (2001) disagree with Singler (1998a), but their accounts of the provenance of the Samaná settlers contradict each other.

Poplack and Sankoff (1987) appear to have had it right the first time: as the title of their article asserts, the story of Samaná is *The Philadelphia Story in the Spanish Caribbean*. Certainly, after 175 years it is not provenance of original inhabitants alone that distinguishes the people of Samaná from those of Sinoe. In the case of Samaná there was a British and Jamaican missionary presence that has no analogue in Sinoe; further, extensive intermarriage between the Samaná folk and Methodists from Turks Island and settlement in the late nineteenth century by people from elsewhere in the anglophone Caribbean have also shaped the current character of the community’s language, as Samaná phonology attests. Post-settlement influence in Sinoe is addressed in Section 7.

For each of the negative features on Myhill’s list, there is – in addition to the LibSE evidence – North American historical evidence that establishes it as a long-standing AAVE feature. It is noteworthy that the LibSE frequency of these features is measurably greater than the AAVE frequency. This would seem to reflect the fact that, compared with AAVE, LibSE has had far less contact with white vernaculars and with StE over the past 150 years.

For the positive features, in every case except the use of *ain t* rather than *didn t*, the feature has undergone an expansion – either of semantic range, syntactic domain, or simple frequency – in AAVE that has not occurred in LibSE. In sum, the

features are quite old, but the extended range of their usage within AAVE reflects their ongoing evolution within that variety.

There are grammatical elements that persist in LibSE but no longer obtain in AAVE. The copula *sə* – illustrated in (19) and (20) above – and the habitual auxiliary *də* are two such features. The creation of *sə* appears to be the result of re-cutting, whereby 's a in a string like *he's a newcomer* gets re-analyzed as *he sə newcomer*. Comparable strings are to be found in Gullah and in the Ex-Slave Recordings (cf. Singler 1991b). A Gullah example is given in (60):

- (60) *Your daughter-in-law say say you's a woman.*  
 (Gullah; Cunningham 1970: 167)

As discussed in 2.1.2. above, the auxiliary *də* marks habitual aspect, as in (61) and (62):

- (61) *They went, they də write to the people say, ...*  
 'They used to go and write to people and tell them ...'  
 (62) *Some country people də eat it [snake]. But civilize people don't.*

As the example in (62) illustrates, *də* can only occur in the affirmative.

## 7. Local influences on LibSE

The post-settlement forces that have affected the LibSE of Sinoe would all seem to involve English itself. This is obvious in terms of forces that might move LibSE closer to StE, but it is also true with reference to those that might pull it away from the standard. Of the forces that might push the LibSE of Sinoe closer to StE, three stand out: the church, the school, and Liberian Settlers from elsewhere. The absence of missionaries in Sinoe has been noted, but even settler clergy were likely to be a force for StE, if not in the vernacular at least in the language used in formal settings such as church services themselves. The influence of schooling is equally evident. Many of the elderly Sinoe Settlers whose speech provided the corpus on which this article is based had had very little formal schooling, some none at all; nonetheless, the importance of education in the Settler community is clear. Finally, Settlers from elsewhere – especially Monrovia – have traditionally possessed greater standing than Sinoenians. Overall, the difference between the LibSE of Sinoe and the LibSE of other Settler communities appears to be quantitative more than qualitative. That is, with few exceptions, the Sinoenians do not use non-standard features that other Settlers do not also use; rather, they use the same non-standard features as other Settlers but they use them far more often.

As for the factors and forces that might have moved LibSE further away not only from StE but also AAVE, the primary influence would have been VLE, with in-



fluence from Niger-Congo languages much more likely to be transmitted through VLE than to affect LibSE directly.

A crucial point about the relationship of VLE to LibSE is that, in cases where the two varieties share a feature, it is rarely difficult to determine where the feature originated. (The use of *we* as a pronominal adjective and an object pronoun, as discussed in 3.2., is an exception.) Establishing a feature's provenance can be done on the basis of evidence internal to the VLE and LibSE communities as well as by evidence external to Liberia. The auxiliaries *də* and *feni* make the point.

Among the settlers in Sinoe, while *də* is used by virtually all speakers, it is used more by speakers in the upriver settlements, i.e. more by the hard-core settlers. The opposite holds true for *feni*; its use in Sinoe is virtually confined to settlers who either live or work in Greenville, the county headquarters, i.e. the settlers with the most contact with VLE speakers. In contrast, a study of VLE speakers in Monrovia shows the use of *də* among older speakers to be confined to individuals whose ethnic group has historically had extensive contact with the settlers. The VLE speakers in Monrovia showed no comparable distributional restrictions in the use of *feni*. Thus, the evidence inside Liberia points to settler provenance for *də* and VLE provenance for *feni*. The external evidence external to Liberia corroborates the evidence internal to it.

There are Western Hemisphere varieties which use *də* (or a form very close to it in shape) to mark imperfective aspect, among them Gullah (Hopkins 1994) and Anguillian English (Williams 2003). However, no Western Hemisphere varieties of which I am aware have a completive auxiliary based on *finish*. In contrast, there are no West African varieties outside of Liberia that have an auxiliary that is both phonologically and semantically similar to *də*, and clause-final *finish* occurs in both Kru Pidgin English (Singler 1990) and Nigerian Pidgin English (Faraclas, this volume).

I have argued that, for the features that LibSE and VLE share, one can determine which of the two varieties had the feature first. At the same time, I acknowledge that my discussion of sources of influence upon LibSE has not taken into account the potential consequences of internal change for the variety.

## **8. The future of Liberian Settler English**

The civil war that began in Liberia in 1989 has yet to be resolved. Until it is, the future of LibSE remains uncertain. Still, given the central role of ethnicity in defining a Liberian's identity, the distinctiveness of the Settler ethnic group (relative to Liberia's indigenous ethnic groups), and the role of language in reinforcing that distinctiveness, there seems little reason to predict that Settler speech will be absorbed into a homogeneous Liberian English. LibSE seems likely to continue to exist for time indefinite.

Less certain, however, is the fate of LibSE at its most highly distinctive and conservative, e.g. the variety spoken by elderly Settlers in the upriver settlements of Sinoe County. In the late 1980's it was still the case that Settler children living in an upriver settlement like Louisiana and attending elementary school there were acquiring the conservative dialect. Since then, however, civil war has devastated the region. If isolated Settler enclaves like the upriver settlements of Sinoe County cease to exist, then the survival of unassimilated varieties of LibSE is likely to be threatened.

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# Cameroon English: morphology and syntax

Paul Mbangwana

## 1. Introduction

As English changes in time and space among native speakers, it also takes many twists and turns in the countries that have adopted it as a second or foreign language. Sala (2003: 66) describes how fossilized errors are recycled and given a wider spread from generation to generation in Cameroon English (CamE). While purists view this process in terms of falling standards, most linguists regard it as an indigenization process according to which “adopted” English is being “adapted” to suit the expressive needs of its users. All users of English, especially those in the English as a second language (SL) or English as a foreign language (FL) situation, seek to build a convenient medium of communication that is simple and economical. When English is transplanted, it acculturates to the new environment in all aspects (lexis, semantics, syntax, etc). In this process it acquires multicultural identities. This study of CamE will focus on the ways in which English has become indigenised syntactically.

The data used in this overview come from previous published research work, literary production, and jottings by myself from a body of live speeches and conversations. Sala (2003: 341) suggests that there are two varieties of CamE: (a) the imposed (exonormative) variety which hardly goes out of the classroom setting that engenders and regulates it, and (b) the innovative (indigenised) variety which is acquired in the greater English-using community showing a great deal of creativity and acculturation to local norms. This innovative variety is the more significant site of research for CamE.

Since syntax relates grammar to meaning by its particular arrangement of words, it is of interest to examine how British English (BrE) and CamE contrast. The adaptation of English in SL and FL situations is usually toward simpler forms. This study examines the various processes and strategies which render CamE convenient, simpler and practically economical in terms of structural levelling-out. Though CamE users have learnt how to build sentences using the rule-governed patterns of clause formation in formal situations, they are still observed to be less competent in actual use.

However, even their innovative performance can be shown to be relatively systematic and amenable to close syntactic analysis. For example, as I will discuss in section 3.5., CamE shows a predilection for sentences replete with subordinate clause structures that avoid prepositions in post-movement positions. It also fa-

vours patterns that may be considered redundant in Standard English (StE). Sala (2003) reminds us that

speakers of CamE should not be considered to be learners of BrE but speakers of a particular brand of English. They learnt the English language and in the course of doing so, they put their emblem on it, that is, they moulded it to fit their needs and ways. (Sala 2003: 338)

CamE has been studied by Todd (1982), Mbangwana (1992; 2002), Simo Bobda (1994) and Sala (2003), amongst others. These studies have identified how certain structures depart from the BrE prototype. Some of these studies point to the low status of the innovations in CamE. However, Sala (2003: 112) takes a more descriptive approach by examining CamE syntax with the aim of understanding the rules and processes involved in structural simplification. These processes are robust, productive and predictable; hence they give evidence of a certain degree of competence underlying their users' creativity.

## 2. Idioms in CamE creative writing

Sala (2003) identifies many instances of usage which might appear redundant as writers attempt to recreate the idiom of the Cameroonian mother tongues. Examples include *cry a loud cry*, *smile a dry smile*, *walk on foot*, *seeing with one's eyes*, *eat with one's mouth*, *laugh a terrible laughter*, *die a good death*. Further examples from creative writers include the following:

- (1) *You (Achiebefuo) have failed me and so I do not have the ears to listen to you at all.*  
'Achiebefuo, you have failed me and so I cannot listen to you at all.'  
(Asong, *The Crown of Thorns* [1995: 14])
- (2) *Mbamu stopped suddenly where two paths crossed and sniffed the air.*  
'Mbamu stopped suddenly where two paths crossed, and sniffed.'  
(Eba Nsanda, *The Good Foot* [1984: 7])
- (3) *Women were to supply potatoes and food for the men who carried the luggage of the White Man of God. How can a man lie to the mother of his children, and to his children and himself?*  
'Women were to supply food to the carriers of the White Man of God. How can a man lie to his wife, his children and to himself?'  
(Jumbam, *The White Man of God* [1980: 30])
- (4) *With his two fingers of the right hand, the thumb and the finger next to it, he squeezed the hot peppers.*  
'With his two right hand fingers, the thumb and forefinger, he squeezed the hot peppers.'  
(Ngongwikuo, *Taboo Love* [1980: 5])

### 3. Syntax

#### 3.1. Elliptical *but*

Sala (2003: 17) reports elliptical instances of *but* used in CamE:

- (5) *I am going to eat but bread.*  
 ‘I am rather going to eat bread than take in that mess of yours.’
- (6) *We are leaving but tomorrow.*  
 ‘We are leaving tomorrow rather than wait for the weekend.’

Ellipsis in these CamE sentences involves two elements: (a) an equivalent of English *rather* and (b) what is actually rejected as expressed by a *than* clause. Sala (2003: 200) concludes that in such situations CamE favours preference-focusing and leaves unstated what is rejected.

#### 3.2. *Like this* and *like that* as elliptical comparative markers

*Like this* and *like that* tend to function clause-finally in a rather elliptical fashion when an immediate shared context between the speaker and interlocutor occurs, making the ellipsed elements recoverable from the context. In BrE such structures are possible in concrete circumstances, such as the following:

- (7) *A house like this [house] is quite convenient*
- (8) *A day like that [one we had last week] is always very refreshing.*

But in CamE those phrases are used in broader contexts, largely associated with the intention of the utterer:

- (9) *I am cooking food like this.*  
 ‘I am cooking food to carry to the death celebration.’
- (10) *I was just coming from Bamenda like that.*  
 ‘I was just coming from Bamenda like that to see you.’

Sala (2003: 210) concludes that such ellipsis requires the effective presence of interlocutors for their content to be recovered either from ocular evidence or from some other context, near or remote. The shared context makes it unnecessary to state the obvious.

#### 3.3. *Like this* and *like that* used as concessive clauses

- (11) *Though you are strong like that, I can beat you.*
- (12) *Though I am old like this, I can run.*
- (13) *You think that I am small like this that I cannot fight you?*

Here the comparative phrases (*like this/that*) are equivalent to the standard English pre-modifier *so*. They occur under the influence of pidgin English and Cameroonian mother tongues.

### 3.4. Innovations in word order

Dangling modifiers and avoidance of self-embedding are notable in CamE. Since non-restrictive relative clauses and non-finite clauses are not attested in the home languages or pidgin English, dangling modifiers become the typical structure which is freely used. Sentences (14) and (15) are speech forms noted on CRTV (Radio Cameroon):

- (14) *Doing the day's assignment, his mother who was cooking asked her son to stop reading.*  
 'As her son was doing the day's assignment, his mother who was cooking asked him to stop reading.'
- (15) *The technician stepped on the dog's tail when he was bitten.*  
 'The technician was bitten when he stepped on the dog's tail.'

### 3.5. Preposition 'chopping' in relative clauses

Whereas many varieties of English increasingly favour preposition stranding with relative clauses, CamE tends to delete such prepositions:

- (16) *He is being followed by an old man which the name is not given ∅.*  
 'He is being followed by an old man whose name is not given.'
- (17) *There is a certain girl that we were in Bamenda together ∅.*  
 'There is a certain girl together with whom we were in Bamenda.'
- (18) *We have produced an album which we want you to buy a copy ∅.*  
 'We have produced an album which we want you to buy a copy of.'

### 3.6. Avoidance of self-embedding

Self-embedding is another difficulty in structuring in CamE. Subordinating elements in CamE tend not to embed elements:

- (19) *CRTV is an institution which people will come and go and it will remain.*  
 'CRTV is an institution which, though people will come and go, will remain.'
- (20) *He ate the beans which Peter bought bread to eat with it.*  
 'He ate the beans which Peter had bought bread to eat with.' – i.e. Peter had been expecting to eat beans with his bread, but they had already been eaten.

#### 4. *That-complement clauses*

In BrE, *that*-clauses are strategies to mark embedding, i.e. they embed one clause into another one. The set of verbs that take *that* and the range of contexts surrounding its use are extended in CamE.

##### 4.1. *That*-clauses

Sala (2003: 136) cites a number of sentences to show how *that*-clauses in CamE are extended to a wider set of verbs than in StE.

- (21) *He phoned me that he is coming.*  
‘He phoned me to say that he is coming.’
- (22) *He insulted me that I am a thief.*  
‘He insulted me saying that I am a thief.’
- (23) *He mocked me that I failed my exams.*  
‘He mocked me because I failed my exams.’

These verbs have been recategorised to take a direct object and a *that* + sentence complement. *That*-complement clauses may clearly stand as *sui generis* clauses in CamE, as in Ngongwikuo’s *Taboo Love* (1980: 65):

- (24) *That Kwifon has asked me to greet all the young mothers and to give to him. That Kwifon has asked me to greet all the old and sick and to give to him.*  
‘I wish to inform you that Kwifon has asked me to greet all the young mothers and all the old and sick, on his behalf.’

##### 4.2. *That*-adverbial clauses

*That*-clauses in CamE also occupy syntactic slots which are usually occupied by adverbial clauses of reason in BrE. Sala (2003: 147–149) provides the following examples:

- (25) *He is crying that I have eaten his food.*  
‘He is crying because I have eaten his food.’
- (26) *His boss bears a grudge against him that he is always late.*  
‘His boss bears a grudge against him because he is always late.’
- (27) *He refused the food that it was too small.*  
‘He refused the food because it was too small.’



4.3. *That*-adverbial clause with *what* in situ

- (28) *He is crying that I have eaten what?*  
‘What have I eaten that he is crying about?’
- (29) *He bears a grudge against me that what?*  
‘What does he bear a grudge against me for?’
- (30) *You have eaten all the food that I should eat what?*  
‘What am I going to eat now that you have eaten all the food?’
- (31) *You reported me to the principal that he should do what?*  
‘What do you want the principal to do now that you have reported me to him?’

These novel examples of “long distance” *what* in combination with *that* clearly do not translate easily into StE. Nor have they been reported in varieties of English elsewhere. Further research has to be done to understand them fully. See also section 5.1.

## 5. *Wh*-word and constituent questions

Sala (2003: 196) shows how *wh*-movement does not occur in CamE. Questions are generated at the base, that is in situ. Their intonation contour is similar to that of normal declarative sentences. Such a *wh*- in situ rule for questioning is structurally simple:

5.1. *Wh*- in root clauses

- (32) *You are going where?*  
‘Where are you going?’
- (33) *He is eating what?*  
‘What is he eating?’
- (34) *He has sent the letter to who?*  
‘Who has he sent the letter to?’

5.2. *Wh*-word in subordinate clauses

Since the *wh*-word remains at the base, constituent questions can occur in subordinate clauses contrary to the way they function in BrE:

- (35) *He wants that I should do what?*  
‘What does he want me to do?’

- (36) *He told you that he was going **where**?*  
‘Where did he tell you he was going?’
- (37) *You are expecting that **who** will come?*  
‘Who are you expecting to come?’

Similar to the structures in section 5.1., these sentences taken from my data base are examples of syntactic economy: they require a minimum of movement, es-chewing both *wh*-movement, auxiliary shift and *do*-support.

### 5.3. Echo questions

Echo questions are used as a reaction to a statement or a declarative sentence, usually expressing disbelief or incredulity in StE. In CamE, echo questions are frequently preceded by the complementiser *that*.

- (38) ***That** you are going where?*  
‘You are going **where**?’
- (39) ***That** Thomas is coming when?*  
‘Thomas is coming **when**?’
- (40) ***That** Thomas ate what?*  
‘Thomas ate **what**?’

### 5.4. Yes/no questions

*Yes/no* questions show the same word order as ordinary statements and are used for greetings, for phatic communion (41–43) or deference (44).

- (41) *You are breaking your fast?*  
‘Are you breaking your fast?’
- (42) *The children are studying?*  
‘Are the children studying?’
- (43) *The day is getting dawn?*  
‘Is the day dawning?’
- (44) *The Fon is in the meeting?*  
‘Is the Fon in the meeting?’

These questions are realised as statements with a rising tone.

## 5.5. Tag questions

The normal form of the tag question in CamE is *isn't it*, a generalised form of the range of possibilities that occur in StE:

- (45) *Ekindi will be coming, isn't it?*  
 'Ekindi will be coming, won't he?'
- (46) *Ngwana didn't do the work, isn't it?*  
 'Ngwana didn't do the work, did he?'
- (47) Q: *We're expecting visitors to night, isn't it?*  
 A: *Yes.*  
 Q: 'We're expecting visitors tonight, aren't we?'  
 A: 'We are.'

The CamE pattern of tag questions is a clear case of simplification, since it does not require pronoun copying, auxiliary copying, *do*-support or negative polarity. Occasionally, other forms of tag questions are used interchangeably: *na*, *not so*, *ein*, *is that*, *right* and *okay*.

- (48) a. *I told you she will come, na?*  
 b. *You will pay the debt, na?*
- (49) a. *You will be around, not so?*  
 b. *She said it, not so?*
- (50) a. *Jane will not eat, ein?*  
 b. *We should stop it, ein?*
- (51) a. *She's married, is that?*  
 b. *Yaya finished the work, is that?*
- (52) a. *You'll wait for me outside the courtyard, right?*  
 b. *Carry this log of wood over there, right?*
- (53) a. *Mati will be on time, okay?*  
 b. *Mazo has finally arrived, okay?*

6. Dummy subject *they* in quasi-passives

Sala (2003: 217) provides three examples from CamE where no NP-movement is involved:

- (54) *They have published results.*  
 'Results have been published [by the principal].'

(55) **They** are paying salaries.  
 ‘Salaries are being paid [by the bank].’

(56) **They** have soiled the toilet.  
 ‘The toilet has been soiled [by a tenant].’

In CamE the pronoun *they* has no antecedent and is therefore non-referential in this sense: it is neither anaphoric nor cataphoric because it cannot be linked to an NP that is explicitly stated. If *they* has no antecedent, then it is only a slot filler like other dummy pronouns such as *it* and *there* in BrE. Passivisation in CamE thus makes use of active verbs and *they* in dummy subject position. The following chain of events is likely:

- (a) There is no overt (content) agentive NP.
- (b) Hence there is no NP-movement with potential passives.
- (c) The subject position is therefore potentially empty.
- (d) It is therefore filled by expletive (or dummy) *they*.

## 7. Resumptive, copy and other pronouns

### 7.1. Left dislocation

As is common in many varieties of African English, left dislocation is a regular feature of CamE, involving the identification of a topic NP followed by a copy pronoun like *she* in (57) below:

(57) *Martina's aunt* **she** works in the Ministry of Public Health.  
 ‘Martina’s aunt works in the Ministry of Public Health.’

### 7.2. Resumptive pronouns

These are also copy pronouns which fill in categories often left empty in StE subordinate clauses. They are most common in CamE relative clauses, including ones with indefinite heads, such as (58):

(58) *There are some students* whom I am teaching **them** to write.  
 ‘There are some students whom I am teaching to write.’

(59) *The other teacher that we were teaching English with* **her** went away.  
 ‘The other teacher with whom we taught went away.’

(60) *What men can do, women can do* **it** better.  
 ‘What men can do, women can do better.’

(61) *The area where we find the capital* **there today** is Yaounde.  
 ‘The area where we find the capital is Yaounde.’

### 7.3. Dative of obligation

There are some examples in which copy pronouns (usually *me* or *us*) express a sense of obligation.

(62) *I am going **me** away.*

‘I must go away.’

(63) *We are sitting **us** down.*

‘We have to sit down.’

It is not possible to say whether the pronouns are in the accusative or the dative case. However, because of constructions like the dative of advantage in varieties of English in the U.S. and elsewhere (*I’m gonna get me a gun*), and because obligation is expressed by the dative in many case-bearing languages, it seems appropriate to label the construction as a dative of obligation.

Finally, in connection with pronouns it is noteworthy that anaphoric nouns are avoided in certain CamE sentences where they are preferred in BrE:

(64) *We have **names** like Nathana, Clara and Joel which are familiar **names**.*

‘We have names like Nathana, Clara, and Joel which are familiar.’

(65) *You have bought **clothing items** like shirts, trousers, hats, and gloves which are common **clothings**.*

‘You have bought clothing items like shirts, trousers, hats, and gloves which are common.’

## 8. Conclusion

CamE has a wealth of syntactic constructions which challenge our traditional notions about the structure of English. There is a general avoidance of movement rules with interesting syntactic consequences. One of these is the frequent similarity in form between direct and indirect questions. Secondly, there is the frequent appearance of *wh*-words in situ, of resumptive pronouns and of the complementiser *that* in root clauses. Thirdly, there is the possibility of using *there* as a dummy subject in quasi-passives. It therefore seems justified to regard the grammar of CamE as a cognitive, non-deficient system, rather than as a substandard version of BrE.

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# **Cameroon Pidgin English (Kamtok): morphology and syntax\***

Miriam Ayafor

## **1. Introduction**

Kamtok, the name that is used today to designate the English-based Pidgin spoken in Cameroon, is believed to have evolved as far back as the 15th century, with the arrival of the Portuguese on the West African coast. By the 17th century, many other European and African ethnic groups had begun to use it in their contacts and transactions with each other, and had contributed to its development. Cameroon is known to have a wide variety of ethnic languages: “the number of languages listed for Cameroon is 286. Of those, 279 are living languages, 3 are second languages without mother tongue speakers, and 4 are extinct. Diversity index 0.97.” (Ethnologue.com: 1)

Today, Kamtok is the major lingua franca in the country and, in terms of geographical spread, is rivaled by no other national language. In terms of number of speakers, Fulfulde, one of the Cameroonian ethnic languages, ranks first, but is localised to a particular region. The fact that Kamtok is now “a fully-fledged language learned by children from their mothers” (Mackenzie 2002: 1) cannot be over-emphasized. Kamtok has developed its own phonological, lexical, and grammatical structures.

## **2. Sources of Kamtok lexis**

### **2.1. From borrowing**

Even though Kamtok is an English-based Pidgin, its lexicon has drawn from other European languages as well, notably Portuguese, Dutch, German and French. Some West African languages have contributed to Kamtok as well, including, of course, Cameroon national languages. Table 1 below gives some examples.

Table 1. Examples of Kamtok borrowings

Origin	Original word	Kamtok word	English equivalent
Portuguese	piqueno	<i>pikin</i>	child
	dache	<i>dash</i>	gift/tribute
	saber	<i>sabi</i>	know
	palaba	<i>palaba/palava</i>	conference/discussion
French	beaucoup	<i>boku</i>	many/much/plenty of
	stade	<i>stad</i>	stadium
	bonbons	<i>bonbon</i>	sweets
	manger	<i>dameh</i>	eat
Yoruba (Nigeria)	wahala	<i>wahala</i>	trouble/hassle/confusion
	akara	<i>makara</i>	bean cake
	egusi	<i>egusi</i>	pumpkin seeds
Igbo (Nigeria)	okro	<i>okro</i>	the vegetable okra
Kikongo	nkanda	<i>nkanda</i>	hide/skin
Twi	pima	<i>pima</i>	vagina
Duala (Cameroon)	ngondele	<i>ngondere</i>	young woman/girl
	munyu	<i>moyo</i>	in-law
	nayo	<i>nayo-nayo</i>	carefully
	mukala	<i>mukala</i>	white man/albino
Fula (Cameroon)	chuk	<i>chuk</i>	pierce/prick
Mungaka (Cameroon)	Ni	<i>ni</i> (a polite manner of addressing a senior male)	(none)
	Ma	<i>ma</i> (a polite manner of addressing a senior female)	(none)
	nkang sanjap	<i>nkang/corn beer</i> <i>sanja/rapa</i>	maize drink loin-cloth
Bakweri (Cameroon)	mbanjah	<i>banja</i>	ribs/waist
Mandankwe (Cameroon)	ngumsi	<i>mengwin</i>	locusts
Lamsoh (Cameroon)	mboh	<i>mboh</i>	groundnut paste

Some of the Kamtok words that are assumed to be English-derived may have come from German or Dutch since the three languages are all Germanic, and since the Germans occupied Cameroon for some time. Also, both Dutch mission-



ary and Peace Corps volunteers were present in the country for some time. It is worthy of note that most Cameroonian dishes have Kamtok names derived from the languages of the ethnic regions where these various foodstuffs come from, e.g. *achu*, *ndole*, *eru*, *ekwang*, *miondo*, *kwa-koko*, *mbanga*, *kum-kum*, *mbongo-chobi*, and *bobolo*.

## 2.2. Normal processes of word-formation

### 2.2.1. Compounding

In order to express some ideas or thoughts, Kamtok uses compounding productively. Examples are *bon-haus* ‘birth + house’ (ceremony to recognize and celebrate the birth of a child), *folo-bak* ‘follow + behind’ (younger brother/sister), *las-bon* ‘last + deliver’ (last child of a family), *mimbo-haus* ‘wine + house’ (bar), *chop-haus* ‘eat + house’ (restaurant), *chopchia* ‘eat + chair’ (successor), and *hay-op* ‘high + up’ (pride/ to be proud).

### 2.2.2. Inversion

In some cases, Kamtok inverts the position of English compound words or phrasal nouns to create new words like *koshot* ‘cut + short’ from *shortcut* (‘path’), *tronhet* ‘strong + head’ from *headstrong*, *taihet* ‘tie + head’ from *head tie/scarf*, and *fufu-con* ‘flour + corn’ from *corn flour*. *Reme* ‘mother’ and *repe* ‘father’ are from the French words *mere* and *pere* that have been inverted phonologically.

### 2.2.3. Truncating or clipping

Some borrowed words are shortened and may seem neologisms. Examples are *clando* from *clandestine* (‘illegal transportation’), *mbut* from *mbutuku* (word from local language for ‘a worthless and stupid person’), *nga* from *girlfriend*, *asso* from *associé* (French word for ‘an accomplice’, used in Kamtok to mean ‘my good friend’), and *pang* from *pantalons* (French word for a pair of trousers).

### 2.2.4. Reduplication

Reduplication resulting in a meaning different from that of the original lexical item is another strategy of word formation in Kamtok. Hence there is the reduplication of the conjunction *so* to create an adverb *soso* in sentences like *Da pikin di soso kray* ‘That child is always crying’. The adjective *kain* ‘kind/type’ has been reduplicated but with less change of meaning than is the case with *so*. *Kainkain* has a plural quality *kain* is missing. Compare *Mi an ma sista get wan kain klos* ‘My sister and I have the same kind of dress’ with *Kainkain klos dem dey fo maket* ‘There are various kinds of dresses in the market’.

### 2.2.5. Neologisms

As noted by several commentators, Cameroonian youths are becoming very innovative in their speech. Examples of Kamtok coinages created from no known source and used and understood by many youths and a few adults include *chaka* ‘shoes’, *buka* ‘to play cards’, *yang* ‘to buy’, *tum* ‘to sell’ and *nyama* ‘to eat’ (probably from the Bantu word for ‘meat’).

## 3. An overview of Kamtok lexis

For reasons of space I limit myself to examples of words from different domains of family, social, and professional life.

### 3.1. Members of the family

Table 2. Kamtok words from the domain of the family

Kamtok word	English equivalent
<i>Papa</i>	‘Father’
<i>Mami</i>	‘Mother’
<i>Pikin</i>	‘child’
<i>Bik-papa</i>	‘grandfather’
<i>Bik-mami</i>	‘grandmother’
<i>Bik broda/sista</i>	‘elder brother/sister’
<i>Smol broda/sista</i>	‘younger brother/sister’
<i>Folo-bak</i>	‘immediate younger brother/sister’
<i>Fes-bon</i>	‘first child of the family’
<i>Las-bon</i>	‘last child of the family’
<i>Mbanya</i>	‘co-wife’ (in polygamous marriages)
<i>Moyo</i>	‘in-law’
<i>Njumba</i>	‘concubine/girlfriend’
<i>Kwakanda</i>	‘old bachelor/old maid’

## 3.2. Social life

Table 3. Kamtok words from the domain of social life

<b>Kamtok word</b>	<b>English equivalent</b>
<i>mimbo-haus</i>	'bar'
<i>chop-haus</i>	'restaurant'
<i>njangi</i>	'a kind of Credit Union'
<i>bon-haus</i>	'a ceremony to recognise and celebrate birth'
<i>krai-day</i>	'a funeral/mourning ceremony'
<i>juju</i>	'secret society/a masquerade'
<i>Fon</i>	'traditional head of a clan'
<i>Chif</i>	'traditional head of a village'
<i>ninga</i>	'slave'
<i>kombi</i>	'friend'
<i>sevis</i>	'waiter/waitress'

## 3.3. Professional life

Table 4. Kamtok words from the domain of professional life

<b>Kamtok word</b>	<b>English equivalent</b>
<i>ticha</i>	'teacher'
<i>hedmassa</i>	'headmaster/head teacher'
<i>polis</i>	'policeman'
<i>kapinta</i>	'carpenter'
<i>brikleya</i>	'bricklayer/mason'
<i>washnait</i>	'night watch'
<i>darekto</i>	'Director'
<i>bikman</i>	'important personality'
<i>bikman fo wok</i>	'boss'
<i>bikman fo jandam</i>	'Gendarmerie Commander'
<i>bayam-sellam</i>	'foodstuff retailer/petty trader'
<i>noss</i>	'nurse'
<i>dokta</i>	'doctor'
<i>kombi fo wok</i>	'colleague'

## 3.4. Some Kamtok idiomatic expressions

Table 5. Kamtok idiomatic expressions

<b>Kamtok expression</b>	<b>English equivalent</b>
<i>Fo nak skin</i>	'To trouble oneself/to be bothered unnecessarily'
<i>Du weti du weti</i>	'No matter what happens'
<i>Man no run!</i>	'Don't give up or abandon at the last minute!'
<i>Fo show man pepe</i>	'To deal severely with some one'
<i>Fo kot man yi fut</i>	'To undercut someone'
<i>Du mi a du yu</i>	'Tit for tat'
<i>Woman rapa</i>	'A male flirt'
<i>Fo put san-san fo man yi gari</i>	'Sabotage'

## 3.5. Some Kamtok proverbs

*Trobu no di ring bel.*

'It never rains but it pours'

*Bele no get Sondag.*

'The stomach never rests'

*Wuman weh yi di kuk wowo chop no laik trenja.*

'A poor cook doesn't like to receive guests'

*Smol pikin kotlas di shap fo monintaim.*

'Time will eliminate the inexperienced, giving way to the experienced to become famous'

*Kombi wey yi nia pas broda wey yi fawe.*

'A close friend is better than a distant brother'

*Tori bi fain sote tifman laf fo banda.*

'A cheerful attitude can win over enemies'

*Wan han no fit tay bondul.*

'Many hands make light work'

*Tok fo mop no bi kago fo hed.*

'What you claim you can do is not what you actually can do'

*Pesin wey yi get mop no fit mis rod.*

'He who asks questions never goes astray'

*Wan bangul no fit hala.*

'Working together/cooperation brings about efficiency and success'

## 4. Parts of speech

### 4.1. Nouns

Unlike in English, Kamtok nouns do not take plural forms through inflexions. Plurals are always expressed in the noun phrase through the addition of the plural marker *dem*. Even when there is a numeral in the phrase indicating plurality, the plural marker is still used, contrary to the observation made by Mackenzie (2002: 1–2). Hence, singular *man* becomes plural *man dem*, *wan buk* becomes *tu buk dem* or *plenty buk dem*, and so forth. Abstract nouns are expressed by explanatory noun phrases or relative clauses, e.g. ‘imagination’ would be *weti wey man de tink*, literally ‘what one thinks’.

Synonyms do exist in Kamtok. Some examples are given in Table 6 below:

Table 6. Kamtok synonyms

Kamtok word	Synonym	English
<i>Tek taim</i>	<i>lukot</i>	‘be careful’
<i>Kassingo</i>	<i>ken</i>	‘cane’
<i>Kotrot</i>	<i>koshot</i>	‘shortcut’
<i>Kwa</i>	<i>poket, hanbag</i>	‘pocket/handbag’
<i>Nyongo</i>	<i>famlah</i>	‘secret society that practises witchcraft/witchcraft’
<i>Mimba</i>	<i>chek/tink</i>	‘to think’

There are some homophones in Kamtok: *aks* meaning ‘to ask’ and ‘an axe’, *taya* meaning ‘a motor tyre’ and ‘to be tired’. Since these involve different parts of speech (nouns and verbs), the homophony/homonymy is tolerated.

Gender is expressed by adding the prefix *man-* and *woman-* to the noun in question. Hence *man-pikin* ‘male child’ and *woman-pikin* ‘female child’, *man-dog* ‘dog’ and *woman-dog* ‘bitch’.

Some nouns in Kamtok are reduplicated. When this happens they either maintain their functions as nouns or become adjectives. Examples are *san-san* ‘sand’, *bia-bia* ‘hair’, *koro-koro* ‘scabies’, *pala-pala* ‘wrestling’, *pof-pof*, ‘dough nuts’, *chuku-chuku* ‘thorns’ and *kenen-kenen* ‘a slimy vegetable’. Used as adjectives, one can have *san-san boy* ‘irresponsible fellow’ or ‘rascal’, *bia-bia ches* ‘hairy chest’, *koro-koro fut* ‘scabies-infected leg’, *chuku-chuku bif* ‘thorny animal’ (e.g., porcupine), and *kenen-kenen rot* ‘slippery road’.

## 4.2. Pronouns

Personal pronouns in subject function are *A* 'I', *yu* 'you', *I* 'he/she/it', *wi* 'we', *wuna*, 'you' (plural), and *deh* 'they'. Object personal pronouns are *mi* 'me', *yu* 'you', *yi* 'him/her', *am* 'it', *wi* 'us', *wuna* 'you' (plural) and *dem* 'them'. The following sentences illustrate these different functions.

- |     |  |     |  |
|-----|--|-----|--|
| (1) | a. <i>A laik fo wok.</i><br>'I love to work.'              | (2) | a. <i>Gif wi de wok.</i><br>'Give us the job.'       |
|     | b. <i>I laik fo wok.</i><br>'He/she/it likes to work.'     |     | b. <i>Gif de wok fo wi.</i><br>'Give the job to us.' |
|     | c. <i>Wuna laik fo wok.</i><br>'You (plural) love to wok.' |     | c. <i>Gif am de bif.</i><br>'Give it the meat.'      |

The relative pronoun in Kamtok is expressed by the words *weh* and *se*. *Weh* is used to link two propositions. The equivalent of *weh* in English is expressed by the words *what*, *who*, *whose*, *whom* and *that*. The context of use differentiates these meanings. In the following examples two sentences are given in each case and then linked with the relative pronoun *weh*. Note that the subject of the second clause is not omitted.

*Weh* as 'who'

- (3)
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| a. | <i>A di tok fo Lum.</i>   |
| b. | <i>I di silip fo trenja rum.</i>  |
| c. | <i>A di tok fo Lum weh I di silip fo trenja rum.</i><br>'I am talking to Lum who sleeps in the guest room.' |

*Weh* as 'whose'

- (4)
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| a. | <i>Nji don si da kapinta.</i>   |
| b. | <i>Yi wok tin dem don los.</i>  |
| c. | <i>Nji don si da kapinta weh yi wok tin dem don los.</i><br>'Nji has seen the carpenter whose tools are missing.' |

*Weh* as 'whom'

- (5)
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| a. | <i>Na Massa Paul dat.</i>   |
| b. | <i>Yu bi gif tu bak simen fo yi.</i>  |
| c. | <i>Na Massa Paul dat weh yu bi gif tu bak simen fo yi.</i><br>'That is Mr. Paul to whom you gave two bags of cement.' |

*Weh* as 'which'

- (6)
- |    |  |
|----|--|
| a. | <i>Wi don put ol pent fo haus.</i>   |
| b. | <i>Yu bi bay am yeseday.</i>   |
| c. | <i>Wi don put ol pent weh yu bi bay am yeseday fo haus.</i><br>'We have used all the paint which you bought yesterday on the house.' |

*Weh* as ‘that’

- (7) a. *Mike no go drin wata.*  
 b. *Da wata komot fo wel.*  
 c. *Mike no go drin wata **weh** yi komot fo wel.*  
 ‘Mike will not drink water that comes from the well.’

Note that *weh* meaning ‘that’ or ‘which’ can be used interchangeably. The other relative pronoun, *se*, which can be translated as ‘that’ in English, is usually used with verbs expressing an opinion or attitude.

- (8) a. *Wi mimba **se** Piskops dem get plenty moni.*  
 ‘We think that Peace Corps are very rich.’  
 b. *Wi sabi **se** tumoro na bik dey.*  
 ‘We know that tomorrow is a public holiday’.  
 c. *A bi di fia **se** ma pikin don mis rot.*  
 ‘I was afraid that my child had lost the way’.

In Kamtok the word *on* is added to possessive adjectives in order to form possessive pronouns. Possessive adjectives in the language are *ma* ‘my’, *ya* ‘your’, *yi* ‘his/her/its’, *wi* ‘our’, *wuna* ‘your’ (plural) and *dia* ‘their’. They precede the nouns they determine, for example *ya moto* ‘your vehicle’, *dia haus* ‘their house’. Possessive pronouns, therefore, are *ma on* ‘mine’, *ya on* ‘yours’, *yi on* ‘his/hers/its’, *wi on* ‘ours’, *wuna on* ‘yours’ (plural) and *dia on* ‘theirs’. Ownership can also be expressed by the use of *get am* or simply by *get* preceded by an object pronoun.

- (9) a. *Dis pusi na **ma on**.*  
 ‘This cat is mine.’  
 b. *Dis pusi na mi **get am**.*  
 ‘I am the owner of this cat.’  
 c. *Na mi **get** this pusi.*  
 ‘I am the owner of this cat.’

A reflexive pronoun is used in a statement when the agent and patient of an action are identical, that is, when the subject and the object of the sentence refer to the same person. In Kamtok, the reflexive is formed by adding the expression *sef-sef* to the object pronoun in question.

- (10) a. *Yu **sef-sef** yu go go fo hospitel.*  
 ‘You’ll go to the hospital by yourself.’  
 b. *Yu bi kuk de chop yu **sef-sef**.*  
 ‘You cooked the food yourself.’  
 c. *Yi **sef-sef** bi wash de klos dem.*  
 ‘He/she did the laundry him-/herself.’

Note that unlike in English, where the reflexive pronoun can only occur in clause-final position, in Kamtok it can occur after initial subjects or in final position. When a reflexive pronoun does occur in initial position, the subject pronoun can still be used in the same clause, as in example (10a) above. In example (10c), the subject pronoun *yi* has been omitted to portray the flexibility of usage of reflexives in Kamtok. Reflexive pronouns can also be used for emphasis. In (11a) and (11b) they stress the subject of the sentence:

- (11) a. *Peter yi sef-sef bi kol mi fo chop-haus.*  
 ‘Peter himself invited me to the restaurant.’  
 b. *Darekto yi sef-sef tek wi go pati.*  
 ‘The Director himself took us to the party.’

To make the emphasis even stronger, a preceding particle *na* is added to the noun phrase:

- (12) a. *Na Peter yi sef-sef bi kol mi fo chop-haus.*  
 b. *Na Darekto yi sef-sef tek wi go pati.*

A related form involves the object personal pronoun to focus on the VP:

- (13) a. *A di go mi fo mimbo haus.*  
 ‘I am going [me] to the drink parlour/bar.’ (i.e. I *really* want to go to the bar)  
 b. *I di chop yi.*  
 ‘He/she is eating [him/her].’ (i.e. he/she is actually eating, despite all)  
 c. *Deh di vex dem.*  
 ‘They are angry [them].’

The negative marker *no* does not change the position of the emphatic pronoun, as illustrated in (14):

- (14) *A no di go mi fo mimbo haus.*  
 ‘I am not going [me] to the bar.’

#### 4.3. Verbs

##### 4.3.1. *The verb fo bi ‘to be’*

This verb has four forms: *bi*, *na*, *di* and *dey*. *Bi* is often used with subject pronouns, as equational copula. *Na* is often used to identify people and places (identificative copula). They function as copular verbs in the simple present.

- (15) a. *Yu bi big man.*  
 ‘You are an important personality.’



- b. *Wuna bi sikul pikin dem.*  
'You are school children.'
- c. *Ma papa na ticha.*  
'My father is a teacher.'
- d. *Bamenda na big taun fo Cameroon.*  
'Bamenda is a big town in Cameroon.'

*Di* is used as an auxiliary verb denoting progressive aspect:

- (16) a. *A di shidon witi ma anty.*  
'I'm living with my aunt.'
- b. *Deh di tok kontre tok fo klas.*  
'They're speaking vernacular languages in class.'

*Dey* is used as a locative copula:

- (17) a. *Ma mami dey fo maket.*  
'My mother is in the market.'
- b. *Wuna famili dem dey fo Nigeria.*  
'Your families are in Nigeria.'
- c. *Moni no dey fo ma broda yi kwa.*  
'There is no money in my brother's pocket.'

#### 4.3.2. *The verbs get 'be', laik 'like' and sabi 'know'*

These verbs do not use the auxiliary *di* in the present tense, as they are statives rather than action verbs. Examples:

- (18) a. *Ma kombi get sikin.*  
'My friend is fat.'
- b. *A laik ma pikin.*  
'I love my child.'
- c. *Yu sabi yi papa.*  
'You know his/her father.'

#### 4.3.3. *The verbs fit and wan*

These are auxiliary verbs and can be used in different ways. Firstly, *fit* can be used as a polite way of making requests. Secondly, it can be used to indicate the ability and the will to do something, as illustrated in (19a)–(19d). *Wan* is used to express an intention, a desire, or a wish, as in (19e).

- (19) a. *Wi fit go sinima dis nait?*  
'Could we go to the movies this night?'

- b. *Yu fit gif mi mimbo?*  
'Could you give me a drink?'
- c. *A fit kuk rais.*  
'I can cook rice.'
- d. *Ndikum no fit draif moto.*  
'Ndikum cannot drive a car.'
- e. *Pasto wan preya fo yu.*  
'The Pastor would like to pray for you.'

#### 4.3.4. *Verb reduplication for intensity*

In the following sentences the reduplicated words are used as verbs only. They often signify or emphasize a continual occurrence of a phenomenon. Note that the sentences would still be correct Kamtok sentences if the words were not repeated. However, their implications and meaning would be different. Compare (20a) and (20b) with (20c) and (20d) below:

- (20) a. *Ren di fol fol.*  
'It is raining all the time.'
- b. *Fo shap monin, wuman dem di hori hori fo go fam.*  
'Early in the morning, women are always in a mad rush to go to the farm.'
- c. *Ren di fol.*  
'It is raining.'
- d. *Fo shap monin, wuman dem di hori fo go fam.*  
'Early in the morning, women hurry to go to the farm.'

#### 4.3.5 *Repeated verbs with the object pronoun am*

This construction is used to emphasize a contrast, as in (21):

- (21) a. Q: *Yu bi trowe da sup?*  
'Did you throw away that soup?'  
A: *No-oh, A no bi trowe am fo trowe am; A bi drink am fo drink am.*  
'No, I didn't throw it away; I drank it instead.'

Sometimes the resulting sentence structure from these repeated verbs expresses the passive voice, which otherwise would be considered absent in Kamtok. The third person plural subject personal pronoun *deh* must be used in this case:

- b. Q: *Deh di kuk soya, no bi so?*  
'Soya is boiled, isn't it?'  
A: *No-oh, deh no di kuk am fo kuk am; deh di bon am fo bon am.*  
'No, it is not boiled; it is roasted.'

- c. **Deh no di pawn fufu fo pawn am; deh di ton am fo ton am.**  
‘Fufu is not pounded; it is stirred.’

Note that in Kamtok the verb *kuk* is used to mean boiling or steaming only. Other methods of cooking like grilling, roasting and baking are called *bon* ‘burning’. Cooking in hot oil is called *frai* ‘fry’. When food is cooked and ready, the Kamtok word is *don* and not *kukt* ‘cooked’, e.g. *De planti don don* ‘The plantain is cooked/ready’.

#### 4.3.6. The verb get fo ‘must/have to’

*Get fo* is used when giving directives. It expresses obligation. The use of *get fo* in giving orders is more polite than its synonyms *mos* and/or *mostu*. These have the same function as *get fo* but appear to be rather impolite.

- (22) a. *Yu get fo rid ya buk.*  
‘You have to study.’  
b. *Beri mostu maret dis man.*  
‘Beri must get married to this man.’

### 4.4. Verb tense and aspect

#### 4.4.1. The past

The past simple is formed by using the auxiliary *bi* + Verb.

- (23) a. *Yesedey A bi go fo maket.*  
‘Yesterday I went to the market.’  
b. *Ma sista no bi go fo maket.*  
‘My sister did not go to the maket.’

The recent past or present perfect and the unspecified past are marked by the auxiliary *don* + Verb. As unspecified past, it is used to ask whether one has ever done something or not. Sometimes the word *bifo* ‘before’ is added at the end of the question. The negative of *don* is *noba*.

- (24) a. *I don si dokta.*  
‘He/she has seen the doctor.’  
b. *Paul don sik plenty.*  
‘Paul has been very sick.’  
c. *Yi bele don poch bifo?*  
‘Has he ever had diarrhoea?’  
d. *I noba si dokta.*  
‘He hasn’t seen the doctor.’

Adding the auxiliary *bi* to the recent past marker *don* and the main verb forms the past perfect: *bi + don + Verb*.

- (25) a. *Ren bi don fol bifo wi komot.*  
 ‘Rain had fallen before we went out.’  
 b. *Kao no bi don chop ol kon fo fam taim weh de pikin dem bi kam.*  
 ‘The cow had not eaten all the corn in the farm when the children came.’

The imperfect *be + di + Verb* is used to indicate actions begun in the past but not necessarily completed as in (26a), for habitual actions as in (26b), and for two past actions taking place at the same time as in (26c):

- (26) a. *Tif pipol dem bi di run foseka se polis bi kam.*  
 ‘The thieves were running because the police came.’  
 b. *San-san boi dem bi di hambok woman dem plenty.*  
 ‘The rascals were disturbing women a lot.’  
 c. *Tif pipol dem bi di brok yi haus taim weh yi bi di slip.*  
 ‘Thieves were breaking into his house when he was sleeping.’

#### 4.4.2. *The future*

The simple future tense in Kamtok is formed by adding the auxiliary *go* to the main verb: *go + Verb*.

- (27) *Ngwing go go holide fo Limbe nex wik.*  
 ‘Ngwing will go on vacation to Limbe next week.’

The progressive aspect of the future is obtained by adding the auxiliary *di* to the future marker *go*: *go + di + Verb*.

- (28) a. *Taim weh a go inta Njangi, a go di chop kola.*  
 ‘When I join the “Njangi” group, I will be eating kola nuts.’  
 b. *Pipol dem no go di kam fo ma haus fosika se a no get moni.*  
 ‘People will not be coming to my house because I have no money.’

#### 4.4.3. *Dropping tense markers*

In narrations, once the time of the story has been established, tense markers can be dropped. It is not necessary in Kamtok to use auxiliary verbs throughout a narrative. Compare the two texts below and observe the absence of auxiliaries in the second.

- (29) a. *Yesede, Manka **bi** go fo Mankon Maket. Taim weh yi **bi** rich fo maket, yi **bi** bay plenty tin dem. Afta, yi **bi** go chop-haus an yi **bi** chop achu an yi **bi** drin top.*  
 b. *Yesede, Manka **bi** go fo Mankon Maket. Taim weh yi  $\emptyset$  rich fo maket, yi  $\emptyset$  bay plenty tin dem. Afta, yi  $\emptyset$  go chop-haus an yi  $\emptyset$  chop achu an yi  $\emptyset$  drin top.*  
 ‘Yesterday Manka went to Mankon Market. When she arrived at the market she bought many things. After that, she went to a restaurant and ate achu and drank a soft drink.’

Some verbs such as *wan*, *get fo*, *fit*, and *sabi* may not need tense-markers or auxiliaries when they are used in the present tense. However, they may need tense-markers when they are used in other tenses.

- (30) a. *Joseph **wan** join Kwifo.*  
 ‘Joseph wants to become a member of Kwifo.’  
 b. *Yi **get fo** bay kotlas an spia.*  
 ‘He has to buy a cutlass and a spear.’  
 c. *Trenja no **fit** inta juju.*  
 ‘A foreigner cannot become a member of a secret society.’  
 d. *Fon **sabi** ol kontri fashon fo vilej.*  
 ‘The chief knows all the traditional rites of the village.’

#### 4.5. Adjectives

The position of adjectives in Kamtok sentences is the same as in English, that is, they can be used both attributive as in (31a) and predicative as in (31b):

- (31) a. *Ma kombi get **bik** fut dem.*  
 ‘My friend has big feet.’  
 b. *Ma kombi yi fut dem **bik**.*  
 ‘My friend’s feet are big.’

Possessive adjectives are: *ma* ‘my’, *ya* ‘your’, *yi* ‘his/her/its’, *wuna* ‘your’ (plural), *wi* ‘our’, and *dia* ‘their’. They precede the nouns they determine, e.g., *ma papa* ‘my father’, *wuna moyo* ‘your father-in-law’.

Certain reduplicated forms are used as adjectives and adverbs, and can modify both nouns and verbs depending on the context of the sentence.

- (32) a. *Pipol dem for kontre get **fain fain fashon**.*  
 ‘Villagers are well behaved.’  
 b. *Da Pa di **wok fain fain**.*  
 ‘That elderly man works well/hard.’

- c. *Shu get nyu nyu kombi dem.*  
'Shu has new friends.'
- d. *Shu don jos kam nyu nyu.*  
'Shu has just recently come.'

#### 4.6. Adverbs

Adverbs in Kamtok include *simol-simol* 'slowly/softly/gradually', *sofli-sofli* 'slowly/steadily/calmly', *popo* 'really', *kwik-kwik* 'quickly' and *ova* 'very/too much'. Unlike in English, *ova* can both precede and follow the verb it is modifying. All other adverbs, however, are post-modifying only.

- (33)
- a. *Ma bik broda di chop ova.*  
'My elder brother eats too much.'
  - b. *Ma bik broda di ova chop.*  
'My elder brother eats too much.'
  - d. *Wuna di waka soffli-sofli.*  
'You are walking slowly.'
  - e. \**Wuna di soffli-sofli waka.*

#### 4.7. Prepositions

The most common preposition *fo* can take the Standard English (StE) meaning of 'to', 'at', 'in', 'on', 'about', and 'from'. The meaning depends on the context of use. The following sentences illustrate this fact.

- (34)
- a. *A di go fo ma wok.*  
'I'm going **to** my place of work.'
  - b. *Pikin dem di pley futbol fo stad.*  
'The children are playing football **at** the stadium.'
  - c. *Piskops don wok fo Cameroon fo long taim.*  
'The Peace Corps have worked **in** Cameroon for long.'
  - d. *Ha fo ya wok witi fama dem?*  
'What **about** your work with farmers?'
  - e. *De kapinta yi wok tin dem dey fo tebul.*  
'The carpenter's tools are **on** the table.'
  - f. *Wuna komot fo England?*  
'Do you come **from** England?'

When *fo* is functioning as 'to', it can be omitted from a sentence without causing any change of meaning, e.g. *A wan go Ø taun* is exactly the same as *A wan go fo taun* 'I want to go to the town'.

Although *fo* functions as a preposition in its own right, it can also be attached to other prepositional words to indicate location of places and things. Thus we

have *fo kona* ‘close to/near’, *fo midul* ‘in the middle of/between’, *fo ontop* ‘on top of/on’, *fo onda* ‘under’, *fo bak* ‘behind’ *fo bifo/fo fron* ‘in front of’, *fo wuman han* ‘to the left’, *fo man han* ‘to the right’, *fo oposit* ‘opposite/across’, *fo insai* ‘inside’, and *fo opsai* ‘outside’.

#### 4.8. Conjunctions and interjections

Kamtok conjunctions are the same as in English but for the difference in spelling and pronunciation. One exception is Kamtok *an* ‘and’ which is omitted in a combination of *kam* or *go* with another action verb:

- (35) a. ***Kam*** Ø ***helep*** *mi wash dis klos dem.*  
 ‘Come and help me wash these clothes.’  
 b. ***Go*** Ø ***gif*** *dis basket fo bik-mami.*  
 ‘Go and give this basket to grandmother.’  
 c. *Onana don go* Ø ***bit*** *yi wuman fo mimbo haus.*  
 ‘Onana has gone and beaten his wife in the drink parlour.’  
 d. *Ticha bi kam* Ø ***tok*** *fo Pa se a di wok fain fo sikul.*  
 ‘The teacher came and told Papa that I do well in school.’

The most common interjections in Kamtok are *Massa!* *Ma mamy ey!* and *A sey eh!* The latter is also used as an introduction to questions.

### 5. Sentence structure

#### 5.1. The simple sentence

As in English, simple declaratives in Kamtok follow an SVO pattern:

- (36) a. *Pikin di kray.*  
 ‘The child is crying.’

Unlike in English, where the negative *not* or *n’t* occurs after the first auxiliary, in Kamtok the negative marker *no* is placed in front of the verb phrase.

- b. *Pikin no di kray.*  
 \*‘The child not is crying.’

Similarly, with interrogatives there is no subject-operator inversion in Kamtok. In speech, only the rising intonation differentiates the question from the statement, while in writing, only the question mark does the same.

- c. *Pikin di kray?*  
 ‘Is the child crying?’

*Wh*-words, however, are also used to ask questions. For a selection of Kamtok *wh*-words, see Table 7 below:

Table 7. Kamtok *wh*-words

Kamtok	English	Question
<i>Weti</i>	'what'	<i>Weti yu di do?</i> 'What are you doing?'
<i>Wusay</i>	'where'	<i>Wusay yu di go?</i> 'Where are you going?'
<i>Wishtaim</i>	'when'	<i>Wishtaim sikul di klos?</i> 'When are schools closing?'
<i>Way</i>	'why'	<i>Way da boi di ron?</i> 'Why is that boy running?'
<i>Ha</i>	'how'	<i>Ha yu dey?</i> 'How are you?'

The particle *na* can sometimes be used alongside *wh*-words, for example *Na weti dis?* 'What is this?' or *Na wusay yu komot?* 'Where are you coming from?'

Question tags do not vary according to the tense of the verb in the preceding statement. There is just one question tag for all statements, *no bi so*:

- (37) a. *Yu laik fo chop wata-fufu an eru, no bi so?*  
'You like to eat wata-fufu and eru, don't you?'
- b. *Da wuman dem bi mami-pikin dem, no bi so?*  
'Those women are nursing mothers, aren't they?'
- c. *Wuna go bay moto smol taim, no bi so.*  
'You will soon buy a car, won't you?'

As far as the imperative is concerned, a distinction occurs between the singular and the plural subject. In the singular, the direct command takes no subject pronoun, while it does in the plural.

- (38) a.  $\emptyset$  *Wukop!*  
'Wake up!' (sg.)
- b. *Wuna wukop!*  
'Wake up!' (pl.)
- c.  $\emptyset$  *Kam dong!*  
'Descend!' (sg.)
- d. *Wuna kam dong!*  
'Descend!' (pl.)

Indirect commands are expressed using the word *mek*. Unlike with direct commands, the speaker using the indirect command has no authority over the addressee. It is rather a polite way of giving instructions. The indirect command can be used with all subject pronouns.



- (39) a. *Mek A komot fo moto.*  
 ‘Let me get out of the vehicle.’  
 b. *Mek **wuna** push moto.*  
 ‘Please push the vehicle.’  
 c. *Mek **dem** shidon fo bak.*  
 ‘Let them sit at the back.’  
 d. *Mek **wi** jek kago.*  
 ‘Let us lift the luggage.’

## 5.2. Comparison

Words used to express comparison in Kamtok are *pas* (< pass), *laik*, *rich* (< reach), and *no rich*.

With nouns:

- (40) a. *A get klos dem **pas** yu.*  
 ‘I have more clothes than you.’  
 b. *Mofor get trosa dem **laik** Anye.*  
 ‘Mofor has as many trousers as Anye.’  
 c. *Massa Ndikum no get moni **rich** Massa Nde.*  
 ‘Mr. Ndikum doesn’t have as much money as Mr. Nde.’

With adjectives:

- (41) a. *Ma sista yi rapa fain **pas** ma mami yi on.*  
 ‘My sister’s loin-cloth is nicer than my mother’s.’  
 b. *John yi fut dem bik **rich** Peter yi on dem.*  
 ‘John’s feet are as big as Peter’s.’  
 c. *Dis rod **no** long **rich** da ada wan.*  
 ‘This road is not as long as the other one.’

With verbs:

- (42) a. *Susana di bay nyanga tin dem **pas** Mary.*  
 ‘Susan buys beauty products more than Mary.’  
 b. *Ngwe sabi ayon klos **pas** yi big sista.*  
 ‘Ngwe does ironing better than her elder sister.’  
 c. *Lum no di gif moni fo yi mami **pas** Siri.*  
 ‘Lum doesn’t give more money to her mother than Siri does.’

With adverbs:

- (43) a. *Yu di soh kwik-kwik **laik** mi.*  
 ‘You sew as fast as I do.’  
 b. *Dis pikin di tok softli-softli **pas** yi papa.*  
 ‘This child speaks more slowly than his father.’

- c. *Wuna no fit wok tron-tron rich wi.*  
 ‘You cannot work as hard as we do.’

Superlatives exist in two forms relating to superiority and inferiority. The former is marked by the expressions *pas ol*, *taim no dey*, and *pas mak*, the later by *atol-atol* and *no smol*. They express the highest degree of comparison.

- (44) a. *Sikam rapa fain. Nangeria wax fain pas sikam. Bot Holan wax fain pas mak / Holan wax fain pas ol/Holan wax fain taim no dey.*  
 ‘But Holland Wax is the best.’
- b. *Da telo no sabi mak klos no smol/Da telo no sabi mak klos atol-atol.*  
 ‘That tailor doesn’t know how to embroider at all/not the least.’

## 6. Conclusion

Much of the published research that has been carried out on Kamtok has been of a sociolinguistic nature. Very little has been done in the field of linguistic description. There is a debate among Cameroonian linguists as to whether Kamtok has reached a status fit enough to be given official recognition by the government of the country. It could then be treated like any other Cameroonian national language, possibly even as a medium of instruction in the first few years of primary education in the regions of the country where Kamtok is highly respected. It is hoped that a scientific study of the language like the one done here will shed more light on its nature and quality, rendering it more prestigious in the eyes of those who have so far thought it was not, and consequently enhance and improve the quality of the debate.

- \* I am deeply indebted to Joseph Wabo, a former teacher of Cameroon Pidgin to American Peace Corps volunteers, who permitted me to photocopy the Trainers’ Manual that he and other Peace Corps trainers compiled and used for their teaching. Many of the examples are modified versions of exercises from this manual. Unfortunately, the document is not a published book and is neither dated nor authored.

## Selected references

Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# East African English (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania): morphology and syntax

Josef Schmied

## 1. Introduction

An outline of grammatical features of East African English (EAF<sub>E</sub>) is even more difficult to produce than that of its phonology, because deviations in grammar occur in much lower frequencies. One reason for this lower frequency is perhaps that grammatical deviations are more stigmatised. Thus, an independent EAF<sub>E</sub> grammar is even less distinguishable than an independent phonology or lexicon.

East African tendencies in morphology and syntax can often also be found in other parts of Africa and even beyond, in so-called New Englishes (cf. Hickey forthcoming), and even in some First Language (L1) varieties in Britain, America or Australia. Partly at least, English varieties all seem to develop in similar directions in some respects, as for instance in terms of simplification and regularisation. Frequency, consistency, systematicity and the developmental, regional and social distribution over various spoken and written text types are a matter for further research as well as the discovery of implicational hierarchies in frequency and acceptability.

## 2. Morphology

In this section the grammatical description of EAF<sub>E</sub> will therefore be presented in broad categories of word class type, independent of any specific syntax or interpretation according to language learning theories. This sometimes leads to overlaps of explanations with underlying semantic structures, such as the ‘count – non-count’ distinction, which has repercussions for plural formation as well as the use of articles, although with different frequencies. The pluralisation *advices*, for instance, seems to be less frequent than *an advice*. What are called grammatical features do not occur consistently each time a construction is used and are very often related to sub-rules of more general rules, which are not affected.

## 2.1. Verb phrase

As far as the verb phrase is concerned, the following tendencies have been noted.

Inflectional endings are not always added to the verb, but the general, regular or unmarked forms are used instead:

This applies to the regular endings of the 3rd sg. present tense and of the past tense as well as to irregular verb forms. Since such deviations from the (British) norm are stigmatised, educated East Africans only use them in special cases. This may happen when they are supported by the pronunciation (e.g. alveolar fricatives/plosives for marking past and plural, respectively, are added to alveolar fricatives/plosives). The phenomenon can also be seen when verb forms like *ran* and *run* are not clearly distinguished, especially when it seems redundant (e.g. after time adverbials). Some cases, like (1) for example, seem a simple expansion of the British norm, where a unit can be seen as a whole or as several pieces:

- (1) *K.shs. 33,500/- was (StE were) raised during our pre-wedding.* (ICE-EA: S1BCE05K)

Complex tenses tend to be avoided:

This tendency occurs particularly with the past perfect and conditionals (*It would have been much better if this was done*) and is also common in less formal native-speaker usage today. It affects mainly the sequence of tenses taught in school grammar, particularly in the case of subordinate clauses in past contexts and when certain types of modality (especially irrealis) are expressed. Past tense forms are rarely used to express modality as in Standard English (StE) *I had better* or *If I went*; this is considered pedantic and typically British. Constructions with *will* are used instead.

Extended forms (BE + VERB + *-ing* construction) are used frequently and do not necessarily imply StE (progressive) meanings:

This affects the distinction between the non-stative and the stative use of verbs. It applies particularly to some verbs that are used with *-ing* forms only in marked, specific meanings. The prime example is *have*, which is used with the semantics of 'temporariness' but also 'habitual', as in (2).

- (2) *Some of us may think that women always **are having** a lot of things to do.* (ICE-EA: S1BINT13T)

- (3) *It is really very toxic to the user because it produces a lot of smoke heavy smoke and it **is smelling**.* (ICE-EA: S1BINT13T)

Patterns and particles of phrasal/prepositional verbs vary:

Phrasal and prepositional verbs are particularly important in English word formation. Adding particles or prepositions after the English verb is a style-specific alternative to prefixation, especially with Germanic stems, for example *go about*

'begin', *go ahead* 'proceed', *go back* 'return', *go down* 'decrease', *go on* 'continue' and *go up* 'increase'). This alternative and special phrasal/prepositional usage is unknown in African languages. Especially for phrasal verbs, the corresponding preposition is not easily accessible for non-native speakers, since the meanings are figurative.

Selection criteria may be extensions from semantically similar phrasal verbs or from etymologically related nouns in English, like *talk about* > *discuss about* or *discussion about* > *discuss about*. Whether a phrase should be considered tautologous is not easy to decide. In the end, the difference between British English (BrE) and EAfE is often a matter of frequency: *discuss about*, for example, occurs relatively three times as often on web pages in the Kenyan domain (.ke) as on the corresponding UK pages (co.uk).

In formal descriptive categories, of course, prepositions may be omitted (the well-known *I will pick you* [StE *up*] *at eight*, *crop* [StE *up*], *provide* [*with*]), substituted (e.g. *attach with* [StE *to*], *concentrate with* [StE *on*], *congratulate for* [StE *on*], *participate with* [StE *in*], *result into/to* [StE *in*]), or added, which seems to be the most frequent case (e.g. *advocate for*, *attend to*, *mention about*, *join with*). Particles are omitted when they appear "obvious", as in *protest* (StE *against*).

The substituted particles are often consistent with the prefix morpheme (e.g. *deprive from* instead of *deprive of*) or closely related in meaning (e.g. *out* and *off*, as in *switch out* [StE *off*] *the light*, *put off* [StE *out*] *the fire*). The additional particles are often logically possible, but considered redundant with the verb according to StE norms. They are, however, used after the corresponding noun (e.g. *emphasise on* < *emphasis<sub>N</sub> on*; similarly, *demand for*, *request for*, *stress on*). Besides analogy, interference from African languages is possible, since their prepositional system is relatively simple and thus polysemous. For instance, one basic locative proposition in Kiswahili, *mwituni*, can be translated as *at*, *to*, *in/inside*, *by/near/next to* and *from the forest*.

Verb complementation (especially infinitives and gerunds) varies freely:

As verb complementation is usually a matter of individual lexemes rather than rules, this feature would have to be listed or taught with the individual verb lexemes. This also determines how stigmatised the expression is. Again, speakers of EAfE often try to solve apparent irregularities by applying semantic criteria, thus *allow him go* is analogous to *let him go* and *made him to do* parallel to *forced him to do*. These are equivalent structures, but they do not correspond to British norms. Sometimes two similar constructions are confused (as *decide to* + infinitive and *decide on* + *-ing*). The subtle distinctions between infinitive and gerund constructions (e.g. between *tried to walk* and *tried walking*) tend to be neglected and the choice seems random, as can be seen in (4) and (5):

- (4) *Would you mind to tell us uh a brief background about ICAC and uh what uh are you going to discuss in Arusha.* (ICE-EA: S1B041T)

- (5) *He has indicated to want to stop **to** deliver what he has.* (ICE-EA: S1B031T)

## 2.2. Noun phrase

The construction of noun phrases in EAfE is the same as in StE, although a few simplifying tendencies have been observed.

Noun phrases are not always marked for number and case (by inflectional endings):

Although English nominal inflections are simple compared to Bantu languages, which have complex nominal classes marked by prefixes, the systems cannot be compared. Further simplification of the English system is therefore possible in EAfE. This applies to certain plural endings (especially when they are redundant after numerals) as well as to genitives (especially when they are redundant in noun modifications that can be interpreted as compounds). It also applies to relative pronouns, where the inflected forms *whom* and *whose* are occasionally avoided in favour of invariable *which* constructions:

- (6) *Adult education **which** its main purpose is to help adults to learn how to read and write faces many problems.*

The use of *-s* plural markers is overgeneralised:

This tendency is quite common in New Englishes and in most cases semantically motivated: although they can also be seen as a collective unit, several individual pieces can be distinguished, for example with *luggages*, *furnitures*, *firewoods* or *grasses*. Sometimes this tendency conflates more or less subtle semantic differentiations in StE, such as between *food* – *foods*, *people* – *peoples*, sometimes it merely regularises (historical) morphological StE irregularities, as in *fishes*.

East African usage basically ignores the grammatical distinction of count vs. non-count nouns, which does not always correspond to the semantic one. In StE, plural *-s* is not added to nouns that are considered abstract or collective/mass and thus non-count, as for example *discontent* or *informations*. But even in StE, some of the non-countables may occur in the plural in special meanings (*works*) or in stressed contexts (*experiences*). Thus, differences are often a question of interpretation and frequency.

- (7) *These **advices** are coming because they've already studied all of us.*  
(ICE-EA: S1BINT12T)

Articles and other determiners tend to be omitted:

This tendency may partly be an overgeneralization of British usage (*I am going to church/school/\*post office*). Often, subrules of StE grammar are neglected, e.g. the rule that a definite article is used when nouns are postmodified by *of*-genitives

or defining relative clauses, as in (8). The basic function of the definite article is of course to refer back to something mentioned earlier in the discourse. Thus, *the others* is clearly cataphoric and specific and different from *others* referring generally to “other people”, but such distinctions are not always maintained in New Englishes.

- (8) *Standing hay, though of poor quality, offers animals nutrients required for ∅ maintenance of their body condition.* (ICE-EA: W2B033K)
- (9) *There is ∅ need for development of small, hand-driven machines.* (ICE-EA: W2B033K)

In contrast to the system in StE, some linguists (e.g. Platt, Ho and Weber 1984: 52–59) even see a completely different system of articles in New Englishes. They argue that StE uses the definite/indefinite system (known vs not known) as the basic distinction, while the New Englishes prefer to use the specific vs non-specific (particular vs not particular) system, as in the StE determiner pair *a certain – any*. In this system, non-specific reference is expressed by the absence of an article (as in *Give me beer*, which gives the typical impression of EAfE “rude style”) and specific by the use of the article *the*. The tendency of omitting determiners also expands to indefinite, possessive and demonstrative pronouns.

### 2.3. Pronouns

Pronouns may be redundant, especially in pronoun appositions:

A pronoun apposition occurs after the noun it refers to, that is, it does not have the usual anaphoric function of linking sentences but that of “repeating” a noun (phrase) in the same sentence. This usage is a particular discourse strategy in which the theme of a sentence is fronted with the pronoun as a placeholder for the noun phrase which was extracted by the fronting process. In StE, pronoun apposition is perfectly accepted when the previous noun phrase is introduced by *as for* NP or *as far as* NP *is concerned*, as illustrated in (10) and (11). When speakers seem to hesitate or have lost their thread, copying a pronoun may help the listener to process the message.

- (10) *As for the calcium in bone, it plays two important roles.* (ICE-EA: W2B030K)
- (11) *As for me and my house, we declared war on poverty.* (ICE-EA: W2F002K)

EAfE seems to be more liberal as far as these rules are concerned, at least in speech. Pronoun copying occurs especially in oral English after long and complex subjects, because of prepositional constructions as in (12), infinitives or relative clauses, as in (13):

- (12) *So human being in the first time of his existence he found that he was <-/subjected> to the work.* (ICE-EA: S1B004T)
- (13) *there is our glue which we are getting them near.* (ICE-EA: S1B047I)

Redundant pronouns can be found within relatives when personal pronouns take up the head of a relative construction, as in (6) above, and when possessive pronouns premodify the head of a relative construction (i.e. the possessive pronoun and the relative clause subject refer to the same person, as in *my book that I read*).

Pronouns are not always distinguished by gender:

The three possibilities of third person singular pronouns, *he*, *she* and *it* in subject roles and *his*, *her* and *its* in possessive roles, are often used indiscriminately, especially when their pronunciation is only distinguished by one consonant, as in the case of *he* and *she*. This can be accounted for as simplification or as interference from African mother tongues that do not have sex distinctions in pronouns (e.g. languages that have only one class for animate or human beings in general).

Prepositions are underdifferentiated:

English prepositions are among the most polysemous and most idiomatic. Because of its lack of inflectional morphology, prepositions are particularly important in English. StE is peculiar in that the use of prepositions is often fixed and either dependent on the preceding verb, noun, adjective or adverb or the following noun. The choice of the idiomatic preposition may follow semantic, morphological or even traditional Latin rules. The matching of prepositions to verbs, nouns, adjectives or adverbs is therefore neither easy nor logical to a second-language user.

Generally, the most frequent English prepositions *of* and *in* (at the expense of the more special *into*) occur significantly more frequently in EAfE than in BrE (cf. Mwangi 2003). This may be explained as a “safety strategy”. More specific simple prepositions (like *off* or *across*) are used less often. This is sometimes seen as underdifferentiation in EAfE, e.g. disregarding the distinction between restricted position and extended position.

Thus, a phrase like *at Nairobi* is used regularly in Kenya, even when it does not suggest a point in a global perspective, but an extended place for which *in Nairobi* is clearly preferred in StE. Since the prepositional systems in English are much more complex than in African languages, standard prepositions tend to be chosen (e.g. *in* for *into*) and analogy plays an important role. Rare prepositions (like *underneath*, spatial *past*, or *down*) are used even less in EAfE. Another case of simplification is the neglected distinction between locative *beside* and contrastive *besides*.

Similarly, frequent complex prepositions (like *because of*, *according to* and *due to*) occur more often, less frequent and more complex ones (like *in front of*, *in favour of*, *by means of*, *in the light of*) less often in spoken EAfE.



- (14) *What is the main reason **of** (StE for) the decrease of production.* (ICE-EA: S1B041T)
- (15) *...many people are just coming **in** (to) the country.* (ICE-EA: S1A018T)

#### 2.4. Adjectives

Adjective forms tend to be used as adverbs. The unmarked adverbial form is correct in very few cases in StE (*hard, first, high* in certain contexts or sayings like *take it easy*, etc.; but not in *Do it proper*). Unmarked adverbials occur not only in African but also in some American and British English varieties.

#### 2.5. Question tags

Question tags tend to occur in invariant form. Tag questions are vital in discourse, but unusually complex in StE morphology. Their form depends on the main clause verb, the gender of the subject and its affirmative or negative character. They tend to be generalised in African varieties of English as in others, e.g. Welsh English. This means that the tag is neither adapted to the verb form nor to the subject of the main clause. *Is* and *it* occur with all verbs and subjects and are repeated consistently to make sure the listeners are still listening. Example (16) is an extreme case of a coherent speech excerpt with three (out of five) non-standard *isn't it* cases in half a minute.

Often the tag is used indiscriminately in the negative form, after affirmative as well as after negative clauses; thus subtle StE distinctions in speaker assumption between positive and negated tags (*is it?* and *isn't it?* with raising and falling intonation, respectively) disappear. Occasionally, non-verbal particles with the same functions are added. *Not so* in (17) has an equivalent in many African languages, e.g. *sivyo* in Kiswahili, but there is also the common *init* in non-standard urban mother-tongue English.

- (16) *We have </haa> and then or this time, **isn't it?** ,cause it's an existential quantifier or **isn't it?** the other side we get it – and then or. There we are, **isn't it?** We come again all right uh uh right. That's our statement, **isn't it.** Okay. And take note that in that statement now we have two different quantifiers, **isn't it?** universal and existential.* (ICE-EA: S2B057K)
- (17) *The price in the display is a very good idea because ... **Not so?** uh okay?* (ICE-EA:S1B010K)

## 2.6 Responses to *yes/no* questions

Negative *yes/no* questions are confirmed by responding to the form of the question and not to the absolute “inner logic”. Those who are used to the StE system of answering direct questions *Yes, it is* or *No, it isn't* may receive a “confusing” mixture of *Yes, he isn't* or *No, he is*. This can be particularly confusing when the tags are omitted and only the particles *no* or *yes* are used. This occasional habit derives from a different frame of reference: EAfE speakers perceive that the negatively stated question queries the accuracy of the statement and thus assert (‘Yes, what you say is true’) or deny the basic statement (‘No, what you say is wrong’). In StE, the particle is chosen in accordance with the answer and in EAfE in accordance with the question. The tag, however, is the same.

(18) Q: *These problems are uh not biological?*

A: *Yes, they're not biological factor.* (ICE-EA: S1B047K)

## 3. Word order

In general, word order in EAfE is much more flexible and can be used to express emphasis and focus more readily than in StE (in this respect it can be seen as being closer to colloquial spoken English).

The basic interrogative word order is maintained in indirect speech and questions: Indirect speech using the word order of direct speech could be interpreted as correct in spoken English where one cannot distinguish between the direct and indirect versions – if it is marked by a different intonation and a break marking a question mark. That may be the reason why this feature occurs also in non-standard native-speaker English.

(19) *I would like to know as to where and when **are you going** to have your celebrations and who will be the guest of honour.* (ICE-EA: S1BINT13T)

(20) *Are there any other activities you're going to show in this week or **you'll be only informing** the public about the two international conferences in Arusha.* (ICE-EA: S1B041T)

Maintaining the *question word – verb – subject* word order seems to contradict another tendency, i.e. to retain the most normal *subject – verb – object* order wherever possible, but it must be interpreted as a simplification or regularisation of the formation rules for all types of questions, direct and indirect.

The strict English word order rules for adverb positions are weakened:

Some adverbs tend to come as an afterthought, often without a break at the end of the clause or sentence, as for example *unfortunately* in (21). Others can be found at the very beginning, as *already* in (22).

- (21) ... *thinking that he would not understand **unfortunately***. (ICE-EA: W1A016T)
- (22) ***Already** appeals have been sent out to individuals, foundations, and other organisations to help contribute*. (ICE-EA: W2B009K)

#### 4. Discourse

##### 4.1. Information processing and presentation

More than in other areas of grammar, emphasis is difficult to judge right or wrong vis-à-vis StE norms, and is considered inappropriate only in few cases since the presentation of information remains flexible to a large extent. Often, however, the question whether an unusual construction implies special emphasis or contrast is difficult to decide.

In contrast to other New Englishes, emphatic pronouns and simple repetitions do not seem to imply emphasis. But related processes occur for instance when the stressed reflexive pronoun is placed in front and repeated as a personal pronoun afterwards, as in (23).

- (23) *Uh **myself** uh I am I started working at Muhimbili in nineteen eighty-seven*. (ICE-EA: S1B046T)

Topicalisation through fronting and corresponding intonation is rare in StE, but common in many English varieties (e.g. Irish English). StE has developed special forms like cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions instead, which are again too complex for second-language speakers.

Similarly, in StE *never* refers to a longer period or adds special emphasis, but occasionally it may simply be used to avoid a complex *to-do* construction required before *not*, as in (24):

- (24) *Most Kenyans **never** hesitate to give generously to help build hospitals, schools, dispensaries...* (ICE-EA: W2E018K)

Generally, the presentation of information varies considerably and the perception whether something is marked in discourse or the natural flow varies accordingly, since the optimal choice of a phrase may depend on many factors.

##### 4.2. Culture-specific discourse

In African societies that maintain more links with oral tradition than European ones, it is not surprising that some discourse features are culture-specific in the sense that they are customarily used and not really marked for the insider, but are clearly unusual for the European outsider. Many such culture-specific discourse

features are linked to traditional African social values involving the extended family, the ethnic group, their environment and their habits.

East Africans tend to greet each other elaborately. If visitors wish to make a good impression they should follow the standard patterns of asking *How is the family, the health, the journey/safari* or so on (straightforward translations from the Kiswahili *Habari ya watoto, ... ya afia, ... ya safari*, etc), before launching into a direct request. This is considered polite and more appropriate than toning down direct questions with *I'm terribly sorry to bother you* or *Would you mind telling me*, which are considered affected in ordinary conversation and are not used by East Africans. Furthermore, some code-mixing is possible with handy little words like *sawa* for 'okay' or *asante* (or intensified *asante sana*) for 'thank you', or exclamations like *kumbe* and *kweli* for surprise.

Another East African politeness strategy is to express one's sympathy with some misfortune or unlucky event – e.g. when someone is obviously tired or ill, by inserting *pole* (or intensified *pole sana*) at the beginning, middle or end of a conversation (not to be confused with *pole pole*, which means 'slowly'). This is often translated as *I am sorry*. However, the expression is untranslatable when someone stumbles, because it often implies some fault on the part of the speaker in StE, which is clearly not intended in EAfE.

Other cultural practices have indirect consequences on English word-meanings. Thus the day and the time starts at 6 o'clock in East Africa and in the Swahili counting of hours. Thus *6 o'clock* is actually in Western terms '12 noon' and not '6 p.m.', which would be *12 in the evening* if it is taken over directly from African languages.

Finally, even non-verbal communication patterns contribute to the East African flavour of a conversation, such as frequent nodding supported by a long and reassuring *eehee* shows the speaker that the listener is still following him attentively.

## 5. Lexis

The lexicon of EAfE (cf. also Schmied forthcoming) comprises the core lexicon of StE and specific East Africanisms, which would not be interpreted easily or equally by the non-initiated user, for example readers/listeners not familiar with English usage in East Africa. Despite some cultural, especially sociopolitical, differences between Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the use of (Kiswahili) loans, the semantic extension of StE lexemes and the idiomatic flexibility are common features.

### 5.1. Loanwords from African languages

In this short section, it will suffice to cover three specific and interesting aspects: the range of the Africanisms, the areas of life in which Africanisms occur and the

origin of Africanisms: from external sources, i.e. from other African languages, or from internal material, i.e. through English word formation processes.

The first issue deals with the question of how far Africanisms are used and understood in the English-speaking world. Lexical East Africanisms consist of several layers: old Africanisms that developed during colonial days and remained in use in East Africa (not only in international films, like *daktari*), post-independence Africanisms (mainly in politics, like *ujamaa*) and recent Africanisms (like *mitumba* for ‘used/second-hand clothes’, but sometimes transferred to ‘second-hand’ in general, as in *mitumba cars* or even *mitumba mentality*).

Very old borrowings, such as *askari*, *baobab*, *bwana* or *safari*, mainly in the environmental field, have already been incorporated into general English and are thus codified in general large dictionaries of World English, the *Oxford English Dictionary* with its supplements, for instance. Their range transcends African English by far, and some have even been integrated into other European languages. They are, however, restricted to African contexts and thus have a more specific meaning in general English than in the particular regional English. A well-known example is the Kiswahili word *safari*. In East Africa it denotes any ‘journey’ (*journey* is hardly ever used, possibly because of pronunciation difficulties). For European tourists it always refers to a small ‘expedition’ to see and shoot game (in colonial days with a gun, nowadays usually with a camera), normally in national parks. Interestingly enough, *safari* in StE can also refer to the group of people setting out on such a safari, a semantic expansion which is not possible in Kiswahili. Very few Africanisms have such a secure existence in general English, most of them being marginal and only used to render meanings in an African context.

This becomes understandable when one examines the areas of life or domains in which most East Africanisms occur. Schmied (1991: 80–81) shows a few examples mainly from Kiswahili, grouped in the major domains of Africanisms. As can be expected, the African environment is inadequately reflected in the StE lexicon and is supplemented by African names for characteristic landscapes, plants or animals. African loans cluster around “African domains” just as English loans cluster around “European domains”. It is interesting to see that the semantic expansion of StE lexemes may create problems of distinction as in the case of *potatoes*, where Africans often have to specify *Irish/European potatoes* or *sweet potatoes*. In general, the preferred staple food dish is hardly ever translated: Kenya’s and Tanzania’s *ugali* is Uganda’s *posho* (from the colonial English *portion*, which was allocated to workers), the traditional maize dish (a little like *polenta* in Italy).

The field of food is probably culture-specific everywhere, but in many African countries there is a marked contrast between European and African food (and eating habits) because Europeans in East Africa have tended not to adopt African food, in contrast to the British in India. Some dishes are also marked by ethnicity or region, like *githeri* for a Gikuyu bean dish or *vitumbua* for a coastal rice-cake.

Some are of course clearly imported from Asia like *bajia* (an Indian potato dish) and *chai* (usually black tea).

Interestingly, many African words for kin relations in the intimate family and beyond are retained, especially when used as a form of address (like *Babu* for ‘grandfather’). Where African clothing is still worn it is, of course, referred to by African names. Other African customs, which have to be rendered in African words, are concerned with traditional customs or pastimes, like *lobola* ‘bride-price’, or with rules of politeness (see section 5.3.2.).

An important domain of Africanisms today is politics. African languages have often played a major role in mobilising the masses, even before *uhuru* ‘independence’ was reached, and before *harambee* ‘pulling together’ and *nyayo* (ex-President Moi’s following in the ‘footsteps’ of Kenyatta) were national slogans in Kenya and *Ujamaa* ‘familyhood’ and *Kujijetemea* ‘self-reliance’ in Tanzania. It is clear that most of these terms have to be seen in their socio-political context, otherwise they may conjure up the wrong connotations. Many politicians wish to demonstrate their local roots by including African vocabulary in their speeches even when using English.

A more comprehensive dictionary entry would have to add typical collocations and sample sentences (in some cases only a picture may explain matters to the non-initiated). Thus a dictionary entry for the famous East Africanism *matatu* (including inflections and denotative and connotative meanings, etymology and collocates) could be as follows:

**matatu** pl ~s N ‘collective taxi’ in EAfr., especially Kenya  
 usu. licensed for fixed routes of public transport, but flexible, they leave when ‘full’;  
 infamous for reckless driving and overcrowding;  
 etym. <Swahili “three”, orig. 3 shillings fare;  
 collocates: N driver, tout, operator, passenger; LOC. park, stand, stage, stop;  
 PREP in, on board a ~; VERB enter, board

These examples also illustrate that many lexemes cannot be translated in a single term or even a few words satisfactorily (cf. *pole* in section 4.2.). This is why many explanations start with *a type of*, indicating a hypernym or a term with a similar function or form from a different culture (like *polenta* above).

Of course, isolated words have to be seen in their context, and phrases and collocates may occur like *bahati mbaya* (‘bad luck’). Then the borderline between code-mixing and loan words can be blurred when for instance the Kiswahili locative or directive particle *-ni* is added to a word, as when an *officer* is *porini* (i.e. ‘in the bush’, ‘up-country’, ‘away from the capital or administrative headquarters’).

## 5.2. Semantic change of StE lexemes

Even if the words used in African English retain the traditional English form, their meanings may be quite different. Although word usage may depend on the specific linguistic and extralinguistic context and although individual words may show many different deviations, some tendencies may be summarised in a categorisation based on the StE correspondence of meaning and form.

This correspondence may be changed in the particular East African environment or context, for instance when a particular meaning is expressed more than once in the same context (redundancy), when in the fixed correspondence between form and meaning the former is changed, usually on the morphological level, (idiomaticity), when words extend (shift or occasionally restrict) their meanings in some contexts (reference expansion), when they are confused or when the context of an English lexeme is different, either in terms of collocations or in terms of connotations usually associated with a certain lexeme.

The level of semantic redundancy tends to be higher:

Examples of redundancy can be found on many levels. The repetition of semantic elements may occur in connection with word formation. For example, the suffix *-able* expresses the same as the modal auxiliary *can*, so the two do not co-occur, thus *something is traceable to* or *something can be traced to*. Redundancy can also be found with modifying elements like adjectives or adverbs. For example, one defining element of a *ballot* in StE is that it is held secretly, thus a *secret ballot* is considered a tautology. Similarly, *perhaps* is redundant in the context of the modal *may*.

Sometimes a (Latin) prefix corresponds to a Germanic particle, and when both are used (as in *return back home*) this is considered tautological in StE. Other meaning elements may be reinforced because they seem to have lost part of their meaning, as the feature [+DURATION] immanent in *during* (less so in *in*), which is emphasised a second time by *the course of*. Other subtle cases of redundancy would be *include* in connection with *and so on*, which both convey the idea of an incomplete list, and *reason* in connection with *because* (as in *the reason why he came is because*). However, such cases can also be found in British or American style guides or rules of rhetoric.

Idiomatic expressions are used in a slightly different morphological form:

Idiomatic expressions usually have a very fixed form as the idiomatic meaning consists of more than that of the single word elements involved. Thus, variation in form is not common in StE, for instance, in terms of pluralisation (as in *just pulling your legs*). Sometimes idiomatic expressions are mixed with similar ones (*with regards to* for instance combines *with regard to* and *as regards*). There is also a tendency to make idioms more transparent and/or use more common synonyms, as in *silence means* (StE gives) *consent*.

English word forms are used in other reference contexts (usually expanded):

In African English, word forms occur in slightly different contexts than in British Standard English (BrStE), thus usually expanding their referential meaning. The most striking examples of this are kinship terms. Even the most casual visitor to Africa notices that Africans seem to have very many brothers and sisters or even fathers; this can not only be attributed to the birth rate and the extended family structure. Kinship terms are expanded as reference and address terms, because they go far beyond the British core meanings related to the biological features of consanguinity, generation and sex, and are related to the social features of seniority (age), solidarity, affection and role-relations. Thus, all the mother's co-wives or sisters may be addressed as *mother*, many elderly men as *father* and people from the same village without direct blood relations as *brothers and sisters*. As it is very important to show respect to older people in general, even older sisters may be ascribed the higher status of *auntie*. This is supported by different kinship categorisations in African languages, where seniority is most important.

Another culture-based term that even the casual tourist notices is *hoteli*, which in Kiswahili refers to a restaurant, so if a stranger or foreigner asks for a *hotel* they may be shown a place to eat. This change of meaning of English loans in African languages including African English is of course the reverse side of the loans from African languages mentioned (in section 5.1. above).

The use of the English discourse particle *sorry* was mentioned in section 4.2. Many visitors to Africa have noticed that their African friends seem to apologise frequently. When Africans say *sorry*, however, they merely use the appropriate African form of expressing solidarity or sympathy, because it is customary to express sympathy when someone has an unfortunate experience. Thus, the word which expresses apology in StE, *sorry*, has expanded its meaning to sympathy in African English, because a gap in the vocabulary seems to have been felt by African users. Other semantic incongruencies can be detected when the usage of expressions of gratitude (*thank you*) and politeness (*please*), in replies corresponding to American *You are welcome*, are examined carefully.

English word forms are confused with similar ones:

In lexical fields, word meanings overlap so that expansions of one lexeme affect the others in the same field. Common "confusables" clash, for instance, the cases when *to book* is used like StE *to hire*, *to forget* like *to lose*, *to refuse* like *to deny*, *to convince* like *to persuade*, *to see* like *to look*, *to reach* like *to arrive*, *arm* like *hand*, *guest* like *stranger*, *strange* like *foreign* and so on. In most of these cases, either the meanings have been expanded or more specific features (selection restrictions) have been dropped. *To escort*, for instance, originally implies a special guard or act of courtesy, but by Africans it may be used in the more general sense of *to accompany*, without the narrower restrictions.



Occasionally, meanings are restricted, as in *move with* in the sense of ‘go out with friends or a boy-/girlfriend’. Sometimes the semantic overlap between items accounts for the “confusion”. For example, *exchange information* has certainly a close relationship with *compare*, but when British students *exchange notes* this implies that sheets of paper are swapped and not merely that *notes are compared*, as with African students. Again, some problem cases can also be found in StE style guides. *Clarify* usually means ‘an effort by somebody who holds information and is in a position to make things clearer’. Thus *I should clarify that point from the principal* refers to an authority from whom one can seek clearance or permission.

English word forms are used in other contexts: collocations and connotations: Collocations occur when certain words go together particularly well or frequently and are associated with each other because they co-occur with unusual frequency. They may be less fixed than idioms, because their particular meaning occurs not only in the idiomatic context; but collocates still “expect” each other to some extent. If similar words are used, the combination is less fixed or differs from what is expected in the context, as in *smooth* (StE *plain*) *sailing*. Often fairly general terms are used instead of more specific collocates: *an election is done* (StE *conducted/held*) or *to commit an action* (StE *crime*). It is not always the case that collocations are stronger, or lexemes used more specifically, in BrStE, because African English has developed its own specific forms, as in *I (dropped, got out/down, alighted) from the car near the hospital*.

Most of the connotations of English lexemes in an African context can lead to intercultural problems in discourse. It seems too obvious to mention that *rich* may conjure up very different ideas in a rural African context, but this may also apply to *travelling* and *holiday*, even *Sunday* and *game*, where associative African values and preferences may differ considerably from European traditions.

### 5.3. Idiomaticity

It has been mentioned that second-language English is usually less idiomatic than first-language English, which may make communication more difficult for Africans listening to European English speakers than the other way round. But EAfE has developed some idiomatic meanings, which may not be obvious at first sight. Thus, if an unsuspecting traveller needed *to make a short call* he might be shown the way to a toilet (or place used for that purpose). Of course, extreme cases are rare and the few exceptions prove the rule.

However, as has been mentioned above, contexts and style choices constituting idiomaticity form a complex interplay and this special flavour can only be studied in larger sections of authentic texts. This is why a few examples of typical verb usage in the spoken part of the Corpus of EAfE may suffice:

- (25) *I am a matatu driver **operating** route No. 44.* (ICE-EA: S1B065K)
- (26) *It is the City Inspectorate who **assigns** the City Askari.* (ICE-EA: S1B066K)
- (27) *But he never saw anybody himself; nor anybody **alighting** from the police m/v go to the house.* (S1BCE07K)

Whether EAF<sub>E</sub> is really more explicit (*according to me* ‘in my view’), more flexible (*to drag someone through the mud* ‘to drag someone through the mire’) and more illustrative (as in *big with child*), can only be decided on the basis of large-scale comparative surveys or informant interviews and elicitation tests (cf. Skandera 2003).

## 6. Research issues

### 6.1. Research data

The problem of insufficient research data has been mentioned in various parts of this article. Although the internet, with East African newspapers and even radio broadcasts (cf. the accompanying CD), has made new data more accessible to the European arm-chair researcher, fieldwork is still essential, partly to evaluate and scrutinise the data available and partly to complement them with other text-types, situations and speakers. Data from the media tend to mirror public oral and written production and clearly have an urban and elitist bias.

The only broad and stratified collection of EAF<sub>E</sub> is the East African part of the *International Corpus of English* (ICE-EA, freely available complete with handbook from the internet). It was collected between 1990 and 1996 and is compatible with the other ICE-corpora, an effort to record true English usage in its first and second-language varieties (principally each with 1 million words in 500 text types, half written and half spoken). The computerised collection from Kenya and Tanzania allows comparisons with the first-language varieties of Britain and Australia, but also with the second-language varieties of India and the Philippines, for instance.

Thus general processes of second-language development can be distinguished from specifically East African features. The size of the corpus (about 1.5 million words with only about half a million words of spoken English) makes it a convenient source for analyses of grammar and frequent lexemes, especially as far as stylistic or text-type-specific differences are concerned. It is, however, not really sufficient for lexical and collocational research, where a much larger corpus is necessary.

For such quantitative comparisons and sample retrievals the *www* with the domains *.ug*, *.ke* and *.tz* can be used. Such a procedure using modern web browsers

provides examples of rare cases much more easily now. However, the texts have to be evaluated critically, that is, the question has to be considered whether they can really be seen as “educated EAfE”. By using the *www*, country-specific patterns can be distinguished. For example, Kiswahili address forms like *ndugu* or *mzee* have higher hits in Tanzania than in Kenya, *duka* and *fundi* are less frequent in Uganda, but *sodas* occurs in all three East African countries in contrast to South African *minerals*.

Finally, again a plea to look at the data carefully: *soda* as well as *minerals* of course also belong to general English, but in other contexts – baking and mining, for instance. Even *mitumba* occurs on *.uk* web sites as well, but usually with an explicit explanation in the form of premodifiers or appositions (*the second-hand mitumba* or *mitumba, second-hand clothes*). In South Africa, it is often used with explicit reference to East Africa.

Table 1. EAfE lexemes on the *www*

		<b>ndugu</b>	<b>mzee</b>	<b>duka</b>	<b>fundi</b>	<b>mitumba</b>	<b>matatu</b>
<i>uk</i> 6,510,000	absolute:	220	292	431	954	25	279
	relative:	0.003 %	0.004 %	0.007 %	0.015 %	0 %	0.004 %
	intrasite share:	10 %	13.3 %	19.6 %	43.3 %	1.1 %	12.7 %
	intrasite factor:	8.8	11.68	17.24	38.16	1	11.16
	intraphrase share:	0.2 %	0.1 %	0.8 %	0.9 %	0.1 %	0.1 %
	intraphrase factor:	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>ke</i> 8,180	absolute:	7	45	4	89	6	185
	relative:	0.086 %	0.55 %	0.049 %	1.088 %	0.073 %	2.262 %
	intrasite share:	2.1 %	13.4 %	1.2 %	26.5 %	1.8 %	55.1 %
	intrasite factor:	1.75	11.25	1	22.25	1.5	46.25
	intraphrase share:	4 %	17.7 %	5.6 %	63.8 %	21.2 %	74.8 %
	intraphrase factor:	25.32	122.65	7.39	74.25	191	527.71
<i>tz</i> 5,140	absolute:	105	131	42	31	14	39
	relative:	2.043 %	2.549 %	0.817 %	0.603 %	0.272 %	0.759 %
	intrasite share:	29 %	36.2 %	11.6 %	8.6 %	3.9 %	10.8 %
	intrasite factor:	7.5	9.36	3	2.21	1	2.79
	intraphrase share:	95.8 %	82.1 %	93.6 %	35.4 %	78.7 %	25.1 %
	intraphrase factor:	604.48	568.21	123.42	41.16	709.26	177.04

## 6.2. Practical language issues

The most pressing problem in East Africa is related to the functions of English in education. Teaching English properly within the limited means in the sociocultural contexts of Africa has been a burning issue for many years. Although these problems are tackled in many development projects, the scientific basis is usually limited, partly because ideological convictions tend to interfere and partly because the teaching materials are only moderately adapted to the local linguistic needs. On this basis, the study of English for academic and specific purposes, especially for science and technology, would help to make learning in English easier, especially on higher levels of education. Thus, studies in educational linguistics are the major desideratum in East Africa.

Other linguistic subdisciplines can support them: more studies on attitude and actual usage could use larger corpora to help draw the borderline between general usage and learner English, which would be useful for the testing specialists in national testing centres and the local writers of adapted teaching materials and text-books. Only much later can questions of national norm be addressed on this scientific basis.

## 6.3. Intercultural problems

The adoption of some English words into African usage can also give rise to connotational problems. Forms like *blackmail* or *black market* are stigmatised because the word *black* is used to characterise activities beyond what is permitted by law. The long European tradition of equating *black* with *bad* and *white* with *good* can also be seen in *black* versus *white magic*, which is difficult to compare with equivalent complex African concepts anyway. It is therefore not surprising that many language-conscious Africans object to these terms and replace them.

This is why Africanisms for *black market* occur almost as frequently all over Africa as the phenomenon itself, e.g. *magendo* in Tanzania and *kibanda* in Uganda. However, such unofficial parts of the economy tend to change expressions rapidly; thus *kitu kidogo* (literally ‘something small’) and *chai* (‘tea’) are well-known in Kenya as euphemistic expressions for a bribe and tend to be replaced already in the inner circle of users.

The connotation “African style” occurs in many areas of the informal sector or petty trade, from the infamous parking boys, who force car owners to pay them for “looking after their cars” to the *jua kali* artisans, who follow their craft in the “hot sun” and not in a shop or garage in Kenya. Similarly, the StE expressions *second-hand* or *used clothes* do not have the same connotations as *mitumba* in Kenya. These examples illustrate that it is necessary to pay attention to denotative but also to connotative meanings.

#### 6.4. Outlook

Since their independence over forty years ago, East Africans have developed an interesting trifocal language system: English, widespread throughout Africa, is rivalled by Kiswahili in high language functions in the region (and through the Organisation of African Unity even on the continent) and by a local vernacular language having low functions. Although other African languages play a role in subnational communication and influence English pronunciation, East Africa is unique among the English-speaking areas of the world because of this dichotomy. Interestingly enough, Kiswahili does not threaten English in the area since its losses in national functions have by far been compensated by the many international functions of English that have been important for East Africans since their integration into world-wide communication networks over 100 years ago.

EAF<sub>E</sub> shares many features, especially in grammar, with other New Englishes, which also have comparable tendencies in lexical development. Thus EAF<sub>E</sub> can be seen in a larger framework (e.g. as in ICE above). In the long tradition of African multilingualism, English has a promising future in the area. The knowledge and appreciation of national and regional features will develop and make English in East Africa interesting for casual global users and specialised researchers alike.

#### **Selected references**

Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# White South African English: morphology and syntax

Sean Bowerman

## 1. Introduction

White South African English (WhSAfE) differs little superficially from other first language varieties of English, and Cultivated WhSAfE approximates reasonably closely to southern British standards and even to RP norms. There are, however, some distinctly South African features in its morphosyntax, and particularly its vocabulary, the latter reflecting the range of languages with which WhSAfE has been in contact. Morphological and phonological features which are distinctive of WhSAfE have often been put down to Afrikaans influence. However, Lass and Wright (1986) and Mesthrie and West (1995) caution against this approach, pointing out that many of these features may be survivals from Settler English.

## 2. The verb phrase

### 2.1. Deletion of verbal complements

In context, the complement(s) of transitive and ditransitive verbs may be omitted or ellipsed. In the case of ditransitive verbs, either one or both of the complements may be omitted, as in (1a) – (1e).

- (1)
- a. *Oh good, you've got ∅.*
  - b. *Did you bring ∅?*
  - c. *Did you give ∅ ∅?*
  - d. *He's already given the money ∅.*
  - e. *You can put ∅ in the fridge.*

Complement ellipsis can occur in a context quite far outside the immediate situation. For example, if you promise somebody that you will bring something to them, they might well say next time they see you: *Did you bring?* Deleting verb complements is a common feature of General and Broad WhSAfE, but is perhaps more associated with Broad.

2.2. *Busy* + progressive

The verb *busy* followed by a present participle is a prominent feature of WhSAfE. It is frequently used with non-active (or non-busy) and seemingly anomalous verbal complements.

- (2) a. *I'm busy relaxing.*  
 b. *I was busy losing my house.*  
 c. *When I got to the car, he was busy dying* (Lass 2002: 123).

There seems to be little difference between this construction and the ordinary progressive; though Lass and Wright (1986: 213–214) suggest that it may be emphatic, excluding the suggestion of any endpoint to state or activity expressed by the verb. *Busy* in this construction is certainly not to be analysed as a lexical verb; rather, it is a grammatical item, more exactly an aspectual marker. For example, *I'm busy relaxing* would most likely be a jocular response to *Are you busy?* By the same token, the question *Are you busy sleeping?* would be meant in all seriousness.

It is possible that this construction has arisen as a translation of a similar construction in Afrikaans, where *besig* 'busy' is used in exactly the same way. However, Lass and Wright (1986: 217) point out that a similar construction was also available well beyond the Early Modern English period, and could be a development from the English of the 19th century British settlers.

2.3. Past *do* + uninflected verb

Perfective aspect is frequently indicated in WhSAfE by the use of the past tense form of *DO*, with an uninflected verb complement. It occurs in the immediate situation, where the present rather than past tense is normative, and usually takes the place of present tense *have* + past participle. Thus:

- (3) a. *Did you bring my books?*  
       'Have you brought my books?'  
 b. *Did you have lunch yet?*  
       'Have you had lunch yet?'

This construction is often stigmatised as Broad or Afrikaans English, but in my experience it is quite common in General WhSAfE. For some speakers, the only time that the *have* + past participle construction occurs is with the possessive verb *got*, when perfective aspect is not intended to be marked. It is interesting that, for these speakers, auxiliary *have* only occurs with possessive *got*. This is probably because *get* would indicate obtaining, rather than possessing, thus ruling out the *DO* + uninflected verb construction.

- (4) a. *Have you got a watch?*  
       'Do you have a watch?'

- b. *Did you get a watch?*  
 ‘Have you obtained a watch?’

*Have you got* occurs more frequently (in Broad and General) than *Do you have*, and the use of past DO + past participle is stigmatised as an Afrikaans English construction, hence the classic parody of the Afrikaans traffic officer: *Did you got a licence?* ‘Have you got/Do you have a licence?’. *Gotten* as the past participle form of *got* is rare in WhSAfE, but is becoming noticeable among younger speakers, probably as a result of American influence.

The use of DO + uninflected verb for the perfective could well stem from Afrikaans, which does not distinguish simple past and present perfect. Both ‘Did you bring it?’ and ‘Have you brought it?’ would be realised in Afrikaans as:

- (5) *Het jy dit gebring?*  
 Have you it brought?  
 ‘Did you bring it? / Have you brought it?’

In other words, Afrikaans uses *have* + past participle for both constructions.

#### 2.4. Adjective + infinitive

The use of a range of adjectives with infinitive clauses is a feature of Broad WhSAfE:

- (6) a. *This container is capable to withstand heat.* (Lass 2002: 123)  
 b. *I am lazy to acquire the skills.* (Branford 1987 in Mesthrie and West 1995: 115)  
 c. *Bob is reticent to talk about that day.* (Branford 1987 in Mesthrie and West 1995: 115).

Mesthrie and West (1995: 116) show that this is a common feature of Settler English. Indeed, in contemporary English, many adjectives show this same pattern normatively:

- (7) a. *She’s crazy to go there.*  
 b. *He is able to climb very tall trees.*

Moreover, any adjective can take an infinitive complement if it is qualified with the intensifying adverb *too*, though the meaning changes somewhat:

- (8) a. *\*She’s sleepy to do her homework / She’s too sleepy to do her homework.*  
 b. *I’m too lazy to acquire the skills.*

Thus, the construction could once again be a generalisation or overgeneralisation of a process that operated in Settler English, or an analogical innovation.



## 2.5. *Is*-inversion

This occurs in constructions with a topicalised locative determiner. The determiner is topicalised, and the verb, always *be*, is cliticised to it. It, too, is a somewhat stigmatised construction, but I have heard it in General speakers.

- (9) a. *Here's it!*  
       'Here it is! < It is here!'  
       b. *There's your father, on the roof!*  
       'Your father is there, on the roof!'

I have heard constructions like (9b) in other varieties of English; however, *here's it / there's it* seems to be uniquely South African, and has a parallel in Afrikaans: *Daar's hy* 'There he/it is!' – also with *be* cliticised to the topic.

## 3. Prepositions and the prepositional phrase

### 3.1. Preposition complement ellipsis

The complement of a preposition is sometimes ellipsed in contexts where the preposition is not a phrasal verb particle; this frequently affects the preposition *with*:

- (10) *Are they coming with ∅?*

This is probably another influence from Afrikaans, where *saam* 'together' has been misinterpreted as 'with' (see also Mesthrie and West 1995: 117):

- (11) *Hulle kom saam met ons.*  
       They come together with us  
       'They are coming with us.'

- (12) *Hulle kom saam.*  
       They come together  
       'They are coming along' misanalysed as 'They are coming with.'

The preposition *met* 'with' cannot be stranded in Afrikaans:

- (13) \**Hulle kom saam met.*  
       'They come together with'  
       'They're coming with'.

### 3.2. Semantic range of prepositions

The preposition *by*, as in Afrikaans, covers a wide semantic range in WhSAfE. Mesthrie and West (1995: 117) show that Settler English had a similar range for *by*:

- (14) a. *I live by the station.* ('near')  
 b. *I left it by my friend's house.* ('at')  
 c. *He stays by his parents.* ('with')

This is a feature of SAfE in general, except for the cultivated variety. Children are taught at school to avoid this usage.

*By* is frequently used, especially in Broad WhSAfE, with heavily stressed locative *there*:

- (15) a. *It's there by the couch.*  
 b. *I was standing there by the shop...*

### 3.3. Other prepositions

Even more stigmatised than the non-standard use of *by* is the substitution of *for* for *of* – again, most likely an Afrikaans influence:

- (16) *She's scared for spiders.*

This feature is unlikely to be found in General, and definitely not in Conservative WhSAfE. The substitution of *for* for *of* is more associated with the second language Afrikaans English variety.

### 3.4. 'Throw me with a stone'

In Broad and some General WhSAfE, the verb THROW...AT may be substituted with THROW WITH, in which case the DP complements are reversed. For example:

- (17) *He threw me with a stone.*  
 'He threw a stone at me.'

This is a highly stigmatised construction, associated with Afrikaans English, and is indeed a direct translation of the Afrikaans equivalent:

- (18) *Hy het my met ,n klip gegooi.*  
 He has me with a stone thrown  
 'He threw a stone at me.'

However, there are also many parallels in English, provided one accepts a wider semantic range for *throw* than that of standard English:

- (19) a. *He shot me with a pellet.*  
 b. *He hit me with a stone.*

Mesthrie and West (1995: 119) cite Pettman's (1913) example of this construction:

- (20) *He threw me over the hedge with a stone*  
 'He threw a stone at me over the hedge.'

#### 4. Modals and modality

There are two features of modality that are distinctively WhSAfE.

##### 4.1. Illocutionary force of *must*

The strong obligative modal *must* has much less social impact in WhSAfE than in other varieties of English, and often substitutes for polite *should* / *shall*. This comes as a surprise to many foreigners asking for directions!

- (21) a. *You must turn left at the robots...*  
 b. *You must just knock on my door when you get here...*  
 c. *Must I make you some tea?*

##### 4.2. *Won't* as a directive "softener"

The use of *won't* to soften a request (though it might not always achieve this effect) is a feature of General and Broad WhSAfE. It uses two directive softeners: the voluntative modal *will* and the negative *won't*.

- (22) a. *Won't you pass me the salt?*  
 b. *Won't you do me a favour?*

*Won't* is usually pronounced with a sharply rising intonation and strong emphasis, and may have the force of a command. The intonation and emphasis makes this construction sound very different to ordinary question intonation that one would find in *Will you do me a favour?*

#### 5. Present markers as proximal future markers

##### 5.1. Present tense + *now*

The present tense construction and the adverb *now* are both normative markers of the present in WhSAfE, but are frequently used to indicate the proximal future. Thus, (23) below could have the normative present tense meaning, indicating that the speaker is on his/her way at the time of utterance:

(23) *I'm on my way now.*

But it is equally likely to mean that the speaker intends to be on his/her way in the near future. Similarly (24):

(24) A: *Do you want to come over?*

B: *No, I'm sleeping now.*

In the use of the present tense + *now*, the speaker indicates that he/she intends to sleep soon. The present tense + *now* construction can also be used to indicate a delay to the proximal future:

(25) A: *Supper's ready.*

B: *I'm coming now.*

*I'm coming now* in this context probably does not mean that the speaker is underway, or that s/he is coming immediately; rather, s/he will be coming soon. Afrikaans has the same construction, with the same meaning.

## 5.2. Reduplicative *now-now* and *just now*

The reduplication *now-now* is used to mean 'very soon' rather than 'immediately':

(26) *I'll do it now-now.*

This usually means that the speaker intends to finish what s/he is already doing before embarking on another activity.

Unlike the U.S. usage, indicating immediacy, *just now* is used in WhSAfE to put something off into the further, but still proximate future:

(27) *I'll be there just now.*

*Just now* means 'not immediately, but soon'; 'later than' would be indicated by *now-now*. A similar construction, *now-now-now* expresses the sense of immediacy lacking in *now-now*.

The British English sense of recent past in *just now* (as in *She left just now*) is less common in WhSAfE than the collocation with the near future. *Now-now* and *just now* are often stigmatised (particularly by non-SAfE speakers) as being procrastination devices that put matters off into the indeterminate future. It is likely that both *now-now* and *just now* are calqued from the similar Afrikaans expressions *nou-nou* and *net nou* respectively.

## 6. Negatives

### 6.1. Non-negative *no*

While *no* is a normative negative marker in WhSAfE, Broad and General speakers frequently employ it in a non-negative sense to introduce an affirmative clause:

- (28) A: *How are you?*  
 B: *No, I'm fine.*
- (29) A: *Isn't your car ready yet?*  
 B: *No, it is.*

In these cases, following Trudgill and Hannah (1994: 32), the function of *no* may be to offset any negative assumptions made by the interlocutor. However, I have also heard things like:

- (30) A: *She's getting big, hey?*  
 B: *No, she is!*

Here, the *no* may indicate surprise, or the negation of the speaker's assumptions. It is qualitatively different to, for example, the simple agreement *Yes, she is!*

### 6.2. *Never*

*Never* is often used in WhSAfE to indicate only one negative instance. It is not confined to the normative sense of *not ever*, and can be used in the place of *do not*:

- (31) A: *Did you see him on Tuesday?*  
 B: *No, he never arrived on Tuesday, but he was there on Wednesday.*

In (32), *never* again has scope over only one point in time:

- (32) *I made you a cake, but I never brought it with.*

In both (31) and (32), *never* scopes over only one instance, and (31) shows that it does not prevent the verb from happening at all. *Never* is also used for emphatic denial:

- (33) A: *Did you take my jersey?*  
 B: *No, I never.*

Afrikaans has some similarity, in that an Afrikaans response to (33) could be *nooit* 'never'; however, Mesthrie and West (1995: 119) show that *never* = *do* + *not* existed in Settler English, and probably antedates contact with Afrikaans / Dutch.

## 7. Adjective comparison

The use of both the periphrastic and inflexional comparative in the same construction is largely a second language English feature; however, it occurs in Broad and even General varieties from time to time:

- (34) a. *That's the most easiest course I've ever done!* (General WhSAfE student)  
 b. *My fez is much more funkier than yours!* (spoken by a General WhSAfE television presenter).

The provenance of this is uncertain: there is no similar construction in Afrikaans. The construction most likely stems from the lack of clarity, even in prescriptive English grammars, as to when *more/most* and *-er/-est* should be used.

## 8. Agreement features

While English has very little agreement, Afrikaans has almost none, and it is possible that Afrikaans influence is responsible for some of the relatively uncommon, non-normative agreement patterns in Broad WhSAfE. However, Settler English displayed inconsistent agreement too, which might have influenced Broad WhSAfE. Inconsistent or non-normative agreement is a highly stigmatised feature, frequently used to satirise Afrikaans English.

### 8.1. 3rd person singular agreement in the present tense

The normative 3rd person singular agreement marker is the inflexion *-s* on the verb or auxiliary. Common agreement errors involve omitting or overgeneralisation, so that both (35a) and (35b) occur:

- (35) a. *Does you go to school?*  
 b. *He like to read.*

This is very rare (I think) in native speakers; but especially (35a) occurs fairly frequently in Afrikaans English.

### 8.2. Singular demonstrative with plural noun complement

A much more common lack of agreement occurs between the demonstrative determiner (*this, that*) and its noun complement. This is also a stigmatised feature, but I believe it is making its way into General WhSAfE:

- (36) a. *I'd better go and pick up this bags.*  
 b. *It's because of that birds.*

The agreement “error” apparently always assigns a singular demonstrative to a plural noun. I have never heard, or heard of, a plural demonstrative being used with a singular noun. Once more, this has a parallel in Afrikaans, which does not distinguish a singular and plural demonstrative.

### 8.3. *Is it?*

This phrase, in the superficial form of a question, is generally a response to a statement. It is widespread through General and Broad WhSAfE. Depending upon the intonation with which it is uttered, it can express anything from keen interest to total disinterest, and is roughly equal to replies like *Really, Has he?*. The form is always *is it*—it never agrees in person or number with what has gone before.

(37) A: *The kittens ran away.*

B: *Is it?* (‘Did they?’)

(38) A: *I’m going overseas*

B: *Is it?* (‘Are you?’)

## 9. Greetings, tags and expletives

### 9.1. *Howzit!*

This is the quintessential SAfE salutation, and probably started as a marker of solidarity among white males. Now, however, it is a solidarity marker among South Africans generally, and is more or less restricted by gender and ethnicity. Derived from *How is it?* rather than *How are you?*, it is not really intended as a question, and is closer in meaning to *Hello* than *How are you?*. The usual response is *Howzit*, and it is not at all unusual for *How are you?* to follow an exchange of *Howzits*.

### 9.2. *Ag, Man* and *Hey*

*Ag* and *man* are two very common tags in WhSAfE; the former is more closely associated with Broad and Afrikaans English, but occurs quite frequently in General, too. Both are usually exclamations of annoyance, but *man* can also express pleasure or delight. *Ag* precedes a sentence; *Man* generally follows a sentence but can also precede it; and the two together can constitute an expletive of annoyance.

(39) a. *Ag, the Stormers lost again.*

b. *Get out of my way, man.*

c. *Man, it’s beautiful!*

*Ag* appears to be an Afrikaans expletive, while *man* as an exclamation is very common in both Afrikaans and many varieties of English, including British English.

Another very common tag in WhSAfE is *hey*, which is roughly equivalent to ‘isn’t it’ or ‘not so’ in other varieties. With strong emphasis and a sharp fall in intonation, it invites agreement:

- (40) a. *Wow, it’s big, hey.*  
 b. *We’re going to Durban, hey Dad.* (‘aren’t we’)

## 10. One as non-specific determiner

*One* is frequently used to pick out one of a set, without specifying exactly:

- (41) a. *My one cat is sick.*  
 ‘One of my cats is sick.’  
 b. *He’s broken his one leg.*  
 ‘One of his legs / a leg is broken.’

(41b) is stigmatised as it is closely associated with Afrikaans English. However, the usage is not confined to Afrikaans English or even to Broad WhSAfE. (41a) is common in General SAfE.

## 11. Lexis

The vocabulary of WhSAfE has been influenced and enriched by a variety of languages. Afrikaans and the indigenous languages have naturally had the most input; but there are also vocabulary items from Malay, Portuguese, Indian languages and eastern European languages. Many African language expressions have found their way into WhSAfE, sometimes via Afrikaans. Globalisation and increased exposure to British and American English are likely to have a significant influence on the lexicon too. Most of the lexis exemplified in this section is in general use among South Africans, and will at least be generally understood by most English-speaking South Africans.

### 11.1. English South Africanisms

Most vocabulary items that differentiate WhSAfE from other international Englishes are drawn from the languages with which English has been in contact in South Africa. There are few uniquely South African English expressions:

- *Turn left at the **robot*** (‘traffic light’)
- *They live in a **township*** (‘town or suburb, usually poor, formerly reserved for Black people’; also ‘location’)
- *Let’s go to the **bioscope** on Saturday* (‘cinema’; common among older WhSAfE speakers).



WhSafE usually follows British rather than North American vocabulary, where these differences are salient: e.g. *torch* rather than *flashlight*; *jug* rather than *pitcher*; *jersey* rather than *sweater*.

## 11.2. Vocabulary items borrowed from other languages

Term	Gloss / explanation	Source language
PEOPLE AND FAMILY		
<i>sangoma</i>	traditional healer, often a.k.a. 'witchdoctor'	Zulu
<i>imbongi</i>	traditional praise singer	Xhosa, Zulu
<i>gogo</i>	'grandmother' (term of address); polite term of reference for older woman	Xhosa, Zulu
<i>oupa / ouma</i>	'grandfather / grandmother'; polite terms of reference for older people	Afrikaans
<i>tannie</i>	'aunt, auntie'; polite form of address or term of reference. Sometimes used derogatorily, especially outside of the Afrikaner community.	Afrikaans
<i>boetie</i>	'brother / little brother'; term of reference for one younger than oneself; not always polite.	Afrikaans
<i>buti / sisi</i>	'brother / sister'; polite form of address / term of reference for one the same age as oneself.	Xhosa, Zulu
<i>bra</i>	informal term of address to an equal.	slang, from English <i>brother</i> .
<i>boer</i>	'farmer'; sometimes extends to 'Afrikaner', when it can be derogatory.	Afrikaans.
<i>kugel</i>	a wealthy Jewish woman, usually derogatory.	Yiddish, 'ball'
<i>ubuntu</i>	spirit of fellowship, humanity and compassion	Xhosa, Zulu
FAUNA AND FLORA		
<i>mamba</i>	a very poisonous snake	Bantu <i>imamba</i> 'snake'
<i>brommer</i>	large fly or buzzing insect	Afrikaans <i>brom</i> 'buzz'
<i>duiweltjie</i>	small, three-pointed burr	Afrikaans <i>little devil</i>
<i>witgatboom</i>	'white-barked tree'	Afrikaans <i>wit</i> = 'white' + <i>gat</i> = 'hole' + <i>boom</i> = 'tree'

Term	Gloss / explanation	Source language
FOOD AND DRINK		
<i>mielie</i>	'maize'	Afrikaans
<i>pap</i>	'maize porridge'; can be crumbly or stiff	Afrikaans 'porridge'
<i>braai</i>	fire for cooking esp. meat, barbecue	Afrikaans
<i>potjiekos</i>	food cooked over an open fire in a round, cast iron pot	Afrikaans 'potfood'
<i>bobotie</i>	curried mince baked with a savoury custard topping	Afrikaans < Malay
<i>bredie</i>	meat stewed with vegetables	Afrikaans < Portuguese
<i>mampoer</i>	strong distilled spirit	Pedi
<i>rooibos</i>	locally made herbal tea	Afrikaans 'red bush'
<i>witblits</i>	strong distilled spirit	Afrikaans 'white lightning'
<i>mqombothi</i>	sorghum beer	Xhosa
PLACES AND THINGS		
<i>lapa</i>	enclosed outside entertainment area / sunroom	Sotho
<i>kraal</i>	traditional African village	Dutch < Portuguese
<i>imbizo</i>	'meeting / workshop'	Zulu
<i>indaba</i>	'meeting / discussion'; also 'news'	Xhosa, Zulu 'business'
<i>bosberaad</i>	'summit meeting' / meeting held outside of the workplace	Afrikaans 'bush conference'
<i>stoep</i>	porch or veranda	Afrikaans
DEEDS AND ACTIONS		
<i>vuka</i>	'wake up, get up, hurry up, move quickly'	Zulu
<i>suka</i>	'go away'	Zulu
<i>dikbek</i>	'cross, sulky, taciturn'	Afrikaans 'thick mouth'
<i>deurmekaar</i>	'untidy, messed up, confused'	Afrikaans
<i>weggooi</i>	'disposable'	Afrikaans

## 12. Conclusion

This article has listed some of the salient morphosyntactic features of WhSAfE. There is not much deviation from other standard Englishes in its morphology and syntax: WhSAfE is primarily distinguished by its accent and its borrowed vocabulary. However, it must be pointed out that the morphosyntax of WhSAfE has not been well or consistently studied. Moreover, it is likely to be influenced by the expansion of the variety, particularly in education, to other (ethnic) groupings which had been largely excluded from joining white peer groups, and some change is bound to result from this.

The influence of Afrikaans on both the phonology and morphosyntax of WhSAfE is an important feature. However, Lass and Wright's (1986) proposal that many features previously accepted as being Afrikaans influence may be Settler input survivals, may indicate that Afrikaans has not had as much impact on the variety as previously thought.

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Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# **Black South African English: morphology and syntax**

Rajend Mesthrie

## **1. Introduction**

This article provides an overview of the main syntactic features of Black South African English (BISaFE), as used by fluent L2 speakers. Some black South Africans now speak English as a first language, especially children who are being brought up in middle-class suburbs where English is a dominant L1. Since these numbers are relatively small, and since children form part of neighbourhood and school peer groups, whose norms are essentially those of General or “Cultivated” South African English, there is currently little to be gained by considering these to be speakers of BISaFE. BISaFE differs from other varieties of English in South Africa more in terms of its phonetics and discourse organisation than its grammar. It shares many syntactic features with other varieties of Sub-Saharan L2 English (see Schmied in this handbook and 1991), perhaps more so with East Africa than West Africa. Part of the reason for this is that Pidgin English is an influence over West African L2 English, but no Pidgin English exists in Southern or East Africa.

Except where otherwise indicated, examples for this study are drawn from part of my database of sociolinguistic interviews involving university undergraduates and graduates, coming mainly from the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Gauteng areas. This chapter exemplifies mesolectal varieties of BISaFE, i.e. the variety of speakers who speak English fluently, but with phonetic and grammatical norms that are clearly different from “Cultivated” SAfE.

## **2. Tense – aspect – modality systems**

### **2.1. Tense**

The broad present – past – future tense distinction of StE is unaltered in BISaFE; where variation exists it is usually in combinations of tense and aspect. The third person singular present tense –s is variable for some speakers.

## 2.2. Aspect

2.2.1. *Be + -ing occurs in a range of contexts that do not always coincide with those of StE*

Stative verbs that do not generally permit *be + -ing* in formal StE, allow it as a frequent option:

- (1) *Because most of the people are hailing from Malawi ...*  
'...hail from...'
- (2) *People who are having time for their children ...*  
'...who have time for ...'
- (3) *Even racism is still existing ...*  
'... still exists ...' (De Klerk and Gough 2002: 362)

Whereas the equivalents of (1)–(3) above would not allow *be + -ing* at all in the Standard, there are some examples of verbs in StE where *be + -ing* is allowed in one sense, but not another. BISAfE generally allows *be + -ing* in both. Thus *He is speaking Navajo* is admissible as present progressive in the Standard, but not as stative, where *He speaks Navajo* is the grammatical form. BISAfE, however, does not always make this distinction, or, at least, allows *be + -ing* as an option with the stative:

- (4) *There were quite a few people who were speaking Shangaan.*  
'... who speak Shangaan.'

Similarly the distinction between *I'm having (tea)* and *I have (a job)* is frequently overridden in BISAfE:

- (5) *The one I'm having presently is a temporary post.*  
'The job I have presently is a temporary one.'

2.2.2. *Past be + -ing for habitual*

- (6) *The essays here are different from the essays we were writing in Vista.*  
'... from the essays we used to write at Vista (University).'
- (7) *When my mother was here, she was here for a month, my father was phoning almost everyday.*  
'... used to phone ...'

2.2.3. *Rarity of have + -en*

In certain contexts (e.g. a subordinate clause preceded by a main clause with past tense verbs) the simple past corresponds to the past perfect of StE:

- (8) *She said she came looking for me.*  
 ‘She said she had come looking for me.’

#### 2.2.4. *-s in past tense contexts*

De Klerk and Gough (2002) give examples of the use of the third person singular present tense *-s* in past tense contexts:

- (9) *In 1980 the boycott starts.*

However, it is not clear if this is from spoken or written data. Such examples are non-existent in my database of spoken university students’ English.

### 2.3. Modality

Some differences in the syntax and semantics of BISAFE from other varieties in South Africa can be discerned. The most noticeable of these is the phrase *can be able*, also found in other parts of Africa:

- (10) *... how am I going to construct a good sentence so as this person can be able to hear me clearly.*  
 ‘... so that this person can understand me clearly.’

The negative *can't be able* is also attested. It is unclear whether ‘can be able’ and ‘can’ are synonymous, though that is my first impression. A likely explanation is a non-semantic one – analogy with the other modals (*shall, must, may, might, will, would, should*), which all allow collocations with *be able* (see sentence [11] from StE).

- (11) *She might be able to work.*

There are some overlaps between the modals. The present forms *can* and *will* are occasionally used where StE prefers the past forms *could* and *would* in irrealis contexts:

- (12) *I wish that people in the world will get educated.*  
 (De Klerk and Gough 2002: 362)
- (13) *Maybe it can be in Computer Science.*  
 ‘Perhaps it could have been in the field of Computer Science.’

*Can* occasionally has the (irrealis) semantics of *might*:

- (14) *I said, “No, they can be wild, but they’re human beings.”*  
 ‘... they might be wild...’

It also co-occurs with *know*, violating a StE collocation:

- (15) *I could know ...*  
 ‘I knew/was able to tell ...’

*May* sometimes occurs as a polite form of (irrealis) *could*:

- (16) *May you please lend me a pen.*  
 ‘Could you please ...’

This may well be a hypercorrection, based on the belief promulgated in classrooms that *may* is preferable to *can* (cf. the schoolteacher’s *You can go to the toilet, but you may not*).

As in Indian South African English (IndSAfE), *wouldn’t* is a polite form for *don’t* in the phrase *I wouldn’t know*.

#### 2.4. Other auxiliaries

Apart from discussions of modals in Section 2.3., auxiliaries appear to be more or less standard. For instance, no studies have suggested any special forms of *be* or *have* or rules like copula deletion (see Undeletions in 5.1.).

In indirect questions auxiliaries tend to be inverted with the subject, thus generalising the main clause rule for direct questions:

- (17) *A Catholic bishop who asked me what would I do if he could pay for my studies.*
- (18) *I didn’t know what were they saying ...*

Likewise *do*-support occurs in indirect questions:

- (19) *I don’t know what did he say.*  
 ‘I don’t know what he said.’

The verb *be* is involved in two idiomatic constructions. In the first, auxiliary *be* stands for *be* + verb of motion:

- (20) *I’m from his room.*  
 ‘I’ve just come from his room.’

In the second, copula *be* is used in PRO + *be* + NUMERICAL constructions corresponding to the StE construction *there* + *be* + NUMERICAL:

- (21) Q: *Have you got a full squad today?*  
 A: *We are ten.*  
 ‘There are ten of us.’

This construction, which always involves a partitive genitive sense ‘ten of us’, ‘three of them’ etc., does not occur in other varieties of SAfE.

### 3. Negation

Verb phrase negation has not been remarked upon in any overview of BISAfE speech. One phenomenon that has been studied concerns responses to *yes/no*-questions couched in the negative.

In positive *yes/no*-questions, BISAfE is no different from StE. Thus:

- (22) Q: *Is he arriving tomorrow?*  
A: *Yes (he is); or No (he isn't).*

That is, in both BISAfE and StE *yes* implies 'yes he is', and *no* implies 'no, he isn't'.

The rules in these two varieties are different if the questions are initiated in the negative:

- (23) a. Q: *Isn't he arriving tomorrow?*  
A: *Yes (he is).* (StE)  
*Yes (he isn't).* (BISAfE)  
*No (he isn't).* (StE)  
*No (he is).* (BISAfE)

That is, the answer *yes* implies 'he is' according to the conventions of the one variety, and 'he isn't' in the other. The same holds for the answer *no* in isolation.

The logic underlying the examples is consistent with Bantu and West African languages, and the construction has been reported in other parts of Africa (see Schmied, this volume and Schmied (1991: 73) for East Africa; Huber, this volume for Ghana). I propose that there is one rule underlying the BISAfE examples, even though *yes* implies 'he is' in one set and 'he isn't' in another. Furthermore, I propose that the rule for BISAfE is different from StE even in the positive, where they appear to coincide.

In order to decide upon this we need to examine the answers *yes* and *no* in their full dialogic context. If the forms of the verb *be* in the answer (whether overtly stated or not) matches that of the question, the answer is always *yes*. If there is no match, the answer is *no*. Thus (23b) shows the single rule for StE:

- (23) b. Q: *Is he arriving tomorrow?*  
A: *Yes (he is); or No (he isn't).*
- Q: *Isn't he arriving tomorrow?*  
A: *Yes (he is); or No (he isn't).*



Sentences (24a) and (24b) show a single rule for BISAF<sub>E</sub>:

- (24) a. Q: *Is he arriving tomorrow?*  
 A: *Yes (he is).*
- Q: *Isn't he arriving tomorrow?*  
 A: *Yes (he isn't).*
- b. Q: *Is he arriving tomorrow?*  
 A: *No (he isn't).*
- Q: *Isn't he arriving tomorrow?*  
 A: *No (he is).*

In each dialect there is one underlying agreement rule for both questions. Agreement in BISAF<sub>E</sub> holds not laterally, but vertically between question and answer. If this analysis is correct, it would show that dialects may be different in areas of grammar that on the surface appear to be the same. That is, the agreement rule for questions posed *positively* is actually different in the two dialects, even though the surface output is the same.

#### 4. Relativisation

There is little to report here, apart from the occasional use of resumptive pronouns.

- (25) *Students discovered that the kind of education that these people are trying to give it to us...  
 '...that these people are trying to give to us...'*

#### 5. Complementation

BISAF<sub>E</sub> has a preference for the overt expression of complementisers like *that* and *to*, and for occurrences of *to be* that are implicit in StE, but rarely expressed.

## 5.1. “Undeletions”

I use this term to denote retentions in BISAFE for elements which are typically deleted (or unexpressed) in StE.

In expository style, speakers use *that* rather than  $\emptyset$  in expressions like the following ([26] and [27] are from a teacher dispensing advice on television):

(26) *As it can be seen **that** there is a problem here.*  
‘As can be seen, there is a problem here.’

(27) *As it has been said **that** history repeats itself.*  
‘As has been said, history repeats itself.’

The surfacing of *that* might well be on analogy of main clauses like ‘It has been said that X’. The surfacing of dummy *it* is probably due to analogy with ‘It has been said’.

Likewise, where *to* is deleted in some contexts after causative main verbs like *let* and *make* in StE, it proves more tenacious in BISAFE:

(28) *Can you tell me what made you to decide **to** come and study?*

(29) *Even my friends were asking me, “Why do you let your son **to** speak Zulu?”*

*To be* also remains in “small clauses” of BISAFE, in contrast to their StE counterparts.

(30) *...treat a person as a person, and maybe pointing out things that can make that person to be a character that he is.*  
‘... can make that person the character that he is.’

(31) *...and it challenges me or makes me to be challenged.*

## 5.2. Variation in the form of complementisers

De Klerk and Gough (2002: 362) report occasional variants like the following:

(32) *I went to secondary school for doing my Standard 6.*  
‘... to do Standard 6.’

(33) *I tried that I might see her.*  
‘I tried to see her.’

(34) *He went there in order that he sees her.*  
‘He went there in order to see her.’

### 5.3. Comparatives

As in other varieties of English in Africa, comparative constructions are occasionally simplified. In (35) *than* is preferred to *rather than* while in (36) the superlative form *most* is left unstated.

- (35) ... *if you are not in a hurry, you can take it today – now – than Thursday.*  
 ‘...today, rather than Thursday.’
- (36) ... *my school was one of the radical schools that you can ever find.*  
 ‘...one of the most radical schools...’

## 6. Other subordination and coordination phenomena

### 6.1. Double conjunctions

Adversative constructions involving conjunctions like *although*, *but*, *even*, *so* etc. mark each clause separately:

- (37) **But** *I don't know it well, but I like it.*
- (38) **So** *we (= each family) had about two rooms each, so we stayed.*
- (39) **Although** *I'm not that shy, but it's hard for me to make friends.*

Such constructions are especially prevalent in lower sociolects and/or unplanned extended discourse.

### 6.2. *Other ... other* constructions

Corresponding to a similar form in languages like Zulu and Sotho, many BISAfE speakers use *other ... other* in place of StE *one...the other* or *some ... other* (Buthelezi 1995: 248):

- (40) *Others are for the proposal, others are against it.*  
 ‘Some ... others...’
- (41) *The other side is that... you make friends; and on the other side enemies are created again.*  
 ‘On the one hand you might make friends; on the other hand you might make enemies.’
- (42) *The other one was smart, but the other one was not clever.*  
 ‘One was smart, but the other one was not.’

The StE idiom *this, that and the other* is sometimes replaced by *this and this and that* or *this and that and that*.

## 6.3. Innovations in the form of conjunctions

These innovations include *if at all*, which is a variant of *if*; *supposing* for *suppose* or *if*; *because-why* for *because*.

## 7. Agreement

There is very little to report here. Subject-verb concord for third person singular is variable between *-s* and  $\emptyset$ , especially in lower sociolects. Whereas *it* and *they/ them* are distinct as referential pronouns, there is some syncretism in anaphoric contexts:

- (43) *Both things I have to do it.*  
 ‘I have to do both things.’

There is some variability in pronoun gender, with *he* and *she* occurring interchangeably in lower sociolects especially. This also applies to the case-marked forms *his* and *her* and to *him* and *her*.

## 8. Noun phrase structure

## 8.1. Articles

There is some variability between the use of  $\emptyset$ , *a*, and *the*. Most noticeably, *a* often replaces zero articles of StE:

- (44) *I was on a maternity leave.*  
 (45) *You're going to have a trouble.*  
 (46) *You might create a chaos.*  
 (47) *If we talk of...migrant labour system.*

## 8.2. Adjectives

A striking characteristic is the use of adjectives as nouns. In this function they may take an article (usually *the*) and may take a plural *-s*. The noun that they are understood to quantify is deleted:

<i>primary</i>	‘primary school’
<i>tertiary</i>	‘tertiary education’
<i>religious</i>	‘religious studies’
<i>the rurals</i>	‘rural places’
<i>the remote</i>	‘remote places’ etc.

(48) *People who come from the rurals have a hard time...*  
 ‘...from the rural areas’

(49) *I’m taking Religious.*  
 ‘...Religious Studies’

Adjectives also show variability in degrees of comparison. *Too* or *very much* are treated as equivalents of *very*:

(50) *It is too difficult.*  
 ‘... very difficult’

(51) *Hatred is very much common.* (De Klerk and Gough 2002: 363)

The phrase *the most thing* may be used for ‘the thing I [verb] most’:

(52) *The most thing I like is apples.* (De Klerk and Gough 2002: 363)

### 8.3. Nouns

Non-count nouns are frequently treated as if they are count nouns: hence *staffs*, *a luggage*, *a transport*, *machineries* etc. Occasionally the plural *-s* ending on regular nouns is absent:

(53) *We did all our subject in English.* (De Klerk and Gough 2002: 362)

## 9. Pronominal systems

As gender differences are not marked in pronouns in Bantu languages, some variability shows up in BISAfE, even amongst fluent speakers. In particular *he* and *she* may be substituted for each other, or subject to self-correction, suggesting that the distinction does not always come automatically to some speakers. Likewise *his* and *her* are not always differentiated:

(54) *He’s working in a factory.*  
 (Graduate student referring to her mother)

The opposite, *he* for *she*, occurs as well.

In lower sociolects the possessive pronoun sometimes follows the noun it qualifies e.g. *father of me* for *my father*. The substitution of *We + be + NUMERAL* for *There + be + NUMERAL + of us* is discussed in section 2.4. above:

(55) *We were nine.*  
 ‘There were nine of us.’

Occasionally second person plural pronoun forms like *you people* (genitive *your peoples*'), occur. The demonstrative pronouns *this* and *that* are sometimes substituted (strengthened) by the forms *this one* and *that one*:

- (56) A: (Cracks a joke)  
 B: *I like that one.*  
 'That's a good one/that's a good joke.'

## 10. Word order

### 10.1. Topicalisation and focussing

BISAfE makes high use of topicalisation phenomena like left dislocation, fronting and focus-movement. Mesthrie (1997: 127) gives a percentage of 5.6 in his corpus of 8,200 sentences, in contrast to a white L1 control group's 1.8 percent (of 1,080 sentences).

Left dislocation involves the leftward movement of an NP, with an appositional (or copy) pronoun in the main or subordinate clause:

- (57) *Today's children, they are so lazy.*

Fronting puts old or given information first, and does not involve a copy pronoun:

- (58) Q: *I think you did your degree in three years?*  
 A: *Three years, and then the fourth year I did BEd.*

Focus movement shows a different intonational contour from fronting, and puts new information first:

- (59) Q: *And how long did you live in East London?*  
 A: *For my life I'm there.*

Whilst these three constructions are found in most varieties of English, there are some aspects of their use in BISAfE that are noteworthy. For left dislocation, the most common pragmatic function is the same as in other varieties – for contrastive effect, especially when speakers go through lists and make comments about individual NPs in the list:

- (60) *Oh, Haroun, he was the co-ordinator. Farouk, that's my economics teacher.*

As in other varieties, left dislocation may also serve the discourse function of re-introducing given information that has not been talked about in the two previous sentence. Some other functions appear to be more common in BISAfE than other varieties – left dislocation with partitive genitives (61), and relative clauses (62). For statistics and further details see Mesthrie (1997: 130–134).

(61) *Some of them, they'll use Afrikaans.*

(62) *The people who are essentially born in Soweto, they can speak Tsotsi.*

There is a large residue (of about 10 percent of all left dislocations in my database) which does not appear to have any pragmatic function, and are therefore labelled neutral predicates. Particularly noticeable is the use of left dislocation with the subject NP *the people*:

(63) *The people, they got nothing to eat.*

Mesthrie (1997: 129–130) reports that the other two constructions, focus movement and fronting, do not appear to differ in their pragmatics or syntax from other varieties of English.

### **Selected references**

Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# Indian South African English: morphology and syntax

Rajend Mesthrie

## 1. Introduction

The description of Indian South African English (IndSAfE) syntax in this chapter is based on my fieldwork in the mid-1980s, when I interviewed 150 speakers in KwaZulu-Natal (Mesthrie 1992). IndSAfE offers an almost inexhaustible treasure trove of syntactic innovations as the variety moved from being a Second Language (L2) to being a First Language (L1) in the 1960s, within a century of its inception in South Africa. The variety clearly shares many features with its antecedent in India, but also shows a variety of features due to Natal colonial English, other L2 varieties of English in South Africa, processes of second-language acquisition and influence from the substrate languages (mainly Tamil and Bhojpuri).

## 2. Tense – aspect – modality

### 2.1. Tense

A broad present – past – future tense distinction forms the backbone of the IndSAfE system, though not without considerable alteration involving aspectual and modal distinctions. A few verbs have non-standard forms in lower sociolects:

<i>seen</i>	‘saw’
<i>been</i>	‘have been’
<i>done</i>	‘did’ (as full verb)

The third person singular present tense *-s* is variable in lower sociolects and in informal speech generally.

### 2.2. Aspect

#### 2.2.1 *BE* + *-ing*

*BE* + *-ing* occurs in a number of contexts beyond (and in addition to) the usual progressive in StdE.



### Historic present of narration

As a stylistic device to create a vivid and immediate effect, the present tense form of BE, instead of the standard past tense form *was*, combines with *-ing*:

- (1) *I'm suffering here now and the pain is getting worse.*  
 'I was suffering and the pain was getting worse.'

A related usage uses historic present *be* + *-ing* to replace the preterite with verbs like *tell*, *say*, and others.

- (2) *Hawa, she's telling she cooks an' all.*  
 'Don't you remember, she said she (still) cooks and so forth.' (*hawa* < 'here you are').

### Perfect / Perfect progressive

In sentences with an adverbial phrase of time, some speakers use *be* + *-ing* instead of the standard *have* + PP:

- (3) *I'm staying this house seven years.*  
 'I've been staying in this house for seven years.'

### Habitual

*Be* + *-ing* is extended to habitual senses, usually expressed in StdE by the present tense:

- (4) *She's working by Foschini's.*  
 'She works at Foschini's.'

### Stative

*Be* + *-ing* is generalised in lower sociolects to co-occur with stative verbs:

- (5) *We thinking now why we can't get eddication.*  
 'We now think back/regret why we didn't get an education.'

### 2.2.2 Have + -en

By contrast, *have* + *-en* occurs rarely in lower sociolects, where it may be replaced by markers like *finish* or *already* or by the simple past:

- (6) *I finish eat.*  
 'I've finished eating.'
- (7) *You finish eat?*  
 'Have you eaten? / Have you finished eating?'

This is subject to occasional hypercorrection in informal acrolect or upper mesolect to forms like the following:

(8) *You finish eating?*(9) *You finished eat?*2.2.3. *Past habitual*

There is a striking use of *should* for ‘used to’ in most sociolects of IndSAfE:

(10) *We should fright!*  
‘We used to be afraid.’(11) *We shouldn’t go to the cinema.*  
‘We never used to go to the cinema.’

This is probably based on the form *would*, though phonetic similarities between *should* and *used to* in fast speech may have played a role as well.

2.2.4. *Leave / stay*

The verbs *leave* and *stay* are used to convey aspectual distinctions in the constructions *and stay* and *and left her/him/it*. The former signals a habitual sense, the latter is a completive marker:

(12) *We’ll fright an’ stay.*  
‘We used to be afraid (for a long time).’(13) *We whacked him an’ left him.*  
‘We beat him up thoroughly.’2.3. *Modality*

*Shall* is rare in IndSAfE. In declaratives it is replaced by *will* (most commonly the reduced form *’ll*), In questions it is used in formal acrolectal use (*Shall I bring it?*). More commonly one hears the following in casual speech:

(14) *Ø I bring it?*  
‘Shall I bring it?’(15) *I must bring it?*  
‘Shall/should/must I bring it?’

The negative form *shan’t* is not part of everyday use and surfaces in formal or literary contexts. It is replaced by *won’t* in casual speech.

The past tense form *should* (negative : *shouldn’t*) is used as an equivalent to ‘used to’ – see sentences (10) and (11). In addition to this habitual sense, it is used as a replacement of the irrealis form *would*:

- (16) *Imagine if the other dog was here, how jealous he **should** get, ey!*  
 ‘...how jealous he would get/would have got.’

Whereas *will* occurs with more or less standard semantics, *would* is rare in lower sociolects. *Would* and its reduced form *'d* are usually replaced by *will* or its reduced form *'ll*:

- (17) *He said he'**ll** do it.*  
 ‘He said he’d do it.’

The form *wouldn't* occurs as an idiomatic softener in place of *don't*:

- (18) Q: *So why are people so cruel today?*  
 A: *I **wouldn't** know.*  
 ‘I don’t know/can’t say.’

*May* in polite, permissive questions or commands is rare. (19) and (20) are examples of informal basilect equivalents of StE *May I go now?* or *You may go*:

- (19) *I can go now?/Can I go now?*  
 (20) *You can go./Go!*

In addition to the standard permission or ability semantics, *can* can also be used to signify emphasis, ‘can really’. Whereas in StdE this has a positive reading (*Mary can act* ‘Mary can really act well’), in IndSAfE negative readings are also possible:

- (21) *Miriam can irritate you!*  
 ‘Miriam can really irritate you!’

### 3. Auxiliaries

#### 3.1. Have + *-en*

*Have* + *-en* is rare in lower sociolects – see section 2.2.2. above.

#### 3.2. BE + *-ing*

*Be* + *-ing*, on the other hand, is used in a range of functions – see section 2.2.1. above. Copula *be* is subject to variable deletion. A large measure of the deletion is phonological in nature, the segment most affected in this non-rhotic dialect being [ə]. Thus, *we're sick* may surface as [wi: sɪk] (with phonological deletion) or [wiə: sɪk], but not [wiər sɪk]. Cluster simplification appears to lead to deletion of 's:

- (22) *Harry Ø not here.*  
 ‘Harry’s not here.’

- (23) *What Ø Dan's age?*  
'What's Dan's age?'

With focus movement involving *that*, the copula is usually absent:

- (24) *My brother that!*  
'That's my brother.'
- (25) *From Sezela that people.*  
'Those people are from Sezela.'

On the other hand, the copula is mandatory in the following contexts:

- (26) *He's my brother. (\*He my brother.)*
- (27) *She's sick. (\*She sick.)*
- (28) *I'm (very) sick. (\*I (very) sick.)*

### 3.3. Habitual *be*

Invariant habitual *be* is a feature of IndSAfE, albeit not a frequent one.

- (29) *Spar's tomatoes **be** nice.*  
'Tomatoes from Spar (a supermarket) are usually nice.'
- (30) *Every time I go there she **be** all dressed up.*  
'Whenever I go there she's (usually) all dressed up.'

### 3.4. *Do*-deletion

*Do*-support occurs in negative declaratives and negative questions, but is rarely used in their positive counterparts:

- (31) *Ø you saw my new hat?*  
'Did you see my new hat?'
- (32) *Ø you like this new programme?*  
'Do you like this new programme?'
- (33) *How often Ø she goes to her mother's place.*  
'How often does she go to her mother's place?'

### 3.5. Auxiliary inversion

The use of auxiliary inversion is mainly reserved for formal contexts. Most speakers keep auxiliaries in situ in informal speech, both in *yes/no* questions and in *wh*- questions:

- (34) *What I must do? If my father say I must go an' plough today what I can do?*
- (35) *Must I put some more milk in it? ...Now you haven't...you didn't go back to eating meat?*
- (36) *So whereabouts in India she's? How many years she's there now?*

Paradoxically, in subordinate clauses, as in the English of India, an inversion might occur:

- (37) *I wonder what will she think?*

Similarly, even though *do* is absent in positive questions in main clauses, it sometimes surfaces in subordinate clauses:

- (38) *I wonder where **does** it go in winter.*

### 3.6. Auxiliary attraction to *wh*-

The auxiliary BE is frequently contracted in indirect questions and attracted to *wh*- words:

- (39) *Do you know when's the plane going to land?*
- (40) *Do you know what's roti?*  
'...unleavened bread...')

## 4. Negation

In most respects the IndSAfE system is that of StdE. However, the use of *never* as an equivalent of *didn't* or *haven't* is widespread in lower sociolects. Basilectal speakers tend to use the unmarked verb after *never*:

- (41) *I **never** go there to find out ...*  
'I didn't go there to find out (what was happening).'
- (42) *They **never** play with those crooks.*  
'They didn't play with those crooks.' (i.e. they beat them up)
- (43) *We **never** write yet.*  
'We haven't written (our exams) yet.'

Sometimes the standard semantics of 'not ever' apply:

- (44) *He **never** finish his matric.*  
'He never finished matric.'

Mesolectal speakers tend to use the past tense of the verb after *never*, with similarities to basilectal semantics:

- (45) *But I never made it to the end.*  
 ‘But I didn’t make it to the end.’

StdE offers two options of contraction when *not* combines with present *be*:

- (46) a. *It isn’t my cat.* (Negative contraction with attraction to copula)  
 b. *It’s not my cat.* (Copula contraction with attraction to pronoun)
- (47) a. *You aren’t my friend anymore.*  
 b. *You’re not my friend anymore.*

Only the forms in (b), involving copula contraction and attraction to pronouns, occur in informal IndSAfE. The forms in (a) may occur as rare stylistically marked alternatives in higher sociolects. With the auxiliary *have* the preference is reversed:

- (48) a. *It hasn’t rained for months.*  
 b. *It’s not rained for months.*
- (49) a. *You haven’t tried very hard.*  
 b. *You’ve not tried very hard.*

This time, the (a) sentences are idiomatic in informal IndSAfE while the (b) forms are rare and stylistically marked. Some speakers even avoid the (a) sentences with their perfective HAVE + *-en* forms, using *never* + unmarked verb or *didn’t* + verb instead.

## 5. Relativisation

Variation in relative clause (RC) formation is a vast topic that takes up a whole chapter (Chapter 3) in Mesthrie (1992). A brief outline of the four types of RCs identified there will be given: standard RCs, almost standard RCs, substrate-influenced RCs and discourse-governed RCs.

### 5.1. Standard RCs

These are post-nominal and introduced by an appropriate relative pronoun like *that*, *which*, *who* or  $\emptyset$ . *Whom* is not a colloquial form in IndSAfE and *that* may be used with human as well as non-human nouns.

- (50) *People who come an’ visit without phoning first make her cross.*

## 5.2. Almost-standard RCs

One set of “almost-standard” RCs keeps the structure of the standard RC, but differs in the choice of relative pronoun, like *what*, *which one* and occasionally *which* for human NPs:

- (51) *But the kind of boodle **what** I'm earning is grand man, man.*  
 ‘...that I’m earning...’
- (52) *That's the maid **which one** was here...*  
 ‘That’s the maid who was here...’

The other set is the “contact relative” which relativises a subject NP without an overt relative pronoun:

- (53) *We talking about my friend  $\emptyset$  lives down there.*  
 ‘We’re talking about my friend who lives down there.’

## 5.3. Substrate-influenced RCs

Correlatives occur in the speech of older speakers, especially those with an Indic (North Indian) background:

- (54) *Which-car they supposed to give us, someone else got it.*  
 ‘Someone else got the car they were supposed to give us.’
- (55) *Which-one I put in the jar, that-one is good.*  
 ‘The ones (i.e. pickles) that I put in the jar are the best.’

These correlatives have the following characteristics:

- The RC is pre-nominal (i.e. it precedes the head noun)
- It is introduced by a *wh*- relative pronoun
- The *wh*- relative has an anaphoric counterpart in the main clause (usually a pronoun or a demonstrative like *that-one*)
- The full NP usually occurs in the preceding subordinate clause, compare *which-car* in (54). There are exceptions when the full NP may occur in both clauses, or when it may occur as *wh*- + pronoun in both clauses as in (55)

A second substrate-influenced type follows the Dravidian (South Indian) prototype. In (56) the relevant RC has been bracketed for ease of identification:

- (56) *People **who got (working here for them) sons**,...*  
 ‘People who’ve got sons who are working here (for the company)...’
- (57) *That's all (we had) trouble.*  
 ‘That’s all the trouble we had.’

Sentence (56) has a standard post-nominal relative with *who* (*People who've got ...*) followed by the substrate-influenced one (*working here for them*) *sons*. This RC and the one in (57) have the following characteristics:

- They are pre-nominal.
- They do not use a relative pronoun.
- There is a single occurrence of the domain noun.

Such pronominal external constructions are quite rare, but identifiably part of the dialect.

A third substrate-influenced type is the past participle strategy:

- (58) *You can't beat Vijay's-planted tomatoes.*  
 'You can't beat the tomatoes planted by Vijay/that Vijay planted.'
- (59) *That Neela's-knitted jersey is gone white.*  
 'That jersey knitted by Neela/that Neela knitted is gone white.'

This RC, which follows from a detail of Bhojpuri syntax, shares its characteristics with the pronominal external RC above and has two additional characteristics:

- It is pre-nominal
- It involves agentive nouns in the RC, marked by the genitive 's (*Vijay's*, *Neela's*)
- It involves a single occurrence of the domain noun
- It does not use a relative pronoun
- The verb in the RC is in the past passive participle form

For further details on all of these, see Mesthrie (1992: 73–76).

The fourth class involves several sub-types which are intermediate between 'pragmatic' and 'syntactic' RCs.

#### 5.4. "Near relatives"

Sometimes clauses are linked together via intonation patterns, rather than overt syntactic marking. These are paratactic rather than fully fledged relatives:

- (60) *I'm a man, I don't go church an' all.*  
 'I'm a man who doesn't go to church, and so forth.'
- (61) *I put a litee from Renishaw, I don't even know him, in the goals.*  
 'I put a youngster, whom I don't even know, as goalkeeper.'

#### Topicalisation strategy

In this sub-type, a topicalised NP is relativised, with a copy (or appositional) pronoun in the "comment clause":

- (62) *One chap who used to stay here, he was a builder – Arjun.*



- (63) *Thing that is coming to you from the government, man, you should be appreciated with that thing.*  
 ‘You should be appreciative of a thing that comes to you from the government.’

Preposition-chopping strategy

In some cases the PP of the relative clause occurs in a reduced form with the preposition deleted:

- (64) *That’s the place I retired Ø, you know. (to > Ø)*  
 (65) *...like a big yard that you do gardening Ø an’ all. (in > Ø)*

Paratactic RCs with possessives

The StdE constraint against relativising NPs involved in possessive constructions is lifted in informal IndSAfE:

- (66) *You like my shirt I bought?*  
 ‘Do you like my shirt, which I bought?’  
 (67) *Remember Mr. Vahed’s coat, he used to wear?*  
 ‘Do you remember the coat that Mr. Vahed used to wear?’

These relatives have an “afterthought” feel about them.

## 6. Complementation

### 6.1. Parataxis

In upper mesolectal and acrolectal speech there is very little to report under complementation. Basilectal speakers, on the other hand, have developed complementation strategies that exhibit striking differences from StdE. Parataxis (loosely arranged clauses, each retaining main clause syntax) is favoured over hypotaxis (the use of clearly marked subordinate clauses):

- (68) *They told I must come and stay that side.*  
 ‘They asked me to come and live there.’  
 (69) *I like children must learn our mother tongue.*  
 ‘I’d like our children to learn our mother tongue.’

This pattern also applies to modal-like or adverbial modifiers:

- (70) *Lucky, they never come.*  
 ‘We were lucky that they didn’t come.’  
 (71) *Must be, they coming now.*  
 ‘Perhaps they’re coming now/It must be that they’re coming now.’

For further details see Mesthrie (1992: 194–197).

6.2. *Oh* as subordinator

*Oh* is occasionally used as an element that has COMP-like status:

- (72) *It's not that you'll be scared **oh** you're going to die there.*  
 'It's not as if you're scared that you'll die there.'

In this construction, *oh* seems to signal direct speech with the semantics of disapproval. That is the speaker signals a slight criticism of the assertion or presupposition made in the direct or indirect quotation introduced by *oh*.

## 6.3. Conditional clauses

In the basilect non-marking of the conditional is common:

- (73) *Ø we gonna keep servant, we must pay the servant.*  
 'If we want to hire a servant, we will have to pay them well.'

The conditional nature of the sentence is understood by the context and by the iconic nature of the arrangement (supposition first, consequence second). When conditionality is marked, a host of alternatives are possible. An intriguing one is the use of *too* at the end of the first clause:

- (74) *It can be a terrible house **too**, you have to stay in a terrible house.*  
 'Even if it's a terrible house, you have to live in it.'

In Section 10. other word-order principles, deriving in part from the OV substrates, are outlined; other functions of *too* are discussed in 10.1. and 10.2. (see example [112]).

## 7. Agreement

There is little to report here. Subject-verb concord for third person singular verbs is variable between *-s* and  $\emptyset$ . The use of the demonstrative adjective *this* with both singular and plural nouns is very common:

- (75) ***This** people drive me crazy.*

Whereas *it* and *they/them* are clearly differentiated as referential pronouns, there is some syncretism in anaphoric contexts:

- (76) A: *I was looking for those shoes all over.*  
 B: *And did you find it?*

## 8. Noun phrase structure

### 8.1. Articles

*One* is an alternative form for the indefinite article *a*:

- (77) *I was feeling thirsty, so I bought **one** soda water.* (Unstressed, asserted, specific)

In elliptical, casual style the definite article may be deleted if it is presupposed and specific:

- (78) *∅ food is lovely.* (*The* understood in context)

Non-specific uses of a noun also allow variable deletion of the indefinite article:

- (79) *Because if they give us ∅ chance...*  
'...give us a chance...'

### 8.2. Adjectives

Adjectives may be reduplicated to signal plurality (80) or indicate distribution (81):

- (80) *You're doing **wrong-wrong** things.*  
'... many wrong things.'
- (81) ***One-one** time you see a blue lizard.*  
'Occasionally you see a blue lizard.'

Adjectives do not reduplicate with singular nouns in other contexts: \**wrong-wrong thing*. The irregular adjective *bad* has comparative forms like *more worse* for 'worse' and *worst* for 'worse' or 'worst'. Some speakers of Dravidian background occasionally use adjectives as substantives, preceded by an article, as in (82):

- (82) *I'm **a strong**, but now I'm gone **a thin**.*

### 8.3. Nouns

Irregular nouns of StdE are sometimes made regular: *oxens*, *childrens*, *bucks*, *sheeps*. On the other hand, plural nouns may be used without an ending if clear in context, though not very frequently. Mesthrie (1992: 130) reports a deletion rate of 5% for *-s* plurals in his corpus of 2,530 nouns not preceded by quantifiers. With quantifiers the deletion rate was 7.3%.

An associative plural marker *them* occurs with human nouns:

- (83) ***Johnny-them** going 'way tomorrow.*  
'Johnny and family are moving tomorrow.'

- (84) *I saw **Saras-them's** cat by the road.*  
 'I saw the cat belonging to Saras's family on the roadside.'

The form *and-them* may be preferred in higher sociolects, and coincides with the general South African English (SAfE) form.

In lower sociolects, *all* may be used as an emphatic plural form or as an associative plural marker with human and non-human nouns:

- (85) *After he died his **books-all** was at home.*  
 '...all his books...' or possibly 'his books and other effects.'
- (86) *How's **mother-all**?*  
 'How's your mother and the others at home?'

#### 8.4. Noun phrase reduction

Very commonly complex noun phrases made up of NP + PP are reduced to ADJ + N or to compound nouns:

<i>cold-touch</i>	'touch of cold'
<i>top-house</i>	'house at the top'
<i>like-his shirt</i>	'shirt like his'
<i>my-house wedding</i>	'wedding at my house'

### 9. Pronominal systems

The most notable characteristic of IndSAfE is the regular use of *y'all* (< *you all*) for second person plural pronouns. It has a genitive form *yall's*:

- (87) *Is that **yall's** car?*  
 'Is that your (pl.) car?'

A less common equivalent is *you people* with the genitive form *your people's*.

- (88) *Is that **your people's** car?*

In lower sociolects an alternative form for *he* is *daffale* (< *that fellow*).

- (89) ***Daffale** said I must come today.*

## 10. Word order

### 10.1. OV influence in VO dialect

Although the basic word order in IndSAfE is clearly SVO, the variety has a greater tolerance than most varieties of English for constructions typically associated with OV languages, due to the SOV nature of both the Indic and Dravidian substrates in IndSAfE. Sentences with the actual order SOV are not characteristic of IndSAfE, even though a few were produced by speakers who were “pre-basilectal”. The following OV features were common in informal IndSAfE:

#### 10.1.1. Quasi-postpositions

Although prepositions are widespread, some uses of *side*, *time*, *part* and *way* approach that of prepositions:

- (90) *I'm going **Fountain Head-side** tomorrow.*  
 ‘I’m going towards Fountain Head tomorrow.’
- (91) ***Afternoon-part** gets too hot.*  
 ‘It gets too hot in the afternoon.’
- (92) *We have our lunch **twelve o'clock-time**.*  
 ‘We have our lunch at/at about twelve o’clock.’

#### 10.1.2. Co-ordination

Some speakers use co-ordinative constructions which are reminiscent of OV structures, since ellipsis is rare and a marker like *too* occurs in final position in both clauses:

- (93) *I made rice **too**, I made roti **too**.*  
 ‘I made both rice and roti.’

A second type involves a survival of a pattern from Indic and Dravidian, in which preference is given to subordinating “conjunctive” constructions over co-ordination:

- (94) *He **bring and sells** mango.*  
 ‘He brings mangoes and sells them.’

This is reminiscent of substrate influence since the phrase *bring an’ sell* is intonationally one unit, with the first verb in stem form.

### 10.1.3. Kinship titles

OV languages prefer the order proper noun before common noun. This pattern survives especially well in IndSAfE, since it is associated with respectful kinship titles, in which an Indian kinship term survives: *Virend maama* '(maternal) uncle Virend', *Rani akka* 'sister Rani', etc. In informal speech the pattern is retained even if an English kinship term is used: *Johnny-uncle* 'Uncle Johnny', *Daisy aunty* 'Aunt Daisy'. It also applies to terms of address: *Somera Doctor* 'Doctor Somera', *Johnny Police* 'Policeman Johnny', *Naicker teacher* 'teacher Naicker'.

### 10.1.4. Question-final particles

For emphasis, question words (especially *what*) are occasionally used in final position as interrogative markers:

- (95) *You din' hear me, what?*  
'Didn't you hear me?' (emphatic)

### 10.1.5. Clause-final conjunctions

*But* is used at the end of clauses with affective meaning, roughly equivalent to 'really, though, truly':

- (96) *She donno Tamil? She can talk English, but!*  
(97) *I was unconscious, but.*

*Too* occurs at the end of clauses, as an equivalent of the clause-initial standard conjunction *even if*, as in (74).

Other manifestations of OV influence include rank-reduction (see section 8.4.) and substrate-influenced RCs (see section 5.3.).

## 10.2. Topicalisation and focussing

IndSAfE has a predilection for an array of processes that can be loosely characterised as topicalisation. The two main processes involved are fronting (98) and left dislocation (99):

- (98) *Change I haven't got.*  
'I don't have change.'

- (99) *Tommy – he was a builder.*

Both occur in informal StdE. Fronting puts old or given information first and frequently involves a contrastive effect. Left dislocation is similar in its pragmatics

but not in its syntactic form, since the fronted NP is represented by a pronoun trace in the main clause, for example the pronoun *he* in (99).

Many factors make topicalisation a prominent feature of IndSAfE syntax and discourse organisation. Firstly, it enables the verb to come last, a position that is compatible with the OV structure of the substrates:

- (100) *Alone you came?*  
 ‘Did you come alone?’

Secondly, a process like fronting is not always controlled by discourse organisation. It may occur initially in a stretch of discourse, without any apparent recourse to givenness or contrast:

- (101) *Your tablet, you took?* (No previous discussion of medication or illness)

Thirdly, fronting and left dislocation occur with a range of semantic roles: temporal, locative (102), genitive, comitative, instrument, goal, beneficiary, source and others.

- (102) *Near to Margate that is.*  
 ‘That place is near to Margate.’

- (103) *My grandfather, I talk with him.*  
 ‘I speak (in Gujarati) with my grandfather.’

Fourthly, topics occur in a wide array of main clauses involving *yes/no* questions, *wh-* questions (105), negatives (104) and comparatives (106):

- (104) *I’m here 14 years, not with one neighbour I had problems...*

- (105) *Your car – where you parked?*  
 ‘Where did you park your car?’

- (106) *Like a wild animal you are!*

Fifthly, topics may be “extracted” out of embedded clauses:

- (107) *Indians, I donno why they like that!*  
 ‘I don’t know why Indians are like that!’

- (108) *Beans-price, I told is high because nobody has got it.*  
 ‘I’ve said that price of beans is high because nobody has got them to sell.’

Sixthly, “stacking” of topics is possible within a sentence:

- (109) *Therefore, I mean, I feel, Phoenix, living like this, I don’t like it.*  
 ‘Therefore, I don’t like living like this in Phoenix.’

For further examples of more complex stacking, see Mesthrie (1992: 113–114).

Seventhly (and finally), topicalisation seems so strong that sometimes, even when speakers begin with an SVO structure, they round it off by recapitulating the pronoun subject and the verb:

(110) *We stayed in the Finn Barracks **we stayed**.*

There is less to say about focussing in IndSAfE. Focussing of the sort found in other varieties involving a special intonation is possible:

(111) ***Twenty years** I've been living here!*

Here the rise-fall intonation on *twenty years* serves a highlighting function. An alternative strategy is for speakers to use *too* as a highlighter after the NP:

(112) *This weather **too**, it's terrible.* (No other terrible thing mentioned).

*Too* may also highlight an entire sentence, roughly equal to standard 'even':

(113) *Can't give one slice of bread **too**.* 'You can't even give me a slice of bread.'

## 11. Selected paradigms

There is little to report in respect of BE, HAVE and DO apart from some variability in third person singular forms. Whereas the present tense paradigm for BE is standard for most speakers, the past tense shows considerable variation between *was* and *were*. Some speakers use *was* throughout the paradigm, and forms like *you was*, *we was* or *they was* are unremarked upon in the lower sociolects.

In these sociolects, *been* replaces *have been* in phrases like *I been there*, (but not as an auxiliary as in *\*I been playing*). For these speakers the present paradigm for DO may also be regularised, with *do* occurring throughout, e.g. *he do*. The verb HAVE is more interesting, admitting fewer non-standard forms, if only because it is a rare form itself in lower sociolects. Perfective *have* is frequently replaced by markers like *finish*, whilst possessive *have* is typically replaced by the regular form *got*. In lower sociolects the paradigm is *I got/you got/he got* etc. for *I've got/you've got/she's got* etc.

Fairly similar observations hold for negative forms of BE/HAVE/DO. Forms like *he don't*, *he wasn't*, *you wasn't* and *they wasn't* are possible for some speakers. The negatives of *I got/you got/he got* are *I haven't got/you haven't got/he haven't got*.

The negative *ain't* is not a feature of IndSAfE. See section 3.2. for interaction between pronouns, the verb *be* and negative contraction. The negative of *used to* is either *never used to* or *shouldn't* (see section 2.3.). The forms *didn't use(d) to* and *used not to* are not a feature of IndSAfE.



In contrast to the immense variation in auxiliary forms relating to aspect and modality already discussed, there is little variation in the form of lexical verbs relating to tense or strong/weak distinctions, where the StBrE forms generally apply.

The prepositional verb *look after* and the compound *by-heart* are treated as one lexical item:

- (114) *He **look-afters** the baby.*  
 ‘...looks after...’
- (115) *They **look-aftered** me when I was sick.*  
 ‘...looked after...’
- (116) *I’m tired of **look-aftering** the baby.*  
 ‘...looking after...’
- (117) *The teacher told us not to **by-heart** our work.*  
 ‘...to learn off by heart...’
- (118) ***By-hearting** your work doesn’t mean you understand it.*  
 ‘...learning by heart...’

## 12. Current research

Not much new work has been undertaken in IndSAfE syntax. In Mesthrie (2003) I examine the choices being made by younger speakers who are faced with an immense variety of morphosyntactic choices. The younger (fifth) generation of children do not seem to innovate much; rather they are selecting features from the pool of variants available to them. However, they are not jettisoning all of the more divergent structures in their parent’s speech. Some OV constructions remain and carry a degree of covert prestige. Speakers are increasingly polystylistic, depending on dimensions of formality, as well as on the identity of the interlocutor, the nature of the interaction and other factors. Since the publication of Mesthrie (1992), IndSAfE-speaking children are effectively, for the first time in South African history, able to attend desegregated schools, including private schools, at which the prestige varieties of (white) SAfE prevail. The give-and-take between ethnolect and prestige variety has still to be studied.

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Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# Cape Flats English: morphology and syntax

Kay McCormick

## 1. Introduction

As indicated in the introduction to the phonology of Cape Flats English (CFE) chapter (other volume), the English spoken by coloured people in Cape Town is not homogeneous. Variation reflects regional and class differences, and also level of schooling and whether schooling took place in predominantly coloured schools or in schools with a more mixed intake, and – in the case of the latter – whether the school was formerly a white state school, or one of the prestigious private schools. Until recently, it was only linguists who asserted that CFE could be viewed as a dialect. It was more commonly regarded, by its speakers and by outsiders alike, as “broken English”, English that had been inadequately learned.

It did not have a name, unlike the local dialect of Afrikaans, which is called *Kaaps* ‘Cape, Cape Speech’ or *kombuistaal* ‘kitchen language’. This is not surprising, given that for decades the situation in many homes, schools and neighbourhoods has mitigated against clearly distinguishing between L1 and L2 speakers of English. Even within families siblings who are close in age may identify themselves differently from one another, as “English-speaking” or “Afrikaans-speaking”. Also to be taken into account is the very common parental practice of speaking Afrikaans to one another at home, while speaking only English to children of school and pre-school age.

Speakers of CFE who have had ten or more years of schooling are usually also able to speak and write standard South African English (SAfE). (Depending on where and how they learned it, they may or may not have a distinctive accent associated with coloured Capetonians – see chapter by Finn, other volume.) Since, in their communities, coloured people’s command of standard SAfE has commonly been associated with aspirations of upward mobility or with assimilation into a white world, people who can speak both dialects choose the contexts in which they use them carefully.

Those who speak the standard dialect at home may well not use it in casual conversation with friends and acquaintances who speak CFE at home, since to do so would suggest social distance. Conversely, people who have mastered the standard dialect but do not speak it at home, would reserve its use for formal occasions or for contexts in which they wished to indicate to interlocutors that they were educated or authoritative. Most Capetonians who have CFE in their linguistic repertoire also speak a non-standard dialect of Afrikaans and are likely to switch between Afrikaans and CFE, even within the same conversation.

The ability to use the non-standard dialect of Afrikaans and to switch appropriately between it and CFE is a powerful indicator of solidarity, of recognition of roots in Cape Town's working-class coloured communities. For more detail, see McCormick (2002). In sum, attitudes towards English are ambivalent. It is seen as a powerful means of upward mobility and as a sign of urban sophistication, but also as a sign of snobbery and the abandoning of roots. CFE does not attract the strongly positive or the strongly negative versions of these attitudes. It seems to be perceived as a code which shows that its speakers are educated but still rooted in their communities. More research needs to be done to test this tentative claim.

Published research on CFE includes Malan (1996), McCormick (2002), Mesthrie (1999) and Mesthrie and West (1995). There is also a growing body of as yet unpublished dissertations on CFE, for example Malan (2000) and Wood (1987). Recordings of interviews held in Oral History archives at the University of the Western Cape, the University of Cape Town, and the District Six Museum in Cape Town are rich sources of linguistic data. Because of their subject matter, these interviews also provide contextually relevant information about the speakers and their communities.

For this paper I have drawn on the published and unpublished sociolinguistic work mentioned above, on Field (2001) (a book about forced removals in Cape Town which is based on local oral histories), on my own corpus of audio-recordings, and on transcripts of recordings made by the Centre for Popular Memory at the University of Cape Town and held in that university's archives.

## 2. Morphology and syntax

While the standard form is an option in CFE for all of the constructions identified below, many of the non-standard variants are the ones that are more commonly heard, especially in informal speech. As yet there has been no systematic, quantitative study of the comparative prevalence of the variables.

### 2.1. Tense – aspect – modality systems

#### 2.1.1. *Non-standard use of auxiliaries*

Unstressed *did* is very commonly used in past tense utterances, especially by children. It is stigmatised and is the target of corrective exercises in grammar lessons at school. Nonetheless, it remains a fairly commonly used optional form in the speech of adults.

- (1) *He did work for Taylor and Horn, that time.*  
'He worked for Taylor and Horn then.'

- (2) *We **did** move here a week already.*  
 ‘We had moved here a week previously.’

The perfective may be avoided, its function being served by an alternative form, as in (3):

- (3) ***Were** you there already?*  
 ‘Have you been there before?’
- (4) *This is the first time in my life I **heard** it.*  
 ‘This is the first time in my life I have heard it.’

*Must* commonly replaces *has/have/had to*, *should* and *ought to*:

- (5) *We **must** have respect for each and every one.*
- (6) *We **must** still wait.*

*Will* commonly replaces *would* in hypothetical, iterative and habitual constructions:

- (7) *How **will** it be if I put this two milks together?*
- (8) *If I answer the door, that person **will** say something first.*

### 2.1.2. Contraction and deletion of auxiliary verbs

*Are* can be contracted and deleted. Speakers are not always consistent, even when instances of *are* occur in a similar phonological environment, as in example (9). Since SAfE is non-rhotic, the deletion of contracted *are* is probably phonologically motivated. If it were part of a morpho-syntactic process, one would expect that *is* would also be both contractable and deletable, but no instances of *is* deletion have been reported in the literature so far.

- (9) *You  $\emptyset$  educated. They’re all uneducated.*
- (10) *They  $\emptyset$  going to say “Ja, (‘yes’) what’s wrong with you?”*

As tense auxiliaries and the past tense morpheme *-ed* may be deleted, the unmarked form of the verb may be left to express the past tense:

- (11) *We **stay** now here for twenty-four years.*
- (12) *Sometimes also when you **enter** those rooms there everybody was making a big noise singing Afrikaans liedjies (‘songs’).*

*Will* and *would* as well as *has* and *have* can be contracted and deleted:

- (13) *When it gets too much for her, she  $\emptyset$  even phone the police.*  
 (Context indicates that the speaker is referring to a pattern of behaviour in the past.)

- (14) *I said "Let's get together this evening and we Ø talk about things."*
- (15) *I said to him, "You Ø finish working."  
(Context indicates past.)*
- (16) *Ja, because we Ø grown up in Africa.*

## 2.2. Deletion of adverbial suffix

The suffix *-ly* may be deleted from adverbs giving them the same form as the related adjectives.

- (17) *We must move **quick**.*
- (18) *People would look at him **strange**, you know.*

## 2.3. Complementation

The *that* complementizer may be omitted:

- (19) *So my granny said Ø he was 21 years old.*
- (20) *Well, I knew Ø they went to church there.*

## 2.4. Agreement

### 2.4.1. The verb to be as copula and auxiliary

The verb *to be* commonly has the same form for third person singular and plural, namely the singular form. This is more likely to occur when the subject is a noun than when it is a pronoun. It happens in both present and past tense utterances:

- (21) *The parents **is** paying.*
- (22) *The people **was** saying he is laying there.*
- (23) *We **was** very forceful.*

In rare instances speakers use the contracted form of the auxiliary for the third person singular after a second person singular subject:

- (24) *You try when you 's talking to a Boere.*

### 2.4.2. Subject-verb agreement in other verbs

The modal construction *would have (had) to* in which *would* has been deleted may allow the plural form after a singular subject:

- (25) *Otherwise she Ø have to phone the neighbours.*

The verb *to do* in a third person singular negative construction is usually rendered in its Standard English (StE) plural form *don't*:

(26) *He **don't** allow her inside the door.*

(27) *My husband **don't** like this district.*

Other verbs may reverse the StE concord rules by taking a word-final *-s* with a plural subject and omitting it with a singular subject. However, this reversal is not an absolute rule. There are more instances of singular verbs without an *-s* than of plural verbs with one. As examples (29) and (30) suggest, the concord pattern is unstable.

(28) *If somebody **chop** it then it **fall** down.*

(29) *They **drink** and they **makes** a lot of noise.*

(30) *Then she **goes** and **visit** this one and that one.*

#### 2.4.3. Agreement between noun, demonstrative adjective and demonstrative pronoun

The singular form of the demonstrative adjective tends to be used with both singular and plural nouns.

(31) *He must take from **that** reserves.*

(32) *I've watched **this** children.*

The demonstrative pronoun is usually used in its singular form, whether the referent is singular or plural:

(33) ***That** is other people's constitutions.*

(34) ***That's** sandwiches.*

#### 2.4.4. Agreement between determiner and noun

Singular nouns ending in *-s* such as *jeans* or *pants* may lose the *-s* as in *a jean* or *a pant*. Alternatively, they may keep the *-s* but lose the preceding *pair of* which is obligatory in StE if the phrase starts with an indefinite article. Hence *a pants*, *a jeans* and *a shorts* are also heard.

### 2.5. Noun plural formation

*Them* may be added to a noun to form an associative plural, with or without an intervening *and*, as in (35) and (36). This construction can then be used in the possessive form, as in (37):

(35) *Maybe because of Joy-**them**, but I knew there was a difference.*

(36) *We were by Marlene-**them** yesterday.*

(37) *Marlene-**them's** car was stolen.*

## 2.6. Phatic question concord

*Is it?* and *ne?* (from Afrikaans) may be used as phatic questions to express interest or sympathy. They keep these forms regardless of person, number or positive/negative polarity in the statement to which they respond:

(38) A: *"No, they don't come visit no more."*

B: *"Is it?"*

(39) A: *"He is so rich!"*

B: *"Ne?"*

## 2.7. Phrase structure

### 2.7.1. Noun phrases

The determiner may be omitted in noun phrases where it would be included in StE. However, as the first example indicates, this is not consistent.

(40) *I was **an** altar boy. I was  $\emptyset$  altar boy then.*

(41) *When they come for  $\emptyset$  holiday, we go to the beach.*

### 2.7.2. Prepositional phrases

The initial preposition may be absent, particularly when the prepositional phrase in question is temporal:

(42) *After she finished her work  $\emptyset$  the day, she... '...for the day'*

(43) *If only Mandela lived  $\emptyset$  that time, we would have stayed. '...at that time...'*

(44) *Zelda died  $\emptyset$  the Friday. '...on the Friday'*

(45) *Two o'clock  $\emptyset$  the morning, I'm walking down the street. '...in the morning...'*



2.7.3. *Serial verbs*

Serial markers *and* and *to* may be deleted, creating serial verb constructions that are not common in standard SAfE. They may involve up to three verbs, as in (49).

- (46) *He go Ø learn there by CAP.*  
 (47) *You run and go Ø watch the Brigade.*  
 (Context indicates repeated action.)  
 (48) *I'll come Ø fetch you one day.*  
 (49) *Yesterday I went Ø go Ø buy fruit.*

2.8. *Word order*

Temporal adverbials commonly precede locational adverbials, as they do in Afrikaans:

- (50) *I'll go **now** on the bed.*  
 (51) *You come **in the morning** there.*

The direct object may follow the indirect object if the latter consists of a preposition and a pronoun. This is the normal word order in Afrikaans:

- (52) *I was speaking **to her** English.*  
 (53) *He explained **to me** a lot of things.*

2.9. *Pronominal systems*

The accusative form of a pronoun may be used in subject position when the subject includes another person. This is an optional construction for adults and is commonly used by children. It is also found in other dialects of SAfE.

- (54) *Now **me and Elizabeth** speaks English.*  
 (55) ***Me and my first baby** were here.*

The dative of advantage (benefactive) is sometimes found. In my data the main examples of this construction are in the first person singular or plural:

- (56) *I'm going to buy **me** biscuits and chocolates.*  
 (57) *We all take **us** down to Hout Bay for the day.*

A related construction occurs in the idiom *keep you / us / him etc.* The phrase means 'regard or present oneself as ...', especially as "high and mighty". Interest-

ingly, the suspicion that one is keeping oneself high and mighty is often triggered by using English instead of the bilingual vernacular in an informal environment:

(58) *We don't **keep us** high and mighty.*

Pronominal apposition may occur in topic-comment structures:

(59) *Those children **they** had to leave school at standard three already.*

*It* may be used instead of *there* in existential verb phrases, as in (60):

(60) ***It** must have been two or three families sharing a room.*

The second person pronoun may be avoided when directly addressing a person of higher rank, or through a wish to be formal and polite. In such cases the addressee's title is used instead of *you*. This follows the Afrikaans pattern. Many bilingual speakers of CFE are not comfortable using *you* to address someone of higher rank, even within the family, being accustomed to having the option – in Afrikaans – of choosing the polite form of the second-person pronoun, an option not available in English.

(61) *Good morning Doctor. Would **Doctor** like some tea?*

## 2.10. Negation

Double negation is common. It is particularly likely to occur when the utterance has a slot for *any*, *anything* or *anyone* as in (62)–(64). *Never* may be used instead of *did not* / *didn't*, as in (65).

(62) *He **didn't** have **no** respect for his mother.*

(63) *It's **not** nice neighbours **no** more, here.*  
(StdE for *no more* would be *any longer*)

(64) *Here they **don't** worry with **nobody**.*

(65) *I **never** saw the goose again.*  
'I didn't see the goose again'

## 3. Lexicon

The lexicon is largely the same as that of standard SAfE. Differences can be located in the absorption of loanwords, special usage of some English words, and calques.

### 3.1. Loanwords

The most commonly used loanwords come from Afrikaans. The ones most frequently heard are not nouns, as might be expected, but discourse markers: particles that contribute to the informal conversational tone of the utterance, as they would in Afrikaans. They have no satisfactory English equivalent, and the standard translations of the words do not capture their effects as discourse markers. Indispensable items are *mos* ‘indeed, of course’, *sommer* ‘just, merely’, *maar* ‘but’, and *ne*. The latter is not used only as a phatic question, as it is in (36), but also functions as a tag question.

(66) *I wasn't **mos** so well.*

(67) *I rather **maar** go sleep.*

(68) *It was like a family before, **ne**?*

(69) *Sometimes when I get the moer in I **sommer** hit from A to Z.*

(*To get the moer in is ‘to become angry or fed up’, but it is a mild obscenity.*)

The obscenity in example (69) is one of several that are used in English. Given the nature of the data bases used for this article, obscenities are few and far between. However, in interviews bilingual respondents indicated that Afrikaans is the language for swearing or expressing anger, and observation confirms this.

In the speech of Muslims and those who frequently associate with Muslims there are loanwords from Arabic such as the greeting *Salaam Aleikum*, and words relating to religious practices, such as *Haj*. Afrikaans is the source of a few items, such as the title for a Muslim male peer, *Boeta*. From Malay CFE has absorbed words pertaining to religious practices like *labarang* ‘the festival of Eid’, to food like *bobotie* ‘curried mince dish with fruit and savouries’, and titles of respect like *Oetie* ‘title of respect for an older woman’.

### 3.2. Usage of English words

#### 3.2.1. Adverbs

Instead of *always*, CFE speakers often use *every time*. Instead of *again*, *any longer* or *no longer*, CFE speakers may use *no more*:

(70) *What is the purpose of you doing this **every time** here?*

(71) *She didn't want to go **no more** there, *mos*.*

(72) *There's **no more** terminus there.*

3.2.2. *Prepositions*

The choice of prepositions is frequently different from that in contemporary StE. The prepositions used in English sentences are often direct translations of those that would appear in the equivalent Afrikaans sentence.

- (73) *She did take photos **from** us. ‘...of us...’*  
 (74) *They phoned me **with** my birthday. ‘...for...’*  
 (75) ***On** school he was in Afrikaans class. ‘...at...’*  
 (76) *You see, they were very scared **for** the police. ‘...of...’*  
 (77) *We didn’t ask to come **in** this world. ‘...into...’*

Other non-standard usage of prepositions is not directly attributable to Afrikaans influence, for example the *in* in (78):

- (78) *Everyday she is **in** work.*

In CFE *by* is used in many environments where alternatives would be used in StE. It occurs, for example, where StE would use *at*, *near*, *with*, *next to*, *in*, or *to*. Mesthrie and West (1995) argue that some of these uses could be traces of settler dialects. They show that several of the usages typical of CFE were present in texts written by 19th century British immigrants (Mesthrie and West 1995: 140).

- (79) *I was living **by** my granny that time.*  
 (80) *I’m telling you, **by** him you must do things right.*  
 (81) *I went to go fetch my grandchild here **by** the school.*

As in some other dialects of SAfE, the preposition *with* does not have to be followed by a noun, as in (82):

- (82) *As they grew older then the next lot goes **with**.*

3.2.3. *Redundancies*

The following redundancies are fairly common, as they are in some other dialects of SAfE: *my utmost best*, *I’d rather prefer*, *more happier*, *more superior*.

3.2.4. *Particles*

*Now* is often used as a discourse marker having nothing to do with present time. It may, as in the first two examples below, indicate a regular occurrence, but it does not always serve that purpose, as is shown by (85) which refers to a one-off occasion.

- (83) *If her mother's **now** angry, she will **now** speak English.*  
 (84) *If somebody **now** passed away or dies, everybody is there.*  
 (85) *I had to **now** maar wear it.*

*Here* may be used as a discourse marker that has nothing to do with place. It doesn't always have the same meaning or function. In (86) below it seems to function as a filler while the speaker thinks about his age, while in (87) its function may be to point out the contrast.

- (86) *That time I was **here** twenty three, twenty four.*  
 'At that time I was twenty three or twenty four.'  
 (87) *I'm always claiming that we started Afrikaans, and **here** I don't want to speak it anymore.*

### 3.2.5. Conjunctions

Very common in children's speech but also found among adults is the use of *so* to mean 'and' or 'and then' in utterances where it is clear from the context that it doesn't suggest consequence:

- (88) *They came from that terrace, **so** they move in here.*  
 (89) ***So** I took the ball after the ref indicated where the mark is, **so** I tapped the ball.*

The phrase *because why* may be used instead of *because*. It has a rising intonation but is not followed by a pause:

- (90) *So I don't know nothing **because why** I haven't seen them for years.*  
 (91) *Yes, **because why** the reason is that whenever I file anything...*

### 3.2.6. Archaisms

The word *thrice* is found even in informal usage.

- (92) *She came back **thrice**.*  
 (93) *I asked him twice, **thrice**, and still he didn't reply.*

### 3.2.7. Euphemism

As other varieties of SAfE, CFE makes predicative use of *late*, meaning 'deceased':

(94) *Then there's my sister, Mary, who is **late**.*

(95) *My aunt is **late** now about fifteen years.*

### 3.3. *Calques*

Calques occur frequently in the speech of children who are being brought up in English by parents whose first language is Afrikaans and who do not speak StE. However, they also occur in adult speech, as in (96)–(99):

(96) *He sommer used to **throw** his mother **with big, big stones** when he is drunk.*

(97) *...and a **long** teacher, Mr Abbas...*

(98) *They had **promised for** the elders that we would be put together.*

(99) *We grew up **in front of them**.*

The calque in (96) *throw with y* is a word-for-word translation of the Afrikaans construction *gooi x met y*. It is used where *y* is an inanimate instrument, and *x* is an animate patient. In (97) *long* is calqued from Afrikaans *lang*, which means both 'long' and 'tall'. In (98), *promised for* is calqued from the construction in Afrikaans, in which the verb for 'to promise' is followed by *vir*, meaning 'for'. Finally, (99) involves a literal translation of the phrase used to denote growing up knowing someone well.

## 4. Recent research on Cape Flats English

Recent research on CFE has been on (a) aspects of the history of some of its features (Mesthrie 1999; McCormick 2002), (b) the implications of dialect differences for the testing of CFE-speaking children's language development (Southwood 1996), (c) the development of children's oral narratives in CFE (Malan 2000) and (d) on the development and use of CFE in the context of social-economic, political, linguistic and discourse facets of the language contact situation between English and Afrikaans in Cape Town (McCormick 2002).

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# St. Helena English: morphology and syntax

Sheila Wilson and Rajend Mesthrie

## 1. Introduction

St. Helena English, as Hancock (1991: 17) wrote, is significant for many reasons: “firstly because of the many similarities with island dialects elsewhere, and secondly because of its implications for the study of nautical English, and its relationship to creolised forms of that language.” The syntax of St Helena English (StHE) does indeed show intriguing features which support Hancock’s assertions. The following account is based principally on fieldwork that Sheila Wilson undertook on the island in 1998. It also draws upon the features outlined by Hancock (1991), who prepared a questionnaire that was administered by a ‘Saint’ (St. Helenan resident). He also drew on the unpublished material on dialect place names by Dr Vivienne Dickson, a former resident on the island.

We argue that present-day St Helena English is the result of the contact between regional varieties of Southern British English, many of them ‘non-standard’, and the rudimentary pidginised English (‘slave fort English’) that some slaves must have brought with them to the island. While StHE no doubt has developed into a unique variety of English, it bears evidence of retained archaisms due to its relatively stable and isolated population. Lexical items such as *a twelve month*, *yonder* and *saucy* are commonly used, although semantic shifts have occurred: *yonder* may apply to even a short distance, such as across a room, and *saucy* is used in reference to vicious dogs.

## 2. Tense – aspect – modality systems

### 2.1. Tense and aspect

While some past tense forms in StHE comply with those of Standard English, like *died*, *brought*, *left*, *said*, in general StHE does show a massive restructuring of the English tense and aspect system. Some speakers give evidence of a system in which aspect is the underlying foundation, with tense distinctions being ‘reconstituted’ or, at best, an overlay.

In certain speakers a frequent lack of past tense inflections can be seen in examples like the following:

- (1) *And we look after those children like we look after our own.*  
‘...looked after...’



- (2) *Because he was thirteen years old when his mama die.*  
 ‘...died...’
- (3) *She work after she left school.*  
 ‘...worked...’

*Done* is used to mark completive aspect:

- (4) *He done see Black Beauty?*  
 ‘Did he see Black Beauty?’
- (5) *Us done finish the introduction.*
- (6) *I done bathed the baby.*
- (7) *I done bath the baby.*

*Done* is an invariant form used with all pronouns. Whereas *done* focuses on the completion of an action, unstressed *did* appears not to have this primary function. It signifies ‘past tense’ with perhaps a ‘highlighting’ function:

- (8) *They did cheat the woman, see?*
- (9) *But yet I was so pleased that he did got something with it.*
- (10) *Then after my daughter died, I did feel lonely inside the house.*

Equivalent forms of unstressed *did* in the present tense are rare, and may well be recessive. One example in our corpus (compiled by Sheila Wilson during her field trip to St. Helena in 1998) signals habitual, as is still common in southwestern BrE dialects:

- (11) *She always do put my name on it.*  
 ‘...always puts my name...’

Furthermore, (12) below is an example of the main verb (*be*) *done* having passive, completive, and possibly irrealis, semantics, in conjunction with *don’t* as simple present negator:

- (12) *No, I don’t be done yet!*  
 ‘No, I’m not done yet’

*Bin* does not appear as a completive marker in our data. However, one such form (*have ben seen it*) is given in Hancock’s data (1991: 22):

- (13) *I have ben seen it round the [wireless station] when Mrs E.T. ben dere.*

Hancock provides two examples of past locative copula *ben*. One of these is given in (13) above; the other in (14) below is intermediate between past locative copula and verb of motion (‘go to’):

- (14) *You ben town lately?*  
 'Have you been to town lately?'

Hancock (1991: 22) also provides an example of *bin* (also spelt *ben*) as a past equational copula:

- (15) *Great Grandpa, he was bin a doctor.*

An *-s* inflection occasionally occurs with first person present tense verbs:

- (16) *Yes, I does.*  
 (17) *And we goes along and we spread out.*

Far more prominent is the use of *is* (or its reduced form 's) or *was* with unmarked main verbs:

- (18) *So people is always ask me if I feel lonely.*  
 (19) *What you's do in your spare time?*  
 (20) *You's go up to K.J.'s?*  
 (21) *But he's only have a little bit of ground.*  
 (22) *I's be very lucky.*  
 (23) *The hops is be quite boring.*  
 (24) *'Cos that is be nice.*  
 (25) *But that little bit of money was mean lot to us.*

Examples (18) to (25) suggest a subsystem with main verbs in invariant form, unmarked for tense or aspect. Tense and aspect are marked by pre-verbal particles, of which *done* and *did* have been noted already. Here, *is* marks non-past tense and *was* past tense. These appear to be invariant; certainly from our data *is* occurs as *I's*, *you's*, *he's*, *us is*, *the hops is*, *the people is*, etc. There appear to be no occurrences of *be* on its own (as opposed to occasional forms of *bin* on its own noted above in (13) and (14)). *Be* is always preceded by *is*, as in examples (22) to (24). However, *is* may occasionally occur on its own:

- (26) *Who dat is?*  
 (27) *Us is round there.*  
 'We are there/were there'  
 (28) *I is eighty-three now.*

From these examples it would appear that *is be* has stative meaning, with *be* as the habitual and *is* as the tense marker. No examples of *was be* occur in our data

base, but this is presumably an acceptable past stative form. This appears to be confirmed by Hancock's example of *was bin* in (15) above. In (26) to (28) *is* on its own is predicative or identificational, rather than stative – see especially (28) where the adverb *now* precludes a habitual reading.

How does one reconcile the non-use of invariant copula *be* in favour of *is* in (26) to (28) with the frequent *is be* forms? One can conjecture that this is decreolisation in action. That is, one might speculate whether an earlier system had zero copula, except in habitual contexts where invariant *be* was used. The effects of the StE system also spoken and promulgated on the island was to introduce tensed forms like *is* or *was*. Zero copula was then replaced by *is/was*, while habitual *be* was replaced by *is/was be*. From Sheila Wilson's data there are occasional glimpses of such a hypothesised earlier stage, with zero copula in non-habitual contexts:

(29) *But her husband dead now.*

(30) *She busy.*

Hancock (1991: 22) supplies further examples of zero copula:

(31) *He family yours?*  
'Is he family of yours?'

(32) *Us firs' cousins.*  
'We're first cousins.'

(33) *I alright.*  
'I'm alright.'

Turning now to BE + -ING progressives, there is noticeable occurrence of -ING without BE as in (34) to (36):

(34) *They shouting to one another.*  
'...were shouting...'

(35) *So now I cooking my dinner.*  
'...am/was cooking...' (narrative tense)

(36) *Shut it, because she talking to that boy again.*  
'...is talking...'

-ING may also co-occur with BE as in (37) and (38):

(37) *I's going town.*  
'I am/will be going to town.'

(38) *I's telling him.*  
'I told him/was telling him.'

In contrast to the form *I's* in (37) and (38), Hancock's data contains a form with StE *I'm*:

(39) *I'm going now to Sandy Bay.*

## 2.2. Modality

As far as future time marking is concerned, Hancock (1991: 22) notes that the small corpus he used contained only two future tense constructions, one with *will* and one with *go*.

(40) *I'll quit here.*

(41) *Us go look.*

Hancock (1991: 24) glosses *have to* as (deontic) *must* in sentences like (41):

(42) *You don't have to do that.*  
'You musn't do that'.

The following example with *would* appears in our corpus:

(43) *He say he would write a letter.*

Hancock (1991: 22) notes alternate Ø-forms of *would*:

(44) *Yes, I like to go to England, I like to see somewhere.*

Future tense may be represented by 's, as in (45). This striking use of 's for StE modal *will* suggests an earlier zero form now being filled by competing forms (*'s*; *'ll*; *go*).

(45) *Us's come pick you up later.*

The modal *mussee* is probably a contraction of *must be*, though it might be related to the Creole Portuguese form *maski* used to indicate uncertainty about the action of the predicate. It is a recessive form, judging from speakers' comments and the fact that it occurs rarely in our data base and only with older speakers.

(46) *They mussee fight with the British.*  
'... must have fought with...'

## 3. Auxiliaries

Most of the areas of interest have already been covered, in considering forms of *be* and the modals. *Have* may be deleted, as in (47) from Hancock (1991: 22):

(47) *You ben town lately?*

Auxiliaries are not generally inverted in questions, even amongst younger speakers. Sentences (48) to (50) were uttered by schoolchildren interviewing senior citizens for the radio station:

(48) *So how old you was when you first start workin'?*

(49) *What religion you is, ma'am?*

(50) *So what the roads was like when you used to go school?*

Similarly, for the same speakers *do*-support is frequently absent in *wh*-questions:

(51) *What ship he come in?*

(52) *Why she ask him?*

(53) *Which way he went?* (Hancock 1991: 22)

#### 4. Negation

The form *ain't* is present in our data base, and is described by Hancock (1991: 23) as a 'general negator' in the dialect:

(54) *Ain't nothing to do, sir!*

Double negation is common. This may occur within the same clause verb and object NP being negated:

(55) *I say he's not done nothin'.*

Sometimes subjects like *everybody* may be negated, together with the following verb:

(56) *And not everybody don't go hop.*

The two negatives may occur across clauses as in (57), which involves raising of the embedded subject:

(57) *...but she wouldn't even let none of the children come.*

#### 5. Relativisation

*What* occurs quite frequently as a relative marker:

(58) *I still got the copy in there now what he send up by his messenger.*

(59) *You know, money what made on the island can be tax, right?*

However, it alternates with forms like *who* or  $\emptyset$ :

(60) *And his auntie who brought him up because he was thirteen days old when his mama die.*

(61) *So at that time we did have problems in the house we was living.*

## 6. Complementation

The system of complementation appears to be standard insofar as *that* or  $\emptyset$  are the usual complementisers and *to* (rather than *for*) in infinitival complements:

(62) *...when she hear the bobbins stop she know that he was out there, you know.*

(63) *...an' I say he's not done nothing.*

(64) *She had to wait until he bring fish in to sell it.*

Hancock (1991: 21) notes that the infinitival marker is generally *to*, but also supplies one example with *for*:

(65) *[I'm] most too tired for eat.*

## 7. Agreement

There is a tendency towards using *is* as the invariant form of the present tense for (*am/is/are*):

(66) *They is.*

(67) *Us is round there.*

(68) *I's telling him.*

(69) *I is eighty-three now.*

(70) *What religion you is, ma'am?*

Likewise, *was* is not limited to first and third singular subjects:

(71) *'Cos they was asking too much.*

(72) *Because he was thirteen days old when his mama die.*

(73) *So how old you was when you first start workin'?*

(74) *When us was the youngest children going hop.*

However, there are occasional attestations of *were*, paradoxically in non-standard positions:

(75) *She were working Missus Humphrey.*

As we have noted, most verbs occur in stem form with pre-verbal auxiliaries like *'s*, *done*, *did* conveying aspectual information (*habitual*, *completive* and [*salient*] *past* respectively). There is a slight tendency for verbs in subordinate clauses to occur in stem form:

(76) *Because he was thirteen days old when his mama die.*

(77) *I still got the copy in there now what he send up by his messenger.*

(78) *She had to wait until he bring fish in to sell it.*

However, past forms like *was* are also common in subordinate clauses; as well as occasional past forms like *died*, *left* and *used to*.

As noted in section 3, occasional forms of *-s* with first person or other pronouns occur:

(79) *And then we goes along and we spread out.*

Further work needs to be done to ascertain whether *goes* is a variant of *go* or whether *-s* fulfills a narrative function here.

## 8. Noun phrase

With verbs of motion the preposition *to* is frequently dropped, leaving a bare NP:

(80) *I's goin' town.*

(81) *Before she go school.*

(82) *He's go seaside.*  
'He has gone to the seaside/wharf.'

## 9. Pronouns

The most striking characteristic with regard to pronouns is the use of *us* as subject:

(83) *Us done finish the introduction.*

(84) *When us was the youngest children goin' hop.*

(85) *Us's come pick you up.*

The alternative form *we* is also in use. The second person genitive form is *you* or *your*:

(86) *Because you getting you pay very early in December.*

Although *you's* [ju:z] is a form commonly heard, it is a cliticised form of *you + is*, and not a form of *youse* with which it might be confused. In this regard it is not clear whether Hancock's statement that there is a second person plural pronoun *youse* is correct. The dummy (or pleonastic) pronoun *it* often replaces *there* in 'there is/are' constructions:

(87) *I suppose it was cancer inside, but it was nothing wrong outside.*  
'...there was nothing wrong on the outside'

(88) *...because we used to have bit of litter, it wasn't no great beer tins and that.*  
'...there weren't many beer tins etc.'

## 10. A St. Helena vocabulary

As a short illustration of the characteristic vocabulary of StHE, we present a glossary of terms beginning with <b>:

- before days: adv., in the old days, could mean just a few years previous.
- belong to (*who you belong to?*): who are/what are the names of your parents?
- bite: spicyness of food, usually fishcakes or tomato paste, ref. to the amount of chilli in recipe;  
pred. adj. – *Are those bite?*  
attrib. adj. – *Don't want no bite ones*  
noun – *Got bite?* – i.e. 'have those (fishcakes) got chilli in them?'
- black tea: Ceylon-style tea, ref. to colour of dry tea leaves, contrasted with 'red tea'
- bold: adj./adv., of a person – jocular or derogatory, not in standard sense of 'brave' or 'decisive' e.g. *'e gettin' on quite bold wid 'iself* – i.e. he is overconfident, getting above himself
- boojies: headlice
- bread 'n dance: [breed'ndahns] sandwiches with cold tomato paste filling (a traditional St Helenian dish, originally brought to or served at various community dances). Recipe includes chopped tomatoes simmered with onion, chilli and egg, and can include pieces of bacon or grated cheese.



## 11. Conclusion

St Helena English raises several challenges for future research. One of these is the extent to which it has incorporated fossilised forms of Early Modern English into a local ‘colloquial standard’. Another is the contribution of West African and other languages in re-shaping the variety. This influence is particularly felt in the restructuring of the verb system. It is our impression that StHE shows a blend of two systems: one, a superstratal variety of English (made up of a koiné of mainly non-standard dialects) and the other, a pidginised variety of English originating in the slave population. Present-day StHE vernacular shows the outcome of this blend, whilst more formal situations require adjustments in the direction of Standard English. The closest analogue to this situation that we know is the account of the development of Afrikaans in South Africa from a similar blend of acrolectal Cape Dutch and a Dutch-based pidgin developed by the indigenous Khoe-Khoen. However, whilst the Cape Dutch communities eventually jettisoned Standard Dutch in favour of Afrikaans, the prestige of StE is very much an ideological and educational force in St. Helena.

## Selected reference

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# Indian English: syntax

Rakesh M. Bhatt

## 1. Introduction

This chapter presents descriptive generalizations about the syntax of Indian English (IndE), drawing mainly from the theoretical model that takes sociolinguistic-syntactic variation as the proper empirical domain of linguistic inquiry. There are, at least, two grammars of English that educated members of the Indian speech community control: Vernacular IndE and Standard Indian English (StIndE) (Bhatt 2000). The latter, StIndE, is essentially similar in its core syntax to Standard British English (StBrE), but differs largely in aspects of phonetics.

Vernacular IndE, on the other hand, shows strong identification with local ideologies: it shows structural influence of the local languages of India, it is not codified or standardized, it does not have official status, and is used in relatively 'Low' functions. Assuming that vernacular IndE is just as systematic and logical as StIndE, this chapter presents the syntax of both varieties, focusing more, however, on aspects of the vernacular since they represent the Indian-ness of English.

This focus is necessitated by the important and systematic ways in which the vernacular variety differs from the local (Indian), regional (South Asian), and supra-regional (Asian, European and American etc.) standard varieties. For example, the subject-auxiliary rule in vernacular IndE is the mirror opposite of StIndE: the movement of the auxiliary verb (to Comp) is forbidden in matrix questions but permitted in embedded questions. Further, both referential and expletive arguments are allowed to drop, contrary to the standard expectation, that is, the expectation that the syntax of vernacular IndE must be like other standard varieties, like BrE or AmE.

This lack of recognition of syntactic variation as systematic and rule-governed has misled many prominent English grammarians to posit the "deviation from the norm" hypothesis (for example Quirk 1990) to account for vernacular IndE. As the discussion of the syntax of vernacular IndE will show, such deviation hypotheses are untenable, and the evidence supporting them is tenuous.

The discussion of the syntax of English in India will focus specifically on the behavior of (i) questions, direct and indirect *wh*-questions and tag questions, (ii) topicalization (iii) the focus particle *only* and (iv) null subjects and objects, the phenomena known as *pro*-drop and expletive subjects. In a final section, I will list other features cited in the literature. These aspects of the syntax of English in India demonstrate the underlying patterns of English language use in different contexts of situation.

In other words, whether a subject will be dropped or not depends on, among other things, the formality of the context: in less formal contexts the probability of subject-drop is high, close to 100 percent, whereas in formal, and especially in the written mode, the probability of subject-drop is very low, close to zero. Although eventually a restrictive theory of language use is obligated to declare the precise nature of the context of situation, which presumably yields observed realization of linguistic expressions of a certain communicative act, such an attempt is beyond the scope of this chapter.

As a very brief, yet bold, speculation I suggest that some adaptations of Ferguson's theory of diglossia – where certain High/Low forms are indexed to certain High/Low functional domains – may account for the observed choices among the competing candidates of linguistic expressions. The syntactic description of English that follows is based on the methodological premise that a descriptively adequate grammar must address the relationship between the forms that a language manifests and its speakers' perception of reality and the nature of their cultural institutions. This premise yields an interpretation of language use constrained by the grammar of culture.

This is particularly true of English in India: the particular form taken by the grammatical systems of IndE is closely related to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve – issues of language identity, and historical and political patterns of its contact, that is, issues of language ideology. Before discussing the syntax of English in India, I briefly present the socio-historical context of the development of English in India to properly situate the discussion of its grammatical aspects.

### 1.1. English in India: a brief socio-historical contextualization

English was introduced to India around 1600 via the establishment of the East India Company. Although initially severely limited in the numbers of its speakers, English bilingualism increased with various strategies of trade and proselytizing, especially from the early 17th century up to the 18th century. The proselytizing strategy was chiefly instrumental in introducing English bilingualism to the Indian subcontinent. After 1765, when the East India Company established political control in India, and especially in the early 19th century, the spread of English was aided and abetted by support from prominent Indians who preferred English to Indian languages for academic, scientific and other intellectual inquiry. This local demand for English, coupled with Thomas B. Macaulay's *Minute* of 1835 (see Kachru 1983: 68–69), led to the use of English in all official and educational domains.

Although English instruction created bilinguals, the models for learning and teaching were not native speakers. As Kachru (1996: 907) notes:

Whatever the assumptions, in reality the teaching of English was primarily in the hands of the locals, and not with the native speakers of the language. [...] It was, therefore, not unusual to find teachers with Irish, Welsh, or Scottish backgrounds overseeing the local teachers and educators involved in the teaching of English, who provided the models for the teachers, both in class and outside it.

Moreover, as the use and users of English increased, so did its acculturation to non-Western sociolinguistic contexts.

By the time India got its independence from Britain in 1947, English was firmly established as a medium of instruction and administration. With respect to the role of English in post-colonial India, little has changed. English still enjoys the status of associate official language and continues to be the language of the legal system and Parliament. It is one of the three mandatory languages introduced in schools. English newspapers are published in twenty-seven of the twenty-nine states and union territories, and they command the highest circulation in terms of the total reading public. The percentage of books published in English is higher than the percentage of books published in any other language. Finally, in 1971, 74 percent of India's scientific journals and 83 percent of its nonscientific journals were published in English (Kachru 1986: 36). Presently, India is the third largest English-using nation (60 million) after the USA and the UK.

This chapter is based on three kinds of data collected in New Delhi: (a) recordings of spontaneous speech (b) data from published sources and (c) introspective judgments. Altogether nine speakers (five men and four women) participated in the conversations. All belonged to educated middle-class families and spoke, in addition to English, fluent Hindi. Their permission to use the recorded material in an anonymous fashion was obtained. The main topics discussed were: neighborhood disputes, weddings in the family, a recent summer vacation and pollution levels in New Delhi. The conversations vary in length from approximately 10 to 20 minutes, representing approximately 7 hours of collected material. Furthermore, where recordings were not possible, notes were taken of what was said, and in what context. Finally, the data were collated and a catalogue of the following syntactic properties was drawn up:

- (a) inversion/adjunction in *wh*-questions
- (b) invariance in tag questions
- (c) topicalization
- (d) focus constituents
- (e) null arguments (subject/object *pro*-drop)
- (f) null expletive subjects ("silent" *it*)

The second kind of data comes from published sources. These sources were consulted, where possible, for comparison with the spontaneous speech data. Finally, judgments on crucial data (inversion in indirect questions, and subject and object NP drop), unavailable in the published sources, were elicited from 27 speakers of

IndE, which included, among others, high school English teachers, professionals (three doctors, two engineers) and two linguists. I have drawn comparisons of introspective data with spontaneous speech data to minimize the risk of hypo- and hyper-correction.

Although this article uses (sparingly) the terminology and conceptual approach of modern theoretical syntax, every effort has been made to render it accessible to scholars outside the field. That is, non-specialists may choose to ignore certain technical terms, usually provided in brackets or conventions involving traces ( $t$ ) and the like.

## 2. Direct and indirect questions

In StIndE, direct (root) questions are formed by moving the *wh*-phrase to the left-edge of the clause (Spec-CP) followed by the auxiliary verb (in Comp), in those questions where the *wh*-phrase is not a subject, as in (1) below:

- (1) *What are you doing?*

Further examples from StIndE are given in (2) below. I first furnish the example and then in square brackets show the peculiarities of movement, using current syntactic conventions. Here  $t$  is the original position from which the *wh*-phrase ( $t_i$ ) and the auxiliary verb ( $t_j$ ) move in interrogative constructions. The subscripts show the proper indexing.

- (2) a. *What has he eaten?*  
 [What<sub>i</sub> has<sub>j</sub> he t<sub>j</sub> eaten t<sub>i</sub>?]  
 b. *Where has he gone now?*  
 [Where<sub>i</sub> has<sub>j</sub> he t<sub>j</sub> gone t<sub>i</sub> now?]  
 c. *How long ago was that?*  
 [How long ago]<sub>i</sub> was<sub>j</sub> that t<sub>j</sub> t<sub>i</sub> ?]  
 d. *When are you coming home?*  
 [When<sub>i</sub> are<sub>j</sub> you t<sub>j</sub> coming home t<sub>i</sub>?]

Embedded indirect questions in StIndE also involve movement of the *wh*-phrase to the left-periphery (Spec-CP) of the embedded clause, without, however, any auxiliary verb following it (in Comp). Some examples are given in (3) below:

- (3) a. *They know who Vijay has invited tonight.*  
 [They know who<sub>i</sub> Vijay has invited t<sub>i</sub> tonight.]  
 b. *I wonder where he works.*  
 [I wonder where<sub>i</sub> he works t<sub>i</sub>.]  
 c. *I asked him what he ate for breakfast.*  
 [I asked him what<sub>i</sub> he ate t<sub>i</sub> for breakfast.]

- d. *Do you know where he is going?*  
[Do you know where<sub>i</sub> he is going t<sub>i</sub>?]

The well-known empirical generalization about example such as those (2) and (3) is that the rule of subject-auxiliary inversion is restricted to matrix sentences and does not apply in embedded contexts.

In vernacular IndE, on the other hand, direct questions are also formed by moving the *wh*-phrase to the left-periphery (Spec-CP) of the clause. However, there is no auxiliary (in Comp) following the left-moved *wh*-phrase. Some illustrative examples are given in (4) below:

- (4) a. *What he has eaten?*  
[What<sub>i</sub> he has eaten t<sub>i</sub>?]  
b. *Where he has gone now?*  
[Where<sub>i</sub> he has gone t<sub>i</sub> now?]  
c. *How long ago that was?*  
[How long ago]<sub>i</sub> that was t<sub>i</sub>?]  
d. *When you are coming home?*  
[When<sub>i</sub> you are coming home t<sub>i</sub>?]

Embedded (indirect) questions in vernacular IndE involve *wh*-movement to the left-periphery (Spec-CP) of the embedded clause. The *wh*-phrase, surprisingly, is followed by the auxiliary verb, i.e., *wh*-movement in embedded contexts is accompanied by auxiliary verb movement (inversion) to, presumably, (Comp). The relevant examples are given in (5) below:

- (5) a. *They know who has Vijay invited tonight.*  
[They know who<sub>i</sub> has<sub>j</sub> Vijay t<sub>j</sub> invited t<sub>i</sub> tonight.]  
b. *I wonder where does he work.*  
[I wonder where<sub>i</sub> does he work t<sub>i</sub>.]  
c. *I asked Ramesh what did he eat for breakfast.*  
[I asked Ramesh what<sub>i</sub> did he eat t<sub>i</sub> for breakfast.]  
d. *Do you know where is he going?*  
[Do you know where<sub>i</sub> is<sub>j</sub> he t<sub>j</sub> going t<sub>i</sub>?]

The simple empirical generalization that emerges from the data in (4) and (5) is that in vernacular IndE inversion is restricted to embedded questions; it does not apply in matrix questions. The question formation strategy in vernacular IndE is the mirror image of that of StIndE, where inversion is restricted to matrix contexts.

The fact that direct *wh*-questions in IndE do not invert is not mysterious; StdInd/Br/AmE questions with the question phrase *how come*, as in (6) below, do not involve inversion either:

- (6) *How come this is grammatical?*

Multiple questions provide another context where the syntax of vernacular IndE differs from StIndE in systematic ways. There is a curious property exhibited by the syntax of *wh*-questions in vernacular IndE: its lack of a superiority effect. Superiority effects refer to the constraint on multiple *wh*-questions in English that disallows the order where the object question word precedes the subject question word. However, in vernacular IndE, matrix questions with multiple *wh*-phrases with object-subject order in (7a) and with subject-object order in (7b) are often both judged as grammatical.

- (7) a. *What who has eaten?*  
 b. *Who has eaten what?*

In other words, the *wh*-phrases in matrix questions can occur in any order. However, this is not possible for embedded questions with multiple *wh*-phrases: subject-object order, as in (8a), is preferred to the object-subject order as in (8b). Thus, superiority effects reappear in embedded contexts in vernacular IndE.

- (8) a. *I asked Ramesh who ate what for breakfast.*  
 b. *\*I asked Ramesh what did who eat for breakfast.*

### 3. Tag questions

In StIndE, tag questions are formed by a rule that inserts a pronominal copy of the subject after an appropriate modal auxiliary. A typical example is given in (9) below.

- (9) *John said he'll work today, didn't he?*

Tags have also been analyzed as expressing certain attitudes of the speaker toward what is being said in the main clause; and in terms of speech acts and/or performatives. Functionally, tags in English behave like epistemic adverbials, such as *probably* or *presumably* as shown in (10) below.

- (10) a. *It's still dark outside, isn't it?*  
 b. *It's probably dark outside.*

Kachru (1983: 79) and Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 111) discuss the use of undifferentiated tag questions as one of the linguistic exponents of vernacular IndE. Their examples of the undifferentiated tags are given below:

- (11) a. *You are going home soon, isn't it?*  
 b. *You have taken my book, isn't it?*

This description, however, leaves out the important pragmatic role played by these undifferentiated tags. In most cases, the meaning of the tag is not the one ap-

pendent to the meaning of the main proposition; rather the tag signals important social meaning. In fact, tags in vernacular IndE are a fascinating example of how linguistic form is constrained by cultural requirements of politeness. More specifically, these undifferentiated tags are governed by the politeness principle of non-imposition. They serve positive politeness functions, signaling deference and acquiescence. Notice, for example, the contrast between examples from vernacular IndE (12) and from StIndE (13):

Unassertive/Mitigated (vernacular IndE):

- (12) a. *You said you'll do the job, **isn't it?***  
 b. *They said they will be here, **isn't it?***

Assertive/Intensified (StIndE):

- (13) a. *You said you'll do the job, **didn't you?***  
 b. *They said they will be here, **didn't they?***

In contrast to (13a) and (13b) above, IndE speakers find examples such as (12a) and (12b) non-impositional and mitigating. Their intuition is more clearly established when an adverb of intensification/assertion is used in conjunction with the undifferentiated tag. The result is, predictably, unacceptable to the speakers of IndE (\* indicates an unacceptable utterance within the variety concerned).

- (14) a. *\*Of course you said you'll do the job, **isn't it?***  
 b. *\*Of course they said they'll be here, **isn't it?***

In a culture where the verbal behavior is constrained, to a large extent, by politeness regulations and where non-imposition is the essence of polite behavior, it is not surprising that the grammar of the variety spoken, that is vernacular IndE, permits the use of undifferentiated tags.

Undifferentiated tags are not exclusive instances in the grammar of vernacular IndE where one finds the linguistic form constrained by the grammar of culture. Such influence can be seen elsewhere in the use of the modal auxiliary *may*. *May* in vernacular IndE is used to express obligation politely, as shown below in (15). The examples in (15) (taken from Trudgill and Hannah 1985: 109) contrast systematically with the examples in (16), the option in StIndE:

- (15) vernacular IndE  
 a. *This furniture **may** be removed tomorrow.*  
 b. *These mistakes **may** please be corrected.*

- (16) StIndE  
 a. *This furniture is to be removed tomorrow.*  
 b. *These mistakes should be corrected.*



#### 4. Topicalization

Topicalization is a syntactic operation that places linguistic elements representing old (given) information, the topic, at the beginning of the sentence, which is followed by new information, the comment. These topic-comment structures are widespread in vernacular varieties of English, replacing the use of the canonical subject-predicate structures of StE. As the examples in (17) show, any constituent of the clause can be topicalized in vernacular IndE. The most frequently topicalized element is the object noun phrase (17a)–(17c), but adverbials of place (17d) and time (17e) are also not uncommon:

- (17) a. *Those people, I telephoned yesterday only*  
 [Those people<sub>i</sub>, I telephoned t<sub>i</sub> yesterday only.]  
 b. *Only fashionable girls, these boys like.*  
 [Only fashionable girls<sub>i</sub>, these boys like t<sub>i</sub>.]  
 c. *All of these languages, we speak at home.*  
 [All of these languages<sub>i</sub>, we speak t<sub>i</sub> at home.]  
 d. *At Ansal Plaza, it happened.*  
 [At Ansal Plaza<sub>i</sub>, it happened t<sub>i</sub>.]  
 e. *Any minute, he will come.*  
 [Any minute<sub>i</sub>, he will come t<sub>i</sub>.]

However, the more surprising aspect of the syntax of topicalization in vernacular IndE is that it is fairly widespread even in embedded contexts as shown in (18): both the object noun phrase, (18a) and (18b), and the adverbial prepositional phrase, as in (18c), can be topicalized.

- (18) a. *His friends know that her parents, he doesn't like at all.*  
 [His friends know that her parents<sub>i</sub>, he doesn't like t<sub>i</sub> at all.]  
 b. *Papa-ji only told us that their money, he will not touch.*  
 [Papa-ji only told us that their money<sub>i</sub> he will not touch t<sub>i</sub>.]  
 c. *My brother warned me that young boys, I should say no to.*  
 [My brother warned me that young boys<sub>i</sub>, I should say no to t<sub>i</sub>.]

#### 5. The syntax of focus particle *only*

As noted in the previous section, *wh*-phrases, which are inherently focused, move to the left-edge of the clause. Other focused elements, however, appear on the right edge of the clause. The evidence of right-edge focus can be demonstrated by the use of adverbs such as *only* which are sensitive to any focused constituent within their scope, and always require one in order to be interpreted. In (19) below, *only* can be interpreted with contrastively focused constituents: with the NP and

the PP in (19a) and with the PP in (19b). The awkwardness of (19c), indicated by the use of a question mark “?”, results from the fact that the underlined constituent associated with *only* is not at the right-edge of the clause. (19d) is well-formed only with an audible pause (indicated by the dash) preceding the PP, suggesting that the unfocused PP is right-dislocated.

- (19) a. *Raj **only** gave a book to Sita.*  
 b. *Raj **only** gave a book to Sita.*  
 c. *?Raj **only** gave a book to Sita.*  
 d. *Raj **only** gave a book – to Sita.*

The right-edge focus position is also evidenced in the presentationally focused constituents. The presentational focus-marking strategy is most visibly available in vernacular IndE, as shown in (20) below. The contrastive focus reading, on the other hand, as in (20a') and (20b'), is unavailable with NP + *only* use. What is of critical importance is the fact that the grammatical utterances in vernacular IndE, (20a) and (20b) below, do not require, contra StIndE, for the verb to be followed immediately by its complement. In both of the instances, an adverb intervenes between the verb and its direct complement, which would be ungrammatical in StIndE.

- (20) a. *These women wear everyday **expensive clothes only**.*  
 [Presentational]  
 a'. *\*These women wear everyday **expensive clothes only**.*  
 (not jewelry) [Contrastive]  
 b. *He will buy over there **tickets only**.*  
 [Presentational]  
 b'. *\*He will buy over there **tickets only**.*  
 (not candy) [Contrastive]

The unavailability of contrastive readings of (20a') and (20b') suggests that the use of NP + *only* marks a non-quantificational (referred to here as ‘presentational’) focus, which is widespread in all varieties of vernacular IndE (Bhatt 1995, 2000; Kidwai 1997). In the absence of a nuclear stress rule that marks sentential focus, the NP + *only* presentational-focus configuration is an innovation in vernacular IndE representing the presupposition-assertion structure of an utterance. The semantics/pragmatics of NP + *only* is one of indexical assertion, drawing the attention of the hearer to a particular part of the speaker’s utterance.

There is another interesting contrast in our vernacular IndE data, as shown in (21), which suggests that there is perhaps only one post-verbal focus position.

- (21) a. *And then, for the first time, he kissed very softly **the forehead of his brand new bride**.*  
 b. *We watched **last night only** // songs from his old hit movies.*

The heavy object NP (21a) is focused (cf. Culicover and Rochemont 1990), and appears predictably on the right-edge of the clause. In (21b), however, the temporal adverb is focused, and the heavy NP is right dislocated, which is evidenced by the fact that this constituent was preceded by an audible intonational fall and a pause, indicated by //. The dislocated heavy object NP in (21b) is not interpreted as focused.

The correlation between right-edge and focus in vernacular IndE, as illustrated in (20) and (21), can be summarized in terms of the following generalizations:

- (a) New information is focused and constituents bearing focus appear at the right edge of the clause.
- (b) Old information, when presentationally focus-marked, appears at the right-edge of the clause.
- (c) Focused object noun phrases do not always appear in canonical (adjacent to verb) positions.
- (d) There is one post-verbal focus position per clause.

Finally, presentationally-focused subject noun phrases do not appear at the right-edge of the clause, as shown in (22), but in the canonical subject position.

- (22) a. ***Her mother only*** is doing this to her.  
(Response to: *What did her mother do?*)
- b. ***These buggers only*** are responsible for this mess.  
[*buggers* is a reference to Indian politicians]
- c. ***She only*** told us to write  $\emptyset$  like this.  
(Response to: *Why didn't you ask your teacher to show you how to write an essay.* [ $\emptyset$  = 'essays'])

What we observe in (22) is that subject noun phrases violate the focus constraint noted above, that is, that focused-marked noun phrases appear post-verbally. In contrast to the generalizations noted above, there is another important generalization, given below:

- (e) A subject noun phrase appears in the canonical subject position, even if it is presentationally focus-marked.

## 6. Null subjects and objects: pro-drop

The generalization in languages that exhibit pro-drop (e.g. Spanish and Italian) is that a pronoun is allowed to drop only if its reference can be recovered from the agreement marking on the finite verb. The agreement marking in pro-drop languages is presumably "rich" enough to recover important aspects (person, number and/or gender) of the reference of the missing subject and/or object. In StE pro-

drop is prohibited, because the agreement marking is too meager to sufficiently determine the reference of the missing subject.

With respect to argument pro-drop, StIndE works like other regional standard British and American varieties. That is, finite clauses without subject are not allowed, as shown in (23a) and (23b) below (in the following two sections, *pro* can be taken as an underlying pronoun that is not overtly expressed):

- (23) a. \**pro* likes bananas.  
 b. \**He* said that *pro* would come tomorrow.

Pro-drop in vernacular IndE is very interesting: Vernacular IndE allows *pro* both in subject and object position, as shown in (24a)–(24e). The null subjects and objects in the sentences under (24) are analyzed as empty pronominals.

- (24) a. *It is simple: take a dollar bill, and insert pro in the machine, face up, and you get four quarters.*  
 b. *I really wanted to read your book. Girish got pro from somewhere but he won't let me borrow pro.*  
 c. *A: He played cricket all day today – and now pro does not want to work on his homework!*  
*B: Our Sanjay does that too: pro plays all day long, and then pro just comes in and demands food.*  
 d. *A: Is he in his office?*  
*B: Sorry, pro left just now only.*  
 e. *A: You got tickets?*  
*B: No, pro sold pro already.*

Other varieties of English show a very similar phenomenon, as observed in Platt, Weber and Ho (1984: 155, 92, 77) They discuss similar data of subject and object drop for Singaporean English (25a, c), and Philippine English (25b) as shown below:

- (25) a. *Dis Australians, you see dem hold hand hold hand, honey here, honey there, darling here, darling dere, next moment pro separated already.*  
 (Platt, Weber and Ho 1984: 155)  
 b. *If you don't like pro, yaya ('nursemaid') will give you water.*  
 (Platt, Weber and Ho 1984: 92)  
 c. *In Australia, people never carry umbrella – so if you carry pro they will laugh at you.*  
 (Platt, Weber and Ho 1984: 77)

The IndE examples in (24) pose two empirical problems for accounts that rely on the correlation of pro-drop and rich agreement. The first problem is that like StIndE, vernacular IndE is morphologically impoverished (morphologically non-uniform paradigms), and therefore should not license pro-drop; it does, however.

The second problem is that vernacular IndE does behave like Spanish and Italian in that it does not require semantically empty subjects like *it* and *there*.

Although the pro-drop facts in vernacular IndE do not follow standard explanations of syntactic recoverability, on closer examination we notice that the absence of an overt argument in vernacular IndE becomes an option only when that argument is coindexed with an antecedent with topic status (cf. Grimshaw and Samek-Lodovici 1995; Huang 1984). The distribution of pro-drop in vernacular IndE is thus similar to Italian, as argued in Grimshaw and Samek-Lodovici (1995). Consider, again, the vernacular IndE examples in (26a) and (26b):

- (26) a. A: *Is he in his office?*  
 B: *Sorry, **pro** left just now only.*
- b. A: *Gautam was there with his wife shopping.*  
 B: *Doesn't his wife work now somewhere?*  
 A: *Yes, **pro** teaches at a school here locally.*

In vernacular IndE, as the examples in (26a) and (26b) show, the subject argument is dropped when it has an antecedent with topic status. The generalization, then, for vernacular IndE is that pro-drop is available for only those arguments (subject/objects) that are topic-connected. Thus, vernacular IndE and Italian behave uniformly with respect to the phenomenon of topic-connected argument drop. The examples in (27) further confirm the claim that the grammar of vernacular IndE forces topic-connected arguments to be unrealized.

- (27) a. A: *Isn't his brother in California, doing engineering?*  
 B: *Yes, but these days **pro** is here looking for a KP ['Kashmiri Pundit'] bride.*
- b. A: *Didn't Amitabh win the Filmfare award this year?*  
 B: *No. No. No. Shah Rukh did.*  
 A: *I think Amitabh wanted to win this year. And I read somewhere **pro** even gave money to buy some fellows off.*  
 B: ***pro** wanted to win, but didn't.*
- c. A: *Nancy's father-in-law may go to U.S.*  
 B: *Why's that? Why not mother-in-law also?*  
 C: *Two tickets get very expensive, so father-in-law only must go.*  
 B: *Must? Why? What's wrong with him?*  
 C: ***pro** needs special care, with his heart condition and all, old age. Last year **pro** had two heart attacks within two to three months.*

## 7. Null expletive (*it*) subjects

Turning now to null expletive subjects, StIndE requires the subject position to be filled in finite clauses, even if that means using a dummy pronoun *there*: (28a) is unacceptable to speakers of StIndE. Vernacular IndE, on the other hand, does not require dummy subjects in finite clauses, as shown in (29a)–(29c).

- (28) a. \***pro** is clear that he will not come.  
 b. It is clear that he will not come.
- (29) a. During monsoon we get lot of rain and then **pro** gets very soggy and sultry.  
 b. **pro** rained yesterday only.  
 c. Here **pro** is not safe to wait.

The grammaticality of (29a)–(29c) suggests that the absence of nonreferential subjects is indeed licensed in vernacular IndE, which is consistent with other empirical observations of pro-drop in this dialect.

## 8. Other miscellaneous features

For the sake of completeness, and to enable comparison with other varieties of English, I draw attention to further salient features of IndE that have been reported in other studies. For reasons of space I must refer the reader to the references cited.

- Article variability: Kachru (1983: 78) and references therein; Agnihotri (1992).
- Plural *-s* with non-count nouns: Kachru (1983: 186) for discussion of examples like *deadwoods, furnitures, apparels*.
- Progressive with stative verbs: Dasgupta (1993: 129–131) for discussion of examples like *You must be knowing him*; Sharma (2002: 367) for the use of the progressive form with the future; Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 110) for related functions like the use of progressive with habitual action and completed action.
- Present *be* for perfective *have* and *been*: Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 109) for examples like *I am here since 2 o'clock*.
- Auxiliary variation: Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 108) for examples like *could* and *would* as tentative, polite forms instead of *can* and *will*; *may* as a polite form for ‘should’.
- Responses to *yes-no* questions couched in the negative: Kachru (1983: 1–13) for examples like Q: *Didn't I see you yesterday in college?* A: *Yes, you didn't see me yesterday in college*.
- Reduplication of adjectives and verbs: Kachru (1983: 78–79) for examples like *different-different things*.

- Variation in *to* complements: Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 111) for examples like *We are involved to collect poems*.
- Use of post-verbal adverbial *there* in place of dummy *there*: Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 109) for examples like *Bread is there* ‘There is bread’.

## 9. Conclusion

The two varieties discussed in this paper – Standard and vernacular varieties of IndE – show systematic differences in their syntax, which frequently correspond to a difference in the socio-pragmatic and ideological meanings. Sharma’s (2002: 343) claim that vernacular uses of English in India introduce new pragmatic meanings deriving from ambiguity in the native system and reinforcement from substrate languages is relevant here. Aspects of the syntax of English in India demonstrate an underlying unity of pattern among different users and uses.

Focus on the vernacular variety reveals the Indian-ness of English and that this variety is most deeply entrenched in the local cultural ethos of the country. Evidence for this entrenchment comes from substrate influence in its syntax. Dasgupta (1993: 130–133), for example, relates the absence of reflexive verbs (‘hurt oneself’) in vernacular IndE to a general syntactic property of India’s indigenous languages: the absence of combinations of verb plus pronominal noun phrase without regular theta-role. Similarly, the systematic omission of subjects and objects in vernacular IndE can be traced to substrate influence: most Indian languages require noun phrases that are topic-connected to be omitted. Bhatt (2000) has argued that non-inversion in matrix questions in vernacular IndE is an instance of a stabilized covert transfer effect from Hindi.

To summarise: some properties of IndE are shared by other varieties of English around the world; other properties are unique to the varieties of English in India. This chapter described in detail mainly those syntactic properties of English that can be identified with local practices – Indian local practices.

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# Butler English: morphology and syntax

Priya Hosali

## 1. Introduction

Indian English (IndE) is a well-known example of ESL that has been extensively studied. However, side-by-side in some parts of India, a Pidgin English also arose, out of contact between the first British colonists and the local population. Schuchardt (1980: 38 [1891]) identified five subtypes of this pidgin: Butler English (ButlE) in Madras, Pidgin English in Bombay, Boxwallah English in Upper India, Cheechee English and Baboo English. Yule and Burnell (1996 [1886]) observed that ButlE is

the broken English spoken by native servants in the Madras Presidency; which is not very much better than the *Pigeon-English* of China [...]. The oddest characteristic about this jargon is (or was) that masters used it in speaking to their servants as well as servants to their masters. (Yule and Burnell 1996: 133–134)

An article in *The Times* of London (11/04/1882) describes the English of the Bombay servants, who are generally half-caste Portuguese, as Pidgin English. The same article cites Boxwallah English as the curious patois, hardly more intelligible than the Pidgin English of servants in Bombay and Madras, that is affected by the itinerant hawkers or box-wallahs (Hindustani *bakas* ‘box’ + *vālā* ‘man’) in Upper India. Cheechee English is the variety spoken by Eurasians or people of mixed European and Asian descent. Cheechee is a disparaging term applied to half-castes or Eurasians and also to their manner of speech. The word is said to be taken from *chi*, a common native (South Indian) interjection of remonstrance or reproof, supposed to be much used by the class in question. The term is, however, perhaps also a kind of onomatopoeia, indicating the mincing pronunciation which often characterizes them.

Baboo English is spoken in Bengal and elsewhere. Baboo (Hindustani *bābū*) is a title, similar to English *Master*, *Mr.*, *Esquire*. Yule and Burnell (1996) describe the variety, whose peculiarities are not in the grammar but in the style, as follows:

[...] among Anglo-Indians, it is often used with a slight savour of disparagement, as characterizing a superficially cultivated, but too often effeminate, Bengali. And from the extensive employment of the class, to which the term was applied as a title, in the capacity of clerks in English offices, the word has come often to signify ‘a native clerk who writes English’. (Yule and Burnell 1996: 44)

Despite its name, ButlE is not restricted to any occupation or region, though it is restricted to a certain class. It seems that the co-existence of interdependent but dis-

tinct hierarchically arranged social groups is a characteristic of all situations which have given rise to European-based pidgins. It should be remembered that ButlE is never spoken among butlers: it has its roots only in the hierarchical relation of the dominant and the dominated. The label pidgin for it has been questioned on this ground. Verma (p. c., 1981) labels it a semi-pidgin while Mühlhäusler (1978: 15) refers to ButlE as a “minimal pidgin”. That is, the issue whether we are dealing with a pidgin or an early fossilised interlanguage is a complex one.

ButlE is spoken by generally uneducated bilinguals knowing some English, such as (a) guides showing foreign visitors around, (b) market women selling wares to foreigners frequenting Indian markets, (c) domestic staff of hotels, catering to tourists and upper-class Indians, (d) domestic staff of prestigious clubs and other recreation centres, and (e) domestic staff employed in racially mixed or westernised Indian households.

ButlE is spoken in a very restricted set of domains: the domestic work-sphere domain, fixed locales like those of hotels, clubs and households, during fixed working hours to indicate the role-relationship of master and servant and to discuss limited topics. Kachru (1969) notes that

In South Asia, it is very common to come across users of English who have acquired some control of restricted items of English, but cannot use the language in any serious sense. Some such varieties have been labelled Baboo English, Butler English, Bearer English, Kitchen English. (Kachru 1969: 637)

This would put most ButlE speakers close to the zero point on Kachru’s cline of bilingualism (pertaining to fluency in ESL and in an Indian L1). Some butlers, however, through a measure of education and exposure to better models of English, may occur somewhere along Kachru’s mid-point.

Schuchardt (1980: 47) gives a sample of ButlE from the 19th century as quoted in *The Times* (11/04/1882: 8c) with the following comment: “The ‘Pidgin-English’ of the Madras and Bombay [...] servants is chiefly remarkable for its extremely scanty vocabulary and grammar, for its love of the present participle active, and for its use of quasi-impersonal forms.”

Discovery has been made of a butler stealing large quantities of his master’s milk and purchasing the silence of the subordinate servants by giving them a share of the loot; and this is how the ayah (nurse) explains the transaction: *Butler’s yeverly day taking one ollock for own-self, and giving servants all half half ollock; when I am telling that shame for him, he is telling, Master’s strictly order all servants for the little milk give it – what can I say, mam, I poor ayah woman?*

Schuchardt (1877: 542) further cites *The Anglo-Indian Tongue*:

In Madras the native domestics speak English of a purity and idiom which rival in eccentricity the famous ‘pidgin’ English of the treaty ports in China; and the masters mechanically adopt the language of their servants. Thus an Englishman wishing to assure himself that an order has been duly executed, asks, *Is that done gone finished,*

*Appoo?* and Appoo replies, in the same elegant phraseology, *Yes, sare, all done gone finished whole [...]*.

Schuchardt (1980: 48) observed that, as further samples were hard to come by, ButLE was likely to have been on the wane. However, the samples quoted from the (1882) and (1877) newspapers, when compared with excerpts from my (1980–1982) data, show that the variety is very much alive, and that though the samples are separated by a century, they have many features in common. Additional recordings of ButLE (1992–2002) endorse my earlier findings. The implication is that the socio-cultural and linguistic setting in which this pidgin developed, has not been wholly wiped out.

Reading through interviews I undertook with 20 butlers, I find references to various types of workers in the domestic service: the head-barman, assistant-barman, and bar-steward; the head-cook, the soup-cook or the travelling-cook; the plate-washer and glass-washer being variously termed glass-cleaner, glass-bearer, glass-*meti* or *meti*-worker. Other household chores are handled by the butler, bearer or boy, second-boy, house-boy, verandah-boy, room-boy, room-service-boy and dressing-boy. Domestic service is thus far from being a dying profession and ButLE has been stable enough to allow it to be described linguistically. Two samples from my data, gathered between 1980–1982, are given below:

- (1) *Dressing-boy master keep it the clothes and everythings and shoes and folding socks – dinner-suit – will go the cuff – clothes I'll keep ready. Is tennis coming tennis I keep it. Will go hunt hunt clothes I'll keep it ready. Look after it...looking their rooms all linen-ginen everythings.*  
(Krishnaswamy, reported age 56, outlines what his work as a dressing-boy entails.)
- (2) *All right. I can tell. Cut nicely brinjal. Little little piece. Ginger, garlic, hm chilly – red chilly, mustard, and eh jira – all want it, grind it in the vinegar. No water. After put the hoil – then put it all the masala, little little slowly fry it – nice smells coming – then you can put the brinjal. Not less oil. Then after is cooking in the hoil make it cold – put it in the bottle.*  
(Mary, reported age 60, tells us how to make brinjal pickle.)

The data discussed in this chapter is based on Hosali (1997; 2000). It draws on the recorded speech of sixty domestics. The corpus comprises 275 foolscap typed pages of text containing 4,205 utterances recorded in natural settings over a three-month period.

## 2. Reduction

ButtE generally shows retention of content words with a more frequent omission of grammatical words. Sometimes content words are absent as well. The following are examples of reduction of form:

### 2.1. Omission of pronoun

(3) *Dining-hall just serve the soup.*  
‘In the dining-hall I just serve the soup.’

(4) *...Waiter I got I telling.*  
‘...I’ve got a waiter’s job, I’m telling you.’

### 2.2. Omission of article

(5) *...Because ball is going nearly 200/250 yards.*  
‘...Because the ball is going (goes) nearly 200 to 250 yards.’

(6) *...That is fore-carry.*  
‘...That is a fore-caddy’s job.’

### 2.3. Omission of preposition

(7) *Now I am barbecue section...*  
‘Now I am in the barbecue section...’

### 2.4. Omission of auxiliary

The ellipsis of the auxiliary, especially of a form of the verb ‘to be’ when followed by the present participle, is prominent.

(8) *... Members hitting ball I watching that ball...*  
‘...When members are hitting (hit) the ball I am watching (watch) that ball...’

### 2.5. Omission of conjunction

*When* and *as* were the conjunctions most frequently omitted.

(9) *...gents also come in the dressing-room...*  
‘...when gents come to the dressing-room...’

(10) *Room-boy we do some works...*  
‘As a room-boy we do some work...’

## 2.6. Omission of content words

Some examples of extreme reduction are:

- (11) *Waiter service.*  
‘As a waiter I had to serve.’
- (12) *Bearer’s room...*  
‘As a bearer I looked after the room...’

## 3. Simplification

Reduction refers to the omission of words, whereas simplification refers to the non-realisation of morphological markings. At the level of morphology, ButIE rarely uses inflectional suffixes.

### 3.1. Noun morphology

Plurals and possessives are rarely used.

- (13) *...then two spoon coffee...*  
‘...then put two spoons of coffee...’
- (14) *... – that that eh master friends also like for my food...*  
‘... – that that eh master’s friends also like my food...’

### 3.2. Omission of verb agreement

There is no agreement or concord between subject and predicate. Usually the form adapted from English is the base or unmarked form: singular for nouns/pronouns and the imperative for verbs.

- (15) *Yes. Master like it.*  
‘Yes. Master likes it.’

### 3.3. Pronouns

The StE pronoun system has undergone a simplification, the possessive adjective *my* being used for the personal pronoun *I* and vice versa.

- (16) *My not eh English madam speaking.*  
‘I am not eh speaking (do not eh speak) English (very well) madam.’
- (17) *Because I story...*  
‘Because my story...’

The use of the object form *me* for the personal pronoun *I* was also noted.

- (18) *Me not drinking madam.*  
 ‘I am not drinking (do not drink) madam.’

Gender distinctions in pronouns are also simplified or eliminated. In (19) *ayah* is the word used for ‘female servant’.

- (19) A. *When will the next ayah come?*  
 B. *When you like it he will come.*  
 A. *So when will she come?*  
 B. *He won't come today.*
- (20) *Hm first daughter is now that master master madam baby's get married in Madras. But I forgot his name – baby – we are calling baby.*

### 3.4. Verb morphology

The verb phrase, in particular, is much simpler in ButIE than in StE.

#### 3.4.1. *The present participle*

According to Schuchardt (1980: 49) the most characteristic feature of ButIE is the use of the present participle or gerund. This is used primarily for the present and probably only secondarily for the future. Yule and Burnell in *Hobson-Jobson* report that the present participle is used, for example, for the future indicative. Thus: *I telling* ‘I will tell’ (Yule and Burnell 1996: 133–134). The use of the present participle was the most prominent feature in the speech of the butlers interviewed. The present participle is used not just for the present and the future but for many StE tense and aspect forms: the present continuous, the past continuous, the simple past, the present and past perfect and the past habitual. A selection of these functions is exemplified below. Distinctions relating to time and continuity of action are understood either from the context or are indicated by adverbials.

- (21) *...and putting masala and some spices...boiling when you coming ghee on top – is ready.*  
 ‘...and I put some masala and some spices...I boil it. When the ghee comes on top it is ready.’ (Present tense)
- (22) *...after Fridays not eating biryani is meat. Wednesday not eating meat.*  
 ‘...On Fridays they do not eat biryani because it is meat. On Wednesday they do not eat meat.’ (Present tense negative)
- (23) *...suppose you're also being in sin – going to straightly Hell.*  
 ‘...supposing you're also steeped in sin – you will go straight to Hell.’ (Future tense)

- (24) ...*My voice not coming nicely no?*  
 ‘...My voice is not coming nicely is it?’ (Present continuous negative)
- (25) ...*When small I working to the British.*  
 ‘...When I was small I was working for the British.’ (Past continuous tense)
- (26) *I know ma’am before coming.... Yes before coming father here.*  
 ‘I know you ma’am – before you used to come...yes before you used to come with father here.’ (Past habitual)

The *to be* + present participle construction is also used for the different tense forms listed.

#### 3.4.2. Auxiliary *is*

Many butlers tended to use *is* without an overt pronoun like *I*.

- (27) ...*but is can’t get work.*  
 ‘...but I can’t get work.’

The use of the contracted form of *is* with the personal pronoun *I* by analogy:

- (28) ...*Every day also I’s going madam.*  
 ‘...Every day also I’m going madam.’

#### 3.4.3. Omission of copula

Whereas StE does not allow copula deletion, some Indian languages permit copula deletion in equational clauses. I therefore examined Tamil, Hindi and Marathi to determine under what conditions the copula could occur. Both Dravidian and Indo-Aryan languages have copulative verbs. However, in equational sentences which identify one noun phrase with another, it is common in Dravidian languages like Tamil to have no copula. Such sentences normally have a copula in Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi, but in Marathi the copula is optional, and perhaps only occurs when emphasis is intended. In negative sentences, Tamil again has no copula unlike Hindi and Marathi. When the verb is in the past tense, a copula is obligatory in all three languages, except in certain constructions in Tamil.

All the butlers interviewed, however, tended to use copula-less clauses in English regardless of the other language(s) they spoke. One can infer that the butler simplifies the language by omitting the copula – which in English inflects for subject-verb agreement, person, number and tense.

(29)–(39) are examples of copula-less clauses from ButLE.

- (29) *That the garden.*  
'That is the garden.'
- (30) *...I don't know – say I twenty-two years first.*  
'...I don't know – say I was twenty-two years old.'
- (31) *...I Pattison ayah...*  
'...I am Pattison's ayah...'
- (32) *Now children all gone.*  
'Now the children are all gone.'
- (33) *I born in 1904.*  
'I was born in 1904.'
- (34) *– and all the children married.*  
'– and all the children are married.'
- (35) *My mother only alive.*  
'My mother only is alive.'
- (36) *They all British officers.*  
'They were all British officers.'

In all the copula-less clauses listed, the subject is expressed. In clauses where there is no expressed subject, a copula marker (generally *is*) is used. Clauses lacking both subject and verb rarely occur. When they do, we have phrases which lend themselves to varied interpretations. Usually the context helps to resolve ambiguity, as in (37).

- (37) *When service-bearer, then drink.*  
'When I am the service-bearer then I serve drinks.'

In ButLE *got* serves an existential or locative function 'there is / are':

- (38) *– why what you got for me no – what is what you got snacks.*  
'... What is there for me, you know – what snacks are there.'

Invariant *be* occasionally occurs with habitual meaning:

- (39) *...Suppose you be here some years...Suppose you be in sin...Otherwise you be going to Good Way.*

In contrast to copula deletion, one or two speakers produced occasional double copulas:

- (40) *...like that we are be grown, ma...*



### 3.4.4. Lack of preterite indicative formed by *done*

One of the features of 19th century ButlE, namely the preterite indicative being formed by *done* (Yule and Burnell 1996: 133–134), seems to have died out. Forms like *I done tell* ‘I have told’ or *done come* ‘arrived’ do not occur in my database. This function is more usually expressed by the present participle (V + *-ing*).

## 4. Syntax

### 4.1. Sentence negators

In StE the negator normally occurs between the auxiliary and the main verb. A sentence like *I have done this* can be negated in the following way: *I have not done this*. ButlE negates sentences differently with the negator being placed between the subject and the verb phrase. The auxiliary which is obligatory in StE is frequently absent in the utterances of the butlers, as in (41) and (42).

(41) *I no go Jesus.*

‘I won’t go to Jesus.’

(42) *...then I not worry.*

‘...then I do not worry.’

The negator can also initiate a negative imperative sentence, as in (43):

(43) *...No water add. No oil also, not necessary.*

‘...Do not add any water. Do not add any oil either – it is not necessary.’

It may be noted that the negator used in the examples is variable: no distinction is made between *no* and *not*. Further characteristics of ButlE negation are the occasional lack of a subject and dummy *do* in simplified utterances as in (44) and (45), and the occurrence of double negation as illustrated by (46) and (47).

(44) *No listen to...*

‘I do not want to listen to it...’

(45) *Not work.*

‘She does not work.’

(46) *No. I didn’t got no son.*

‘No. I haven’t got any sons.’

(47) *He’s not made nothing madam.*

‘He’s not made anything madam.’

## 4.2. Question formation

In ButIE interrogation is usually signalled by intonation or intonation + the structure of a statement, whereas in StE there is normally a change in word order: the first constituent of the auxiliary inverts with the subject.

(48) ...*What parents I've got?*  
 '... What parents have I got?'

(49) *What I can tell, ma – another story?*  
 'What can I tell, ma – another story?' (*ma* = respectful form for older female)

In many examples the auxiliary is omitted producing a question form like the following:

(50) ...*What I do?*  
 '... What can I do?'

ButIE does not use dummy *do* in questions and negatives.

(51) *You know Mr. Basalat Jah?*  
 'Do you know Mr. Basalat Jah?'

In ButIE, word order in indirect questions is similar to that of the direct question form:

(52) *I tell you how can you put table – how can you serve?*  
 '(Shall I tell you) how you can lay the table – how you can serve?'

Thus, in some aspects ButIE accords with the rules of (educated) IndE, rather than Standard British English (StBrE).

## 4.3. Question-tags

StE has a complex system of rules to generate question-tags. ButIE has reduced this complex system to one simple rule – the use of an invariant monomorphemic (and monosyllabic) tag, most commonly *no*. However, forms like *na* and *eh* may also be found. The tendency in IndE is to use *isn't it* as a universal question-tag and *no* as one of its variant forms (Verma 1978: 8).

(53) *English-speak sahib is all gone no?*  
 'The English-speaking sahibs are all gone, aren't they?'

(54) *She is now gone to dos properly na?*  
 'She is now going to do things properly, isn't she?'

(55) *He's nice eh?*  
 'He's nice isn't he?'

- (56) *It's all right ha?*  
 'It's all right isn't it?'

These question-tags are also used for confirmation:

- (57) *Oh Hosali master is my Pattison master ko so friends eh. Best friend eh hm.*  
 'Oh Master Hosali is my Master Pattison's very good friend you know. Best friend you know, hm.'  
 (*Ko* is a Hindi form, here specifying possession.)
- (58) *You mix it, eh?*  
 'Mix it, all right.'

#### 4.4. Left dislocation and right dislocation

A prominent feature of the syntax of ButlE is the iteration of the subject by an anaphoric or cataphoric pronoun. The rule of left dislocation leaves a pronominal copy in the position previously occupied by the dislocated noun phrase. The pronominal copy agrees in gender and number with the dislocated noun phrase. Similarly, right dislocation copies a constituent. This feature has also been referred to as the left topic shift and the right topic shift.

The iteration of the subject by the anaphoric and cataphoric pronoun *it* are illustrated by (59) and (60) respectively:

- (59) *Cold jellies – all make it boiled and the chicken and...chicken all boiled it and keep it separate...eh and the radish – all boiled it.*  
 'Boil the cold jellies; boil the chicken, and keep it separate; boil the radish.'
- (60) *And make it the carrot and beans, turnips, eh and the radish – keep it piece.*  
 'Prepare the carrots, beans and turnips and radish, chop it up.'

Other pronouns which perform the iterative function are *he/she/they*.

- (61) *Hosali sahib he know.*
- (62) *Eve, she go this side.*
- (63) *There she is working, my daughter.*
- (64) *But British people, they are paying him eh good salary.*

## 4.5. The imperative

In ButIE the imperative is of two types. The first accords with StE in being subjectless, as in (65). The second type of indirect imperative retains the pronoun *you*, as in (66). Sometimes the imperative is expressed by V + -ing as in (67) and (68):

(65) *Boil the hot water and...boil...just pour it. Throw the water, then put the tea-leaves.*

(66) *You first grind the chicken. Then you wipe with cloth...you mix. After that you fry the chicken...you keep this cut onion...and you cut about three onions – and this you cut – you cut cut bacon first.*

(67) *Coffee eh making a filter coffee.*  
'Make filter coffee.'

(68) *You putting some hot water.*  
'Put some hot water.'

A pattern that occurs frequently in recipes is (*You*) + *can* + verb, possibly as a polite form of the imperative:

(69) *...and separate milk and sugar – can take.*

(70) *...you can put vegetable also.*

## 4.6. The conditional

Conditional clauses are hardly ever marked overtly but have to be inferred from the context.

(71) *After that they want something to drink, or they want some breakfast.*  
'After that if they want something to drink or if they want some breakfast.'

## 4.7. Direct and indirect speech

ButIE shows a marked preference for direct speech. In direct speech the words of the speaker are incorporated within the reporting sentence, and retain the status of an independent clause.

(72) *He coming "you come myself, you can see any Calcutta". I'm telling "I got no money I'm not coming. I poor boy". He asking "you don't worry money. I will pay and taking you".*

## 5. Conclusion

This analysis of ButIE would not be complete without some reference to the occasional use of more or less standard forms. StE equivalents for all categories listed occur throughout in ButIE, raising the question whether one is dealing with one variable system or several co-existent systems. Le Page (p. c., 1981) suggests:

[users of ButIE] may have a knowledge of or a repertoire of two systems: one of these may be a fairly stable pidgin, which does not make use of inflections nor of copular constructions, while the other one is more like StE. It may be that informants are more at home in the pidgin variety but have some partial knowledge of a more standard system and, therefore, add some of these features to their pidgin from time to time when for some reason they wish to sound more like StE speakers.

Though ButIE is a minimal pidgin, it is a rule-governed system with specific properties. There are many rules operating upon the raw material of English grammar in a distinctive way, leading to a set of differences which are persistent and well-established. It is unlikely that this pidgin will ever achieve status as a norm in its own right. ButIE will always be measured against the contemporary version of the native speaker model to which standard IndE is closest, namely StBrE. If it were to become extinct, it would not be because of any intrinsic linguistic inadequacy but because it could not compete against the overwhelming pressures of StE or StIndE.

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Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# Pakistani English: morphology and syntax

Ahmar Mahboob

## 1. Introduction

Pakistani English (PakE) is one of the less well-researched varieties of English. The largest body of research on PakE focuses on its historical and political status. This research is summarised in the companion piece on Pakistani English phonology (other volume). The next most commonly studied aspect of PakE is its lexis. Some studies on lexis also discuss creative processes in PakE morphology. There are fewer studies concerned with PakE syntax and even fewer dealing with phonology, discourse and pragmatics. Key research done on PakE, with year of publication and focus, is given on the CD-ROM accompanying this Handbook.

Existing studies of the variety focus on its features *vis-à-vis* Standard British (StBrE) or American English (AmE), rather than investigating the grammar of PakE in itself. For example, Talaat's (1993) study of lexical variation in PakE looks at semantic shift in certain lexical items as a shift from their original StBrE usage to a so-called Urduized meaning. Similarly, Baumgardner's (1996: 258 [1987]) discussion of PakE complementation is based on "manifest differences in PakE from Standard British and American" Englishes. Thus, the literature on PakE is based on a comparison of PakE with exonormative models of English. Non-comparative and in-depth studies of PakE grammar are greatly needed. As a prelude to such studies I present an overview of PakE syntax, morphology, and lexis as they have been discussed in the existing literature.

The examples in this paper are primarily taken from the collection of papers edited by Baumgardner (1993a) and a study of acceptability of linguistic features by Baumgardner (1995). Baumgardner's (1995) work is based on questionnaires that measured the acceptability of certain grammatical features of PakE by Pakistani teachers and journalists. He drew on 150 respondents for one of his linguistic questionnaires and 165 respondents for the second. He also had 320 respondents fill out an attitudinal survey, which is of less relevance here. Linguistic features that are acceptable to Pakistanis but are not attested in other varieties of English, especially British and American varieties, may be part of an acceptable model of local grammar and usage.

Baumgardner's (1995) discussion of the acceptability of various syntactic, lexical and morphological innovations in PakE is the only large-scale study of its kind. The scope and aims of his study did not extend to the investigation of sociolinguistic variation in PakE. Rahman (1990) attempts to do this. However, his generaliza-

tions are based on only 10 informants, and, at times, he presents examples based on his intuition rather than actual language use. As a result of the limited reliability of research on sociolinguistic variation within PakE, it will not be discussed in this paper. A study of the range and distribution of the acceptability and presence of these features needs to be conducted.

## 2. Syntax

Syntactically, PakE differs from British English (BrE) at both the sentential and clausal levels. At the sentence level, a number of word-order changes can be observed. At the clausal level, complementation rules of PakE are found to deviate from BrE. In addition to these, the use of certain tenses is also different. Examples of these are presented in this section.

### 2.1. Progressive aspect

PakE permits the use of the progressive aspect with the habitual and the perfective:

- (1) *I am **doing** it all the time.* (Rahman 1990: 43)
- (2) *Where are you **coming** from?*  
'Where do you come from?' (Rahman 1990: 43)

Rahman also gives examples of the use of the progressive aspect with stative verbs:

- (3) a. *I am **seeing** the sky from here.* (Rahman 1990: 54)
- b. *They were **having** a horse.* (Rahman 1990: 54)

### 2.2. Perfective aspect

There is a preference for the perfective aspect over the simple past in sentences which contain a past adverbial:

- (4) *I **have seen** him yesterday.* (Rahman 1990: 58)

### 2.3. Reduced relative phrases

PakE prefers preposed phrasal compounds as the equivalent of postposed attributive relative clauses. Baumgardner (1990: 47) provides the following examples:

- (5) a. ***detrimental to health** medicines*  
'medicines which are detrimental to the health'



- b. *public-dealing office*  
'an office which deals with the public'
- c. *under construction bridge*  
'a bridge which is under construction'

## 2.4. Complementation

The main focus of work on PakE syntax has been on complementation. Baumgardner (1993c) based his discussion of PakE complementation on examples from newspapers. Rahman (1990) and Saleemi (1993) use his work and borrow/adapt his examples in their own work. Most of the examples in the following sub-sections are therefore taken from Baumgardner (1993b).

### 2.4.1. Adjective complementation

Two types of StBrE adjective complementation, *-ing* and *to*-infinitive, vary in PakE. In the first case adjectives in PakE are frequently followed by a *to*-infinitive instead of a preposition and participle clause as in BrE. The following set of examples taken from Baumgardner (1993b: 258–259) show the StBrE and PakE variants:

- (6) *He is **interested in learning** Urdu.* (StBrE)
- (7) *They were not at all interested in democracy...and were only **interested to grab** power at any cost.* (PakE)
- (8) *They are **capable of doing** anything.* (StBrE)
- (9) *He should be well-versed with the latest developments in the accounting profession and fully **capable to enforce** financial and budgetary controls.* (PakE)

Other adjectives in this category include *firm*, *insecure*, *committed*, *responsible*, *successful*, etc. (Baumgardner 1993c: 273).

The difference between PakE and StBrE adjective complementation involves the use of a preposition followed by an *-ing* participle where users of StBrE would use the *to*-infinitive. The following examples from Baumgardner (1993b: 259) illustrate this point.

- (10) *They are not **eligible to enter** the contest.* (StBrE)
- (11) *Students who are likely to be admitted by the end of January 1987 are also **eligible for appearing** in the qualifying examinations.* (PakE)
- (12) *His is not **prepared to repay** the money.* (StBrE)
- (13) *It is believed that PIA is **prepared for filing** an insurance claim.* (PakE)

2.4.2. *Verb complementation*

In addition to adjective complementation, PakE differs from StBrE in monotransitive and ditransitive verb complementation. Within monotransitive verb complementation, Baumgardner (1993c: 259) lists three subcategories and provides examples to show how they differ in StBrE and PakE.

- (a) Monotransitive verb complementation by a noun phrase as prepositional object  
In this type of complementation, the *to*-infinitive of BrE may be substituted by a prepositional verb plus *-ing* clause.

(14) *I am **looking forward** to going to Lahore.* (StBrE)

(15) *Javed...was **looking forward to become** a millionaire.* (PakE)

Other verbs that follow this pattern include *aim, refrain, resort, think* and others.

- (b) Monotransitive verb complementation by a finite clause

In BrE, a finite clause that complements a monotransitive verb consists of a transitive verb that has a *that*-clause as its object. PakE may replace the *that*-clause complement with a *to*-infinitive complement.

(16) *They **announced that** there would be another drawing soon.* (StBrE)

(17) *The Baluchistan Clerks Association has **announced to take out** a procession.* (PakE)

Other verbs that follow this pattern include *assure, demand, reiterate* and *urge*.

- (c) Monotransitive verb complementation by a nonfinite clause

This type of verb complementation is further divided into four sub-types, three of which show differences between PakE and StBrE. Firstly, in PakE, the *-ing* participle of StBrE may be replaced by a *to*-infinitive, as illustrated in (19):

(18) *He **avoided seeing** her.* (StBrE)

(19) *Meanwhile, the police are **avoiding to enter** the campus where the culprits are stated to be hiding.* (PakE)

Other examples of such verbs given in Baumgardner (1993c: 273) are *consider, discuss, require, suggest* etc.

Secondly, PakE speakers may substitute the StBrE main verb plus *to*-infinitive with a main verb plus *that*-clause.

(20) *He **wants to go**.* (StBrE)

(21) *I **want that** I should get leave.* (PakE) (Baumgardner 1993c: 261)

Other verbs in this category include *hesitate, fail, refrain, resort, think, aim* etc. (Baumgardner 1993c: 273).

Thirdly, the StBrE *to*-infinitive with a (raised) subject may be replaced by either a *that*-clause or an *-ing* participle clause, depending on the verb. Verbs such as *want* and *like* may be complemented with a *that*-clause in PakE.

(22) *He wants her to go.* (StBrE)

(23) *She said that her party wanted that we should not be intervening in internal affairs of Afghanistan.* (PakE) (Baumgardner 1993c: 262)

Verbs such as *forbid* and *beseech* may be complemented with an *-ing* participle clause in PakE.

(24) *She forbade me to pursue...* (StBrE)

(25) *She forbade me from pursuing the story.* (PakE) (Baumgardner 1993c: 262)

The fourth type of monotransitive verb complementation, involving the participle *-ing* with a subject, is shared by StBrE and PakE.

In addition to the differences in monotransitive verb complementation, PakE and StBrE show differences in ditransitive complementation as well. Baumgardner (1993b: 263) lists three differences in ditransitive complementation.

(d) The StBrE prepositional object of a ditransitive verb may be replaced by a *to*-infinitive.

(26) *They banned the film from being distributed.* (StBrE)

(27) *The resolution banning Americans to enter the University campus is still in force.* (PakE) (Baumgardner 1993c: 263)

Other verbs in this category include *prevent*, *discourage*, etc. (Baumgardner 1993c: 263)

(e) The indirect object in ditransitive verb complementation with indirect object plus *that*-clause object may be deleted in PakE.

(28) *He reminded the students that it was time for a break.* (StBrE)

(29) *The Sind Minister reminded Ø that the public memory was not so short as to forget the capture of a large quantity of lethal weapons by the army on the Baluchistan border.* (PakE) (Baumgardner 1993c: 264)

Other verbs in this category include *inform*, *tell*, *assure*, *reassure* and others (Baumgardner 1993c: 263–264). In addition to the indirect object, a direct object may also be deleted after certain verbs like *deplore* and *rectify*. The following example is cited in Baumgardner (1993c: 264).

(30) *He has deplored the fact that...* (StBrE)

(31) *He has **deplored** Ø that the nation has been divided into more than 50 political units.* (PakE)

(f) The combination of *in* + gerund after certain nouns (e.g. *interest*) may be replaced by a *to*-infinitive in PakE.

(32) *He **showed no interest in studying.*** (StBrE)

(33) *The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka has **shown keen interest to send his agricultural scientists to interact with Pakistani scientists.*** (StBrE)  
(Baumgardner 1993c: 264)

Other verbs in this category include *play (a role)* or *save (time)* (Baumgardner 1993c: 273).

### 2.4.3. Noun complementation

As with adjective complementation, PakE differs from StBrE in noun complementation. Thus, a preposition plus *-ing* participle in StBrE may become a *to*-infinitive in PakE:

(34) *Pakistan has no **influence in controlling...*** (StBrE)

(35) *Pakistan has no **influence to control** affairs inside Afghanistan.* (PakE)  
(Baumgardner 1993c: 265)

Other nouns that follow this pattern include *insistence, inefficiency, intention, sincerity, tendency, satisfaction* and others. (Baumgardner 1993c: 265)

Similarly, a *to*-infinitive in StBrE may become a preposition plus *-ing* participle in PakE:

(36) *The Minister said that any **decision to take...*** (StBrE)

(37) *The Minister said that any **decision for changing** uniform from current *shalwar-qamis* to coat-trousers would be after an agreement with the parents and teachers.* (PakE) (Baumgardner 1993c: 265)

Other nouns that follow this pattern include *desire, curiosity, endeavors* and *tendency*. (Baumgardner 1993c: 265)

### 2.5. Tag questions

Rahman (1990: 55) provides the following example of the invariant tag question *isn't it?* in PakE.

(38) *You are ill, **isn't it?***

This use of a single tag with invariable singular verb and an invariant pronoun suggests that in PakE the whole proposition in the main clause is taken as the anteced-

ent of the tag question, rather than the subject and the verb as separate elements. Further work needs to be done to verify such an observation.

## 2.6. Word order

### 2.6.1. Lack of inversion in *wh*-questions

Lack of subject-auxiliary inversion is acceptable in PakE, as illustrated by (39)–(41):

(39) *What this is made of?* (Rahman 1990: 56)

(40) *Why a step-motherly treatment is being meted out to the poor peons, naib qasids, chowkidars and malis (different types of workers) of the Education Department?* (Baumgardner 1993b: 48)

(41) *Why so many are being killed?* (Baumgardner 1995: 268)

Conversely, while there is no inversion in direct questions, subject-auxiliary verb inversion is observed in some indirect questions:

(42) *I asked him where is he?* (Rahman 1990: 56)

### 2.6.2. Lack of inversion in sentences with subject-initial adverbials

Similar to a lack of inversion in *wh*-questions, a lack of inversion in subject-initial adverbials is also acceptable in PakE:

(43) *Wali Khan pointed out that at no stage it was demanded that agreements of provincial branches should be discussed in the central working committee...* (Baumgardner 1993b: 48)

That is, in PakE the common Germanic verb-second feature is not respected.

## 2.7. Syntax and Morphology

Differences in the use of articles and prepositions and the omission of certain auxiliary verbs are the most commonly cited features of PakE morphology. These and other key morphological features discussed in the literature are summarized in this section.

### 2.7.1. Omission of auxiliary *do*, *did* and *does*

Rahman (1990: 57) reports that in casual speech, some Pakistani speakers may not utilize *do* support. He gives the following example:

- (44) *How you got here?*  
 ‘How did you get there?’ (Rahman 1990: 57)

Other syntactic and morphological processes which influence the lexis of PakE are examined in section 3.

### 2.7.2. *Articles*

At present there are no in-depth studies of the article system in PakE. However, Rahman (1990: 42) cites a number of examples suggesting differences from StBrE. An article may exist where it wouldn't in StBrE, as in (45). A definite article may be absent where it would be present in StBrE, as in (46). An indefinite article may be omitted, as in (47):

- (45) *The England is Ø / a / the good place.*  
 (46) *He said that Ø Education Ministry is reorganizing English syllabus.*  
 (47) *My father is Ø lecturer.*

### 2.7.3. *Prepositions*

PakE has a different distribution of prepositions as compared to BrE. Rahman (1990: 51) cites three forms of deviations: (a) PakE may omit prepositions where BrE has them – see (48); (b) It may add prepositions where BrE does not have them – see (49): and, (c) It may use a different preposition – see (50).

- (48) *To dispense...*  
 (49) *To combat **against** poverty*  
 (50) *What is the time **in** your watch*

## 3. **Lexis**

As stated earlier, the largest body of linguistic work on PakE focuses on lexis. Researchers have pointed out that PakE lexis has evolved rapidly. One of the key processes that has resulted in an enrichment of PakE vocabulary is borrowing from Urdu and other languages. Such borrowed words show adaptation to the English grammatical system. A number of other word formation processes have also been reported in PakE. Conversion of words from one part of speech to another and semantic shift are two of these. In addition there is the retention of words that have become obsolete in BrE. In this section, I will list and present examples of some of these processes.

### 3.1. Borrowing

Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamim (1993) list 54 categories in which words are borrowed from local languages into English. A few of these categories, along with examples for these categories, are given below.

- (51) *At some time they again came to the **haleem** (a thick soup) shop on motorcycles and threw his two **daigs** ('cauldrons').*  
(Edibles)
- (52) *I may be a devout believer of the **pardah** ('segregation') system but...*  
(Religion)
- (53) *Jewelers observe **hartal** ('strike').*  
(Law and order)
- (54) *Why can't our **shaadies** ('wedding') be something like, 'O.K. bring in the **dulha** ('groom') and **dulhan** ('bride'), their close friends and relatives: dance, eat, have fun, and that's it'?*  
(Wedding)
- (55) *According to the prosecution...two proclaimed offenders...armed with **klashnikovs** demanded Rs. 5,000/- as **goonda tax** ('extortion') from Ghulam Akbar. (Kennedy 1993b: 208)*  
(Terms of gratification)

### 3.2. Grammatical adaptations

Words from local languages, once borrowed, may be used with English grammatical morphemes. For example, the plural of *chowkidar* 'watchman' in the following example is constructed by adding the English plural suffix -s.

- (56) *But the **chowkidars** working in the Technical Education Department are getting only a monthly dress allowance and not the washing allowance.*  
(Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamim 1993: 152)

Another example of adding the plural suffix to Urdu words is given below.

- (57) *Agitational politics, **jalsas** ('rallies') and **jallooses** ('protestors') have become the preoccupation of political party workers in Pakistan.*  
(Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamim 1993: 129)

### 3.3. Affixation

Affixation is productively used to construct new words in PakE. The affixes used for this purpose may be from English, Urdu, or any other local language.

3.3.1. *Urdu-based affixes*

Affixes from Urdu are borrowed into PakE and retain their affix status. They are also used productively to form new words. One of the most productive of these morphemes is *-wala / wali* ('masculine/feminine'). Depending on the context, these morphemes may mean 'person with / owner of / seller of' and so forth.

- (58) *This donkey belonging to a **Gadhagari-wala** ('person who owns a donkey cart') was borrowed, cart and all, by a cop...living in the neighbourhood.*
- (59) *As soon as the **churi-wali** ('a woman who sells bangles') entered a home all young girls surround her, delving in her basket. (Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamim 1993: 139)*

This Urdu morpheme may also be attached to words of English origin:

- (60) *But Hamza stood up to talk against the **Sugar-wali** ('person who owns sugar / sugar mill') – hinting at the Sakrand Sugar Mills alleged to be owned by Benazir Bhutto's in-laws. (Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamim 1993: 139)*

3.3.2. *English-based affixes*

A number of English affixes are also used productively in new collocations in PakE. These suffixes may be attached to either English or Urdu words (or of words from other local languages). Examples of affixes *-d-*, *-lifter* and *-ism* are given below:

- (61) *List of telephone numbers F-1 to be converted into other numbers due to **de-loading** ('decreasing the load') of F-1 exchange. (Baumgardner 1993b: 43)*
- (62) *A **motorcycle-lifter** was arrested by CIA following recovery of six stolen motorcycles at his pointation on Sunday. (Kennedy 1993a: 72)*
- (63) *...a policy of **ad-hocism** and **stop-gapism** has been followed with respect to Azad Kashmir... (Baumgardner 1993b: 42)*

3.4. *Compounding*

Some new compounds have a particularly vivid effect in PakE. Consider the following examples from Baumgardner (1993b: 51): *flying coach* 'a fast bus'; *cent percent* '100 percent'.



### 3.5. Hybridization

In addition to compounding involving two native English morphemes, Urdu words may also be joined with English words to form new hybrid compounds. This process of hybridization is used productively in PakE. Examples are *double-roti* 'bread' (Baumgardner 1993b: 45) and *goonda-tax* 'extortion' (Kennedy 1993b: 208).

### 3.6. Conversion

Words of English and local origin which are borrowed into PakE may show a shift from one part of speech to another. (64) illustrates a shift from adjective to noun while (65) and (66) show a shift from noun to verb.

- (64) *Another **Gora** ('white, white man') telling us what we are...*  
(Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamim 1993: 93)
- (65) *Are all the traffic sergeants there only to **challan** ('ticket') the innocent?*  
(Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamim 1993: 90)
- (66) *Plans to **aircraft** the ailing Khan Adul Ghaffar Khan, from New Delhi to Peshawar tomorrow have been deferred...* (Baumgardner 1993b: 45)

### 3.7. Preposed phrases

Similar to the use of preposed attributive relative clauses, certain prepositional phrases may also be preposed. For example, *jam or jelly bottle* is used to mean 'a bottle of jam or jelly' in the following example.

- (67) *Shezan has also increased the prices of some of its products...A **jam or jelly bottle** can be purchased at Rs. 16 per bottle whereas it was available at Rs. 14 per bottle.* (Baumgardner 1993b:47)

Other examples provided by Baumgardner (1993b: 47) include: *milk bottle* 'a bottle of milk', *wheat bag* 'a bag of wheat' and *toast piece* 'a piece of toast'.

### 3.8. Archaisms

A few words that have become obsolete in British or American English may still be used productively in PakE. Marckwardt (1980) called this colonial lag. Görlach (1991), however, argued that generally such examples are so few that the term is a misnomer. An example of such a colonial lag is the use of *tantamount* in (68):

- (68) *We cannot support the demand of a confederation as it tantamounts to the dismemberment of the country.* (Baumgardner 1993b: 47)

The use of *tantamount* as a verb was possible in BrE, but is now obsolete. The predicative form *is tantamount to* also survives in PakE.

### 3.9. Semantic shift/extension

A number of words are noted that reflect a shift in meaning from their StBrE usage. The following examples are cited in the literature.

- (69) *He ordered for necessary **patchwork** ('repair') on the roads to be carried out.* (Baumgardner 1993b: 47)
- (70) *They also as a matter of routine overload the front seat and do not care for women waiting for **conveyance** ('transport').* (Talaat 1993: 59)  
(*conveyance* is cited as an example of colonial lag in Baumgardner 1993b: 47)
- (71) *Police have booked...Zaman and three others on the charge of allegedly **teasing** ('harassing') a college girl and snatching her wrist watch and books.* (Talaat 1993: 61)

## 4. Concluding remarks

This paper outlines some key features of PakE grammar and lexis. The features and examples presented in this paper clearly demonstrate that PakE has unique features. Unfortunately, no reliable studies of the distribution or range of these features exist. There are also no studies that describe PakE grammar on its own, systematically rather than via comparisons with BrE and AmE. It is hoped that this summary will generate sufficient interest in PakE to encourage new studies of this variety of English.

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# Singapore English: morphology and syntax

Lionel Wee

## 1. Introduction

It may be useful to divide the discussion of Colloquial Singapore English (CollSgE) morphology and syntax into five parts:

- (a) Features relating to the verb and verb phrase. Here, we focus on aspect, the absence of number agreement, copular *be* and the use of *got*.
- (b) Features relating to nouns and the noun phrase. Within the noun phrase, CollSgE tends not to make use of articles. It treats non-count nouns as count nouns, and its relative clauses are ordered rather differently than their counterparts in more standard varieties of English.
- (c) Features relating to the clause. These include pro-drop, object-preposing, question formation, and the passive voice.
- (d) In addition to these three features, CollSgE makes productive use of reduplication, which cuts across various lexical categories. It is therefore important that we devote a specific section to the discussion of reduplication.
- (e) Finally, CollSgE is also widely recognized as having a large inventory of particles, which serve various discourse-pragmatic functions. These discourse particles, too, need to be discussed separately in order to better appreciate the grammar of CollSgE.

## 2. Features relating to the verb and verb phrase

### 2.1. Aspect

We begin by noting that the verb generally appears in an uninflected form. As shown below, the verb *eat* is not marked for tense or number. Because the verbs are uninflected, time and aspectual information are conveyed lexically (using words like *yesterday* or *already*). The lack of inflectional marking on the verb also means that there is no subject-verb agreement in CollSgE, and even in question formation, there is a tendency to use invariant tags.

- (1) a. *He eat here yesterday.*  
 b. *He not yet eat lunch.*  
 c. *They eat already.*

Aspect is marked via forms like *always*, *already* or *still*. Thus, *always* is used to mark habituality:

- (2) a. *She always borrow money from me.*  
 b. *The bus always late!*

*Already* is used for both the perfective (1a) as well as inchoative aspect. Thus, (3) can be used to indicate that the speaker's son is just beginning to learn how to ride the bicycle.

- (3) *My son ride bicycle already.*  
 'My son has just started riding the bicycle.'

The progressive aspect is marked by *still*.

- (4) a. *Late already, you still eat.*  
 'It's late already and you are still eating.'  
 b. *The baby still cry because you never feed it.*  
 'The baby is still crying because you haven't fed it.'

Additionally, the progressive is the only aspect that is marked inflectionally. However, only the suffix *-ing* is used; the auxiliary *be* is not. As (5b) indicates, both *still* and the *-ing* suffix can be used together to convey the progressive.

- (5) a. *The baby crying a lot.*  
 b. *The students still writing.*

## 2.2. Number agreement

As mentioned, CollSgE lacks number agreement, indicated by the fact that there is no subject verb agreement in main clauses.

- (6) a. *The teacher shout a lot.*  
 b. *The teachers shout a lot.*

In more standard varieties of English, the nature of the tag in tag questions varies according to the subject and the auxiliaries present in the clause to which the tag is being attached.

- (7) a. *He is watching television, isn't he?*  
 b. *He isn't watching television, is he?*  
 c. *They have been watching television, haven't they?*  
 d. *They haven't been watching television, have they?*

As the CollSgE verb phrase is comparatively simpler in structure – lacking verb inflections and a complex auxiliary system – there is no such variation of the tag. Instead, CollSgE uses an invariant tag *is it*. This tag is neutral in that it carries no expectation by the speaker as to what the answer to the question might be. It can also be used when the clause being tagged contains a negative (9).

- (8) a. *He watching television, is it?*  
 b. *They watching television, is it?*
- (9) a. *He not watching television, is it?*  
 b. *They not watching television, is it?*

The tag can also be used in the negative form, *isn't it*, in which case the speaker conveys the assumption that the proposition described by the clause being tagged is correct.

- (10) a. *The tea very hot, is it?*  
 b. *The tea very hot, isn't it?*

While (10a) can be considered a neutral question, in (10b) the speaker is assuming that the tea is indeed very hot. Thus, *isn't it* often has the pragmatic effect of eliciting agreement from the addressee.

### 2.3. *Be* and *got*

Platt and Weber (1980) note that CollSgE clauses that are attributive or equative tend not to use the verb *be*.

- (11) a. *The house very nice.*  
       ‘The house is very nice.’  
 b. *That girl my neighbour.*  
       ‘That girl is my neighbour.’

The verb *got* is used variously in CollSgE as a perfective, a possessive, and an existential marker.

- (12) a. *He got go to Japan.*  
       ‘He has been to Japan.’  
 b. *You got buy lottery?*  
       ‘Did you buy a lottery ticket?’  
 c. *You got nice shirt.*  
       ‘You have a nice shirt.’  
 d. *Here got very many people.*  
       ‘There are many people here.’

### 3. Features relating to the noun and noun phrase

#### 3.1. Articles

A number of researchers have commented on the general absence of articles in the noun phrase. Thus Platt and Weber (1980: 70) observe that “[i]t is noticeable that a definite or indefinite article does not always occur in [CollSgE] in positions where it is obligatory in [StBrE]”. The examples in (13) come from Platt and Weber (1980: 70–71), the ones in (14) from Alsagoff and Ho (1998: 144).

- (13) a. *I don't have ticket.*  
 b. *Maybe you better have microphone a bit closer.*
- (14) a. *She got car or not?*  
       ‘Does she have a car?’  
 b. *She buy dress for what?*  
       ‘Why is she buying a dress?’

As discussed below, Alsagoff and Ho (1998: 144) make the interesting suggestion that the lack of articles in CollSgE could be due to the fact that CollSgE tends to treat nouns like *ticket* or *car* as non-count.

#### 3.2. Count/non-count

There is a tendency in CollSgE to treat non-count nouns as count nouns, giving rise to forms such as *luggages*, *equipments*, *staffs* and *furnitures*. Alsagoff and Ho (1998: 143) point out that in some cases the plural marker is absent where Standard English (StE) requires one. Thus, they note that in the CollSgE version (15a), *ticket* is not marked for plural though it is so marked in the StE version (15b).

- (15) a. *She queue up very long to buy ticket for us.*  
 b. *She queued up for a very long time to buy tickets for us.*

They suggest that (15a) should not be analyzed as a lack of the plural marker; instead *ticket* in (15a) is being used as a non-count noun. Their reason for this suggestion (1998: 144) is that “when *ticket* is used with a quantifier, e.g. *four*, *many*, it is always inflected; where it is uninflected, it always appears alone, without premodification.”

Thus, they conclude that “Most nouns that are, in StE, only classified and used as count, can in CollSgE be used both as count and non-count” (1998: 144).

#### 3.3. The relative clause

Consider the examples in (16) and (17), adapted from Alsagoff (1995: 85). The CollSgE relative clause in (16) is fairly similar to that found in StE. Except for the

fact that the verb is not inflected for tense, the construction is regular, the relative pronouns *who* and *that* precede the modifying clauses *pinch my sister* and *John buy* respectively.

- (16) a. *That boy who pinch my sister very naughty.*  
 ‘That boy who pinched my sister is very naughty.’  
 b. *The cake that John buy always very nice to eat.*  
 ‘The cake that John buys is always very delicious.’

(17), however, shows another kind of CollSgE relative clause, one that is much more different from the StE version. Here, the relative pronoun *one* is invariant, appearing consistently as *one*, and follows the modifying clause.

- (17) a. *That boy pinch my sister one very naughty.*  
 ‘That boy who pinched my sister is very naughty.’  
 b. *The cake John buy one always very nice to eat.*  
 ‘The cake that John buys is always very delicious.’

(18) shows that the other relative pronouns (*that*, *who*) cannot be used after the modifying clause, and conversely, *one* cannot be used before the modifying clause.

- (18) a. \**That boy pinch my sister who very naughty.*  
 b. \**That boy one pinch my sister very naughty.*

Thus, CollSgE appears to have two kinds of relative clauses. The first one resembles the StE relative clause: it uses the same kinds of relative pronouns and has the same word order with the pronoun preceding the modifying clause. The second one is clearly more different: it uses *one* as the relative pronoun and has a different order where *one* follows the modifying clause.

#### 4. Features relating to the clause

##### 4.1. Pro-drop

CollSgE has been described as being a pro-drop language (Gupta 1994; Platt and Weber 1980) in that the subject and/or object are often left unexpressed, particularly when the identities of the pro-dropped elements can be recovered from the context.

- (19) a. *Always late!*  
 ‘You are always late!’  
 b. *Must buy for him, otherwise he not happy.*  
 ‘We must buy a present for him, otherwise he won’t be happy.’



## 4.2. Object-preposing

Though the canonical word order in CollSgE is SVO, the object (direct or indirect) is commonly preposed, giving rise to examples like the following (Platt and Weber 1980: 73).

- (20) a. *Certain medicine we don't stock in our dispensary.*  
 b. *To my sister sometime I speak English.*

There is some disagreement over the relationship between object-preposing and information structure, specifically, over whether the fronted element is being focused or topicalized. The difference between focus and topic lies in whether the fronted object conveys old information (topic) or new information (focus). Platt and Weber (1980) treat fronting as a case of focussing while Alsagoff and Ho (1998: 148) claim that it involves topicalization.

With regard to this debate, it may be relevant to consider CollSgE constructions where doubt is being expressed. As shown below, object-preposing and the pro-drop feature often come together in utterances expressing doubt. What is relevant to the focus/topic debate is that it appears to be old or established information that is being fronted. In (21a–b), for example, the speaker and the addressee presumably already have shared knowledge about which movie or car is being discussed. Such cases suggest that object-preposing involves a topic rather than a focus.

- (21) a. *The movie don't know whether good or not.*  
 'I don't know if the movie is good or not.'  
 b. *The car don't know whether expensive.*  
 'I don't know whether the car is expensive.'  
 c. *\*The movie know whether good or not.*  
 'I know whether the movie is good or not.'

The examples in (21) are expressions of doubt on the part of the speaker, but the preposed object and the unexpressed subject can give the impression that a lack of knowledge (*don't know*) is being attributed to an inanimate entity (*the movie, the car*). As (21c) indicates, the construction cannot be used to assert knowledge on the part of the speaker, since without the negative marker, the construction is unacceptable.

## 4.3. Question formation

In *wh*-interrogatives, the interrogative pronoun typically remains in situ:

- (22) a. *You buy what*  
 'What did you buy?'  
 b. *This bus go where?*  
 'Where is this bus going?'

- c. *You go home for what?*  
‘Why are you going home?’

With yes/no questions, CollSgE makes use of the invariant tag *is it* (discussed above). CollSgE also has another tag *or not*.

- (23) a. *The food good or not?*  
‘Is the food delicious?’  
b. *You busy or not?*  
‘Are you busy?’

The *or not* tag often appears with the modal *can* in questions concerning permission or possibility.

- (24) a. *Can go home or not?*  
‘Can I go home?’  
b. *Can answer the question or not?*  
‘Do you know the answer to the question?’

This has led to the emergence of the tag *can or not* (25). *Can or not* can also constitute a separate conversational turn, a possibility not open to *or not* (26).

- (25) a. *I want to go home, can or not?*  
‘Can I go home?’  
b. *Answer the question, can or not?*  
‘Do you know the answer to the question?’  
(26) A: *I want to go home.*  
B: [no response]  
A: *Can or not? \*Or not?*

#### 4.4. The passive

CollSgE has two passive constructions, the *kena* passive and the *give* passive. (27a) and (27b) below are examples of the *kena* passive, the agentive *by* phrase being optional. Although the lexical verb is sometimes inflected, this need not always be the case.

- (27) a. *John kena scold (by his boss).*  
‘John was scolded by his boss.’  
b. *The thief kena caught (by the police).*  
‘The thief was caught by the police.’

The *kena* passive has an adversative reading so that while *scold* easily allows passivization, *praise* and *like* do not.

- (28) a. \**John kena praise by his boss.*  
       ‘John was praised by his boss.’  
       b. \**Mary kena like by her tennis partner.*  
       ‘Mary was liked by her tennis partner.’

The *give* passive, like the *kena* passive, also has an adversative reading. Thus, the examples in (30) are not acceptable compared to the ones in (29).

- (29) a. *John give his boss scold.*  
       ‘John was scolded by his boss.’  
       b. *The dog give the boy kick.*  
       ‘The dog was kicked by the boy.’  
 (30) a. \**John give his boss praise.*  
       ‘John was praised by his boss.’  
       b. \**The dog give the boy stroke.*  
       ‘The dog was stroked by the boy.’

There is a slight difference in the adversative readings associated with the two passives. With the *give* passive, there is an implication that the subject contributed in some way towards its own misfortune; this reading is absent in the *kena* passive. Thus, in (29a) John, perhaps through his own incompetence, provided his boss with a reason to scold him. Likewise, in (29b), if the dog had been faster or more aggressive, it might not have gotten kicked by the boy.

There are two further differences between the passives. Unlike the *kena* passive, the *give* passive requires that the agent be present:

- (31) a. \**John give scold.*  
       b. \**The dog give kick.*

Secondly, unlike the *kena* passive, the lexical verb in the *give* passive must always appear uninflected.

- (32) a. \**John give his boss scolded.*  
       b. \**The dog give the boy kicked.*

## 5. Reduplication

### 5.1. Nominal reduplication

In CollSgE nominal reduplication occurs primarily with names of close friends or family members, or with common nouns that, when reduplicated, refer to someone who can be considered an intimate.

- (33) a. *Where is your boy-boy* (boyfriend/son)?  
       b. *We buddy-buddy* (close male friends). *You don't play me out, OK?*

- c. *Say who told you my mummy-mummy (mother) is a graduate? She study more than you, she knows better than you.*

In (33), the nominal bases (*boy*, *buddy* and *mummy*) undergo reduplication. The resulting forms are still nominal. The difference here is that the reduplicated forms mark affection or intimacy. Thus, when *boy* reduplicates, we get the meaning ‘boyfriend’ or ‘son’. Likewise, when *buddy* and *mummy* reduplicate, *buddy-buddy* and *mummy-mummy* both draw attention to the close relationship that exists between the male friends, and between parent and child respectively.

Names, too, can reduplicate when they refer to close friends of the speaker. In (34a)–(34b) names of individuals, such as *Henry* and *Choon Yeoh*, are shortened to a single syllable. The resulting monosyllabic form is the basis for reduplication. This shortening is crucial since the base forms cannot reduplicate otherwise, as shown in (34c)–(34d). However, the requirement of a monosyllabic base seems to apply mainly to names. As (33b)–(33c) show, disyllabic common nouns can be reduplicated.

- (34) a. *I'm looking for Ry-Ry (Henry)*  
 b. *Have you seen Yeoh-Yeoh (Choon Yeoh)?*  
 c. *\*Henry-Henry*  
 d. *\*Choon Yeoh-Choon Yeoh*

## 5.2. Adjectival reduplication

Adjectival reduplication in CollSgE intensifies the meaning of the base adjective.

- (35) a. *Don't always eat sweet-sweet (very sweet) things.*  
 b. *Why the vege got bitter-bitter (very bitter) taste?*  
 c. *I like hot-hot (very hot) curries.*

The adjectives in (35) are semantically simple in the sense that they do not indicate either the comparative or superlative meanings. These semantically simple adjectives can reduplicate. (36) suggests that comparatives are able to reduplicate (36a)–(36b) as well, while superlatives are unable to do so (36c)–(36d).

- (36) a. *That one! That greener-greener one.*  
 b. *Make it smaller-smaller.*  
 c. *That one! That \*greenest-greenest one.*  
 d. *Make it \*smallest-smallest.*

We can explain why superlatives are unable to reduplicate if we think of adjectives as coding properties on a scale, and intensification as moving the properties higher up along the scale. Comparatives and the simple adjectives are not located at the end-point of the scale, and can move further up along the scale via reduplication. But if the adjective is coding a property that is already at the end-point of the scale,

which is what a superlative does, then it will be unable to move up any further. We would therefore expect superlatives not to reduplicate.

### 5.3. Verb reduplication

With verb reduplication, we need to distinguish two different sub-types. The first type, similar to nominal and adjectival reduplication, results in only a single copy of the base. The second, however, results in two copies of the base. There are associated meaning differences. With only a single copy in the resulting form, the meaning is that of attenuation. With two copies, the meaning is that of continuity.

In attenuative verb reduplication, the action described by the base verb is understood to take place over a relatively short time period. In (37a), for example, reduplication of *walk* results in the meaning ‘stroll’, where the activity now covers a shorter time period. In the rest of the examples, the reduplication is accompanied by adverbials such as *a while* or *a bit* to indicate that the activity is less sustained.

- (37) a. *Don't always stay in the house. Go outside walk-walk* (stroll).  
 b. *No traffic police ... stop-stop* (make a short stop) *a while*.

Verbs can also be reduplicated to indicate that the action is continuous or on-going, and in comparison with attenuative reduplication, the action is now understood to take place over a longer period of time. Compared with the examples in (37), the examples below involve two copies of the base.

- (38) a. *I walk-walk-walk* (was walking) *then I fall down*.  
 b. *Take bus no good, always stop-stop-stop* (keeps on stopping).

The difference between the two sub-types of verb reduplication becomes clearer when we compare (39a) with (39b).

- (39) a. *Ya, I was sick but really, nothing serious. Cough-cough a bit then no more already* (Minor coughing).  
 b. *Why you cough-cough-cough whole day long?* (keep coughing).

The examples in (39) involve reduplication of the verb base *cough*. In (39a), with a single copy, the act of coughing is given an attenuative interpretation, thus conveying that the coughing was minor or not serious. On the other hand, in (39b), with two copies of the base resulting, the act of coughing is given an interpretation of continuity, thus conveying that it was an activity that kept on recurring.

Rajendra Singh (p.c.) suggests that the two types of verb reduplication are possibly related. Since they differ primarily in terms of the length of time involved, that is, the second sub-type differs from the first by increasing the duration over which the action is performed, this suggests that instead of positing a separate and independent process, the second sub-type is better derived from the first, effectively giving it the nested structure shown below. (The use of ‘//’ simply indicates

that we have no current evidence for assuming that CollSgE reduplication is either suffixing or prefixing.)

Attenuation: Verb base // Copy  
 Continuity: [Verb base // Copy] // Copy

This also captures the iconic relationship between the two sub-types since it is the longer form that is used to convey a longer time period.

## 6. Particles

CollSgE has a large number of particles that typically occur in clause-final position. Although they are optional syntactically, it is widely recognized that they perform various discourse-pragmatic functions. The most common of these particles is *lah*. Other particles include *ma*, *hah*, *meh*, *leh*, *lor*, *hor* and *wat*. This last particle is apparently based on the English word *what*.

Below is a brief summary of the various properties of the CollSgE particles. Three particles, *ma*, *wat* and *lor*, indicate that a piece of information is obvious. However, there are differences between them. The particle *ma* is perhaps the most neutral in that other than indicating obviousness, it does little else. The other two, *wat* and *lor*, in addition to obviousness, also convey, respectively, a challenge to some earlier proposition and a sense of resignation.

<i>lah</i>	indicates speaker's mood/attitude and appeals to the addressee to accommodate this mood/attitude
<i>ma</i>	indicates information as obvious
<i>wat</i>	indicates information as obvious and contradictory
<i>meh</i>	indicates scepticism
<i>leh</i>	marks a tentative suggestion or request
<i>lor</i>	indicates obviousness or a sense of resignation
<i>hor</i>	asserts and elicits support for a proposition
<i>hah</i>	question marker

In the following discussion, we focus only on a few selected particles: *lah*, *lor* and *wat*.

### 6.1. *Lah*

The Internet edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2000) describes *lah* as 'a particle used with various kinds of pitch to convey the mood and attitude of the speaker', giving examples like *Come with us lah* to indicate persuasion, *Wrong lah* to show annoyance, and *No lah* to demonstrate strong objection. This attributes to the particle a maximally general characterization – it is simply used to

convey a certain mood or attitude of the speaker. Exactly what mood or attitude is being conveyed will depend on specific contextual factors, from which the addressee will have to infer.

On the other hand, for CollSgE speakers, an objection like *No* without the particle would be perceived as being much ruder than one with the particle present. Similarly, *Come with us* and *Wrong* are respectively requests and assertions that are made more polite by the presence of *lah*. This has led to claims that the particle is a marker of solidarity, functioning to mitigate face-threatening speech acts. Expressions of annoyance and objections both threaten the addressee's positive face while attempts at persuasion threaten the addressee's negative face. The presence of *lah* as a solidarity marker is often used to soften the force of a speech act.

One way to reconcile these different accounts is to combine them and to treat the particle as having a two-part function. The particle draws the addressee's attention to some mood or attitude of the speaker and, in doing so, also appeals to the addressee to act in such a way as to accommodate this mood or attitude. The first part of this characterization treats *lah* as a highly general particle, while the second part, by appealing to the addressee, is consistent with the impression that *lah* is a solidarity marker.

## 6.2. *Wat*

This particle presents a piece of information as being obvious. Importantly, it also carries the force of a contradiction to something that has previously been asserted. For example, in (40), C's suggestion to buy sandals with buckles is rejected by B and A. In particular, A's use of *wat* (< *what*) both indicates that it should be obvious to C that salt will cause rusting, and that this very fact makes C's suggestion untenable. C's failure to see the relationship between salt and the buckles leads A to repeat the utterance, using the particle yet again, and to also elaborate further by pointing out that salt is present in sweat.

- (40) (A, B and C are talking about buying sandals)  
 C: *Then buy a buckle type lah!*  
 B: *Buckle will break because it rusts.*  
 A: *Salt wat!*  
 C: *Ah?*  
 A: *Salt wat! ... Your sweat got salt, you see. Salt will make it corrode even faster.*

## 6.3. *Lor*

The *lor* particle can indicate that a piece of information should be obvious to the addressee, and also convey a sense of resignation. The following shows *lor* marking obviousness. A is asking about the kinds of things that need to be bought, and

B's answer takes the form of a list. Here, B is indicating that A should already know what needs to be bought.

- (41) A: *What do I have to buy at the market?*  
 B: *Fish lor, vegetables lor, curry powder lor.*

By attaching *lor* to an utterance, the speaker can also indicate that the situation described by the utterance is one over which nothing can be done (i.e. the situation can't be helped). And because nothing can be done, one has to simply accept the situation or its implied consequences. In (42), both A and B recognize that having children might require them to stop working. B's initial use of *lor* suggests that she can't bring herself to stop working, and her subsequent uses suggest that she is willing to accept the consequences of working, which are to not marry and to not have children.

- (42) A: *But, um, I might stop working for a while if I need to, if I need to lah, especially for looking after kids.*  
 B: *But for me, I won't stop working lor. The most I won't give birth to kids lor. For the most I don't marry lor. (Laughing)*

## 7. Conclusion

Perhaps the most fundamental issue in research on CollSgE concerns its status as an autonomous linguistic system. We saw in the companion article on SgE phonology (other volume) that an early controversy over whether or not CollSgE should be understood in terms of a post-creole continuum or diglossia was essentially a debate over whether or not CollSgE can be treated as a self-contained system that can be analyzed without reference to other, more standard varieties of English. But such debates need to consider local perspectives on and attitudes toward CollSgE. And in this regard, one must consider the possibility that government policies aimed at enforcing "good English" may lead to the eventual elimination of reduplication as a productive morphological process. The issue is not the wholesale death of CollSgE as a variety since colloquial varieties, as a matter of sociolinguistic necessity, will prevail. Rather, the question concerns the long-term stability of specific grammatical features as these become affected by language ideologies. Research into how particular properties of CollSgE are influenced by, and in turn, perhaps, influence local perceptions and values would be of interest not only to scholars interested in the status of CollSgE, but also to those with a more general interest in the study of language ideology.

Another area of research that has gained momentum in recent years is the description of intonation that takes into account the ethnically heterogeneous nature of Singapore's population. Until about a decade ago, most work concentrated on



establishing differences between patterns of intonation in Singapore with that in Britain. In the last few years, however, there has been greater focus on the intonation patterns that characterize the different ethnic groups in Singapore, such as the differences in pitch range and tempo, and in the alignment of pitch peaks with syllables. For example, initial evidence suggests that Chinese speakers of Singapore English use loudness and length as cues for stressed syllables, while Malay speakers use pitch, loudness and duration, while Indian speakers use pitch and loudness (Lim 2001). The robustness of these claims, and the extent to which they are traceable to influence from other languages such as the speakers' ethnic mother tongues, need to be further investigated.

Finally, another issue of interest concerns the discourse particles. Research on the particles has tended to follow two directions: a micro-analytic approach focusing on individual particles and attempting to provide, as far as possible, a unified account of their various properties, and a macro-analytic approach concerned with developing a broad-based classification of the particles. An example of the former is Wong's (1994) attempt to describe the "invariant meanings" of specific particles within the framework of Wierzbicka semantics. An example of the latter comes from Gupta's (1992) attempt to group the particles into three main categories (contradictory, assertive, and tentative) that cluster along a scale marking degrees of assertiveness. Individual particles, then, are said to convey different degrees of speaker commitment towards a proposition. Though there are problems with Gupta's specific proposal, there is little doubt that a large-scale attempt to explicate the paradigmatic relationships among the particles is crucial. Reconciling both the micro- and macro-analytic approaches so that descriptions of individual particles are placed within the context of a larger system would be an invaluable contribution to our understanding of CollSgE grammar.

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# Malaysian English: morphology and syntax

Loga Baskaran

## 1. Introduction

In describing some of the aspects of syntactic difference between Standard British English (StBrE) and Malaysian English (henceforth MalE) in this chapter, some emphasis will be placed on the possibility of influence from the substrate languages. The main language used here is Bahasa Malaysia. This is based on two criteria mainly:

- The population ratio is in the order: Malays (55%), Chinese (30%), Indians (10%), Others (5%). Based on these figures alone, the influence from Bahasa Malaysia could be substantial, although actual quantitative studies have not been done to prove this yet.
- Even among the Chinese and Indians (as well as the ‘others’), Bahasa Malaysia is more in use by these speakers than their own mother-tongue. Thus the subsequent influence of Bahasa Malaysia on the English spoken by the non-Malays can at times be considered even more substantial than that exerted by Chinese or Tamil.

In this chapter interlingual influence from Bahasa Malaysia and Tamil will be considered. The influence of Chinese on MalE has yet to be researched. Of course some aspects of variation discussed in this chapter could well be from Chinese. The absence of the copula in certain syntactic environments in Chinese, for example, could be additionally contributive (along with the same situation in Bahasa Malaysia and Tamil) to the absence of such a copula in MalE. Then again, as Tay (1977) confirms, it could be postulated that the grammatical particle *la* in MalE has its source from the Hokkien dialect of Chinese, although Bahasa Malaysia also has a suffix of equally significant import and function.

All in all, one can say that the substrate languages have their influencing role on the syntax of MalE in various permutations and combinations. But as Platt and Weber (1980) suggest, it would be wrong to trace all characteristics of MalE/SgE to the local background languages as every interlanguage and every emerging new variety develops its own system, which is to some extent independent of the background languages.

This study, therefore, describes MalE in terms of structural differences in comparison with StBrE. The latter is used as a norm of comparison purely because it is still the grammar of this standard variety (though not the phonology) that is aimed

at on the acrolectal level in Malaysia (namely programmed instruction, official media, locally organised international conferences and the like).

The results and findings in this study are culled from various types of sources, of which the primary ones are:

- Written and spoken language observations of students who are postgraduate in-service English Language teachers, undergraduate students, or secondary school pupils.
- Entry and diagnostic test sheets of in-service (postgraduate) English language teachers.
- Official statements, newspapers, radio and TV.
- Formal and informal speech of professionals and lay people.

## 2. Noun phrase structure

Three characteristic elements in the noun phrase of Malaysian English show that there is a specific system underlying the variety, rather than random simplificatory processes.

### 2.1. Article ellipsis

Article ellipsis does not just occur before any nouns as such, but abstract nouns in particular. Furthermore, ellipsis applies, only to those abstract nouns that are modified:

- (1) *Did you get **mileage-claim** for that trip?*
- (2) *Finance companies effected **drastic increase** in interest rates this year.*
- (3) ***Main reason** for their performance...*

The only other exception to this rule is the concrete noun when it is used as an institutionalised or generic noun in predicate position, as seen in the following examples:

- (4) *She is Ø **trend-setter** of the class.*
- (5) *He was Ø **most popular prefect** last year.*
- (6) *He is Ø **drug addict**.*

Such article ellipsis before modified abstract nouns could be a carryover from Malay, where there is no article system. Numeral quantification of concrete nouns is by cardinal determiners with classifiers:

- (7) Malay: *Apakah keadaan tentang perkara itu?*  
 What (INT.) situation regarding topic that?  
 ‘What is the situation regarding that?’
- (8) Malay: *Penghasilan motor-car sekarang diberi keutamaan.*  
 Production motor-cars now given priority.  
 ‘The production of motor-cars is now given priority.’

## 2.2. Pronoun concord

As far as pronominal concord is concerned, there is a singular/plural distinction for animate nouns, but no number distinction for inanimate nouns. The following MalE examples are representative:

- (9) *Those books are very informative. It can be obtained at Dillon’s.*
- (10) *The houses on Travers Road are UDA houses. It caters for the Division ‘B’ employees of the Malayan Railways.*
- (11) *Rahman bought three ball-pens from the Co-op, but forgot and left it on the cash desk.*

The partial influence from Malay can be postulated on the basis of examples like the following. In (12) to (14) *ia* is used as an invariant pronoun for inanimate as well as animate non-human nouns:

- (12) Malay: *Surat-surat itu baru sampai – mungkin ia dari ayah saya.*  
 Letters those just arrived – must be *it* from father my.  
 ‘Those letters have just arrived – they must be from my father.’
- (13) Malay: *Baju siapa semua itu? Ia sangat cantik.*  
 Clothes whose all those? *It* very pretty.  
 ‘Whose clothes are those? They are very pretty.’
- (14) Malay: *Ada dua ekor kucing di dalam longkang itu – ia semua berwarna putih.*  
 Are two (CLAS.) kittens in drain that – *it* all  
 coloured white.  
 ‘There are two kittens in that drain – they are all coloured white’.

## 2.3. Individuation

It is noticeable how frequently mass nouns (like *staff*) are treated as count nouns in MalE. This may be due to bilingual usage, based on familiarity with the Malay system of classifiers. The classifiers are not carried over into MalE, but the noun itself is treated as if it were indeed countable (or governed by a classifier):

- (15) *How many **staffs** are on medical leave?*  
 (16) *She bought three **lingeries** at Mark's today.*  
 (17) *There are not many **stationeries** in the room.*

There is also some random pluralising of such mass nouns:

- (18) *She cleared all her **paraphernalias** out of the way.*  
 (19) *There were no suitable **accommodations** for them.*

Some element of analogy within English itself can be postulated where such examples like *jewellery* (*jewelleries* – MalE) and *stationery* (*stationeries* – MalE) are pluralised in a way similar to *grocery/groceries* in BrE.

Pluralisation also occurs when a noun occurs as a hypernym or composite term. Thus MalE has *furnitures* – from ‘tables, chairs, beds etc.’; *fruits* – from ‘apples, pears, bananas etc.’; *offsprings* – from ‘sons, daughters’. On the other hand *children* is not pluralised.

### 3. Verb phrase structure

#### 3.1. Tense and temporal distance

Tense in MalE is determined by temporal distance from the deictic centre. The concepts of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority are relevant to this conceptual framework:

- Past events are considered anterior to the deictic centre, with three degrees of remoteness. These are immediate past (*I ate/was eating rice this morning*); recent past (*I have eaten/have been eating rice yesterday*); remote past (*I had eaten/had been eating rice last month*).
- Present events are considered simultaneous to the deictic centre – thus with no degree of remoteness involved, as in ‘I eat (**am eating**) rice now’.
- Future events are considered posterior to the deictic centre – with two degrees of remoteness. These are immediate future (*I will eat/will be eating rice tonight*); remote/distant future (*I would eat/would be eating rice tomorrow*).

This system seems to be independent of any influence from Malay, where no deictic tense marking is involved although there is differentiation of temporal orientation in terms of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority (in its aspectual verbs). Further, there is no tense marking in its lexical verbs either, as can be seen in the following examples:

- (20) Malay: *Saya makan nasi pagi tadi.*  
           I ate rice this morning.

- (21) Malay: *Saya* ***sudah*** ***makan*** *nasi* *semalam*.  
 I have eaten rice yesterday.
- (22) Malay: *Saya* ***sudah*** ***makan*** *nasi* *bulan lalu*.  
 I had eaten rice last month.
- (23) Malay: *Saya* ***makan*** *nasi* *sekarang*.  
 I eat rice now.
- (24) Malay: *Saya* ***akan*** ***makan*** *nasi* *malam ini*.  
 I will eat rice tonight.
- (25) Malay: *Saya* ***akan*** ***makan*** *nasi* *esok*.  
 I would eat rice tomorrow.

### 3.2. Modals

As for the modals in MalE, the simplified system can be summarised as follows:

<i>can</i>	–	permission, ability
<i>would</i>	–	past tense of the above meanings
<i>may</i>	–	possibility
<i>will</i>	–	immediate futurity (± volition)
<i>would</i>	–	distant/remote futurity (± volition)
<i>should</i>	–	obligation, necessity
<i>must</i>	–	obligation, necessity

Such a system may be considered similar to the narrow-ranged modal system in Malay:

<i>hendak, mahu, ingin</i>	–	volition
<i>enggan</i>	–	weak/negative volition
<i>harus, wajib, mesti</i>	–	compulsion
<i>perlu</i>	–	obligation, necessity
<i>boleh, dapat</i>	–	ability, permission
<i>mungkin</i>	–	possibility, probability

It could, however, also be viewed as a simplification of the system, so that there is no ambivalence of meaning.

### 3.3. Stative verbs in the progressive

The third characteristic feature in the verb phrase is the occurrence of some of the stative verbs in the progressive, contrary to (written) StE usage. These are the relation verbs and verbs of inert perception and cognition:

- (26) *That bottle is containing sulphuric acid.*  
‘...contains...’
- (27) *I am smelling curry in this room.*  
‘...smell...’
- (28) *She is owning two luxury apartments.*  
‘...owns...’

Within BrE itself there is a possible source of over-generalisation, e.g. the verbs of bodily sensation that can occur in the progressive (as in ‘My back *is aching*’ or ‘My foot *is hurting*’). Furthermore, there might well be reinforcement from Malay relational verbs like *contain* and *own* which can occur optionally with the equivalent V-ing form (although this is not a common phenomenon).

#### 4. Clause structure variation

##### 4.1. Lack of inversion in *wh*-questions

Noticeable in main clause *wh*-questions in MalE is a lack of auxiliary inversion with the subject NP:

- (29) *What we have here?*
- (30) *Where they are going?*
- (31) *How they will come home?*

On the other hand, in indirect *wh*-questions inversion does occur in MalE, contrary to the rules of StE:

- (32) *I wonder where is she?*

The *wh*-element in the MalE interrogative can also occur in sentence-final position:

- (33) *They are going where?*
- (34) *She is doing what?*

The use of *wh*- in situ could be transfer from Malay:

- (35) Malay: *Mereka pergi ke mana?*  
They go where  
‘Where are they going?’
- (36) Malay: *Dia menangis kenapa?*  
She cry why?  
‘Why is she crying?’



#### 4.2. Tagged *yes-no* interrogatives

Another interesting feature of MalE interrogative clauses is the *yes or not?* and *or not?* tags used to mark *Yes-no* interrogatives. Thus the two variant tags are used as seen below:

- (37) a. *She can sing or not?*  
       ‘Can she sing?’  
       b. *She can sing, yes or not?*  
       ‘Can she sing?’
- (38) a. *You are hungry, or not?*  
       ‘Are you hungry?’  
       b. *You are hungry, yes or not?*  
       ‘Are you hungry?’

A likely source of influence for these tags is the Malay interrogative construction:

- (39) Malay: *Dia makan atau tidak?*  
           He (eat) or not?  
           ‘Did he eat?’
- (40) Malay: *Dia makan ya `tak?*  
           He ate yes or not?  
           ‘He ate, didn’t he?’

#### 4.3. Invariant interrogative tags

Another interrogative tag that is often used in MalE is the phrase *can or not?* It has several functions: seeking permission (41), confirming ability (42) or assessing volition (43):

- (41) *I want to come, can or not?*  
       ‘Can I come?’
- (42) *They must submit the forms tomorrow, can or not?*  
       ‘Can they submit the forms tomorrow?’
- (43) *You carry this for me, can or not?*  
       ‘Will you carry this for me?’

The only interrogative tags used for polarity-based tag interrogatives are *is it* and *isn’t it?* They serve the function of BrE reversed polarity tags, as well as constant polarity tags:

- (44) *They are coming, isn’t it?*  
       ‘They are coming, aren’t they?’

- (45) *He can play the piano, is it?*  
'He can play the piano, can he?'

#### 4.4. *Yes-no* questions without inversion

These use rising intonation rather than auxiliary inversion:

- (46) *They were fat or thin?*  
'Were they fat or thin?'
- (47) *He likes red or white wine?*  
'Does he like red or white wine?'
- (48) *They eat rice or noodles?*  
'Did they eat rice or noodles?'

As examples (46) to (48) suggest, this rising intonation question form frequently involves alternatives between NPs.

#### 4.5. Lack of verb inversion in adverbial initial sentences

In sentences with an initially-negated declarative or adverbially-fronted declarative there is no auxiliary inversion:

- (49) *Never he was so delighted.*  
'Never was he so delighted.'
- (50) *Scarcely ever he has come here.*  
'Scarcely ever has he come here.'

### 5. Other syntactic variational features

Other mesolectal features in the syntax of MalE that have still to be researched in greater depth are listed here for the sake of completeness:

Pronoun-copying:

- (51) *My brother, he is an engineer.*

Further research needs to be undertaken to ascertain whether this is 'normal' left dislocation, with a contrastive, pragmatic effect, or whether – as reported in some varieties like SAfBIE – it is becoming grammaticalised in some lects.

Pronoun-ellipsis:

- (52) *She wrote the letter but forgot to post ∅.*

Adverbial positioning:

(53) *They must admit immediately to the offence.*

Ellipsis of expletive *it/there* + *be*:

(54) *No point pursuing the matter further.*

Whilst (54) is part of casual StE, the stylistic restriction does not appear to apply in MalE.

Substitution of *there* and *be* with existential/locative *got*:

(55) *Got no food in the fridge.*  
 ‘...There is...’

Grammatical particles:

There are typically MalE particles which replace the various functions represented by intonational variation and grammatical structures in BrE. These include *what* (56), *man* (57), *one* (58) and *lah* (59):

(56) *I told, **what**, the other day.*  
 ‘Don’t you remember/Aren’t you convinced that I told you?’

(57) *He isn’t the Captain, **man**, he’s just a prefect.*  
 ‘Don’t talk nonsense, he’s not the captain, just a prefect!’

(58) *She is real lazy, **one**.*  
 ‘She sure is a typical lazy thing!’

(59) *Please, **lah**, come home early.*  
 ‘For heaven’s sake, come home early.’

Such epithets serve a grammatical and pragmatic function, usually expressing disapproval. Example (57) with *man* exists, of course, in BrE and other varieties worldwide, and is listed here for comparative purposes.

## 6. Lexis

Any discussions of Malaysian English would be incomplete without mentioning features of lexical indigenisation. The main focus will be on substrate language referents (use of substrate lexicon in MalE) and on StE lexicalisation (English lexemes with MalE usage).

## 6.1. Substrate language referents

Local terms can be considered from the following vantage points: institutionalised concepts; emotional and cultural loading; semantic restriction; cultural/culinary terms; hyponymous collocations; campus/student coinages.

## Institutional concepts:

Some local words pertaining to particular institutions that have been borrowed into MalE have no equivalent in StE. Some examples are terms like *bumiputra* ‘son of the soil, patriot’ and *khalwat* ‘proximity, intimacy’.

## Emotional and cultural loading:

Some examples of words with local cultural and emotional association are *kampung* ‘village’, *dusun* ‘orchard’, *bomoh* ‘medicine-man’, *penghulu* ‘village-chief’ and *pantang* ‘taboo’.

## Semantic restriction:

These are local words with a possible English translation but used in a semantically restricted field. For example *dadah* ‘drugs’ does not mean drugs in general but drugs used illicitly. Other lexemes with such a semantic restriction are those like *haj* (pilgrimage, especially of Muslims to Mecca), *toddy* (fermented coconut-water – different from fresh coconut water sold as an iced refreshment), and *silat* (the Malay art of self-defence). Thus we read of *silat*-groups and *toddy*-shops. The word *padi* (*paddy* in BrE) also has such semantic restriction – meaning ‘rice-grown in the fields’ – i.e. ‘unhusked rice’. Hence, there is an overlap but also an opposition between the pairs *dadah* – *drugs*; *haj* – *pilgrimage*; *toddy* – *coconut water*; *silat* – *self-defence* and *padi* – *rice*. In fact the first item of each pair is a sub-type of the second item.

## Cultural and culinary terms:

These are local culinary and domestic referents specifically akin to a characteristic of local origin and ecology. Some such lexemes are *durian* (a thorny fruit) and *sambal* ‘condiment’ paste. Such words, similar to the Indian *sari* and Japanese *kimono* are now slowly being transported to at least the South East Asian region, e.g. the words *durian* and *sambal* in Sri Lanka.

## Hyponymous collocations:

The presence of local words collocated with an English term is yet another type of lexical indigenisation. A hyponymous relationship is exhibited with the English equivalent as the superordinate and the local word as the subordinate referent. Some examples are words such as *meranti* ‘wood’, *orang asli* ‘people’, *batik* ‘cloth’, *syariah* ‘court’, *nobat* ‘drums’, *bersanding* ‘ceremony’ and *path dab bhog* ‘ceremony’.

Campus/student coinages:

These are a few words that have recently come into currency – being transported from Malay due to the change in medium of instruction in education and the subsequent strong influence of this language. Thus students in schools and at campuses use these local referents. Some examples are *lecheh* ‘troublesome, inconvenient’; *teruk* ‘serious, in bad shape’; *doongu* ‘silly, dumb, stupid, foolish’. Whether these code-switched, slangy items will prove durable is hard to say.

## 6.2. Standard English lexicalisation

The speaker of Malaysian English also has a tendency to use some of the StE lexemes in novel ways. The following processes will be briefly exemplified: polysemic variation; semantic restriction; informalisation; formalisation; directional reversal; college colloquialisms.

Polysemic variation:

Some StE lexemes keep their original meaning whilst taking on an extended semantic range. Examples are *cut* and *open*. In addition to its usual sense, *cut* has the following meanings in MalE: ‘to overtake’ (60), ‘to beat’ (61) and ‘to reduce’ (62):

- (60) *I tried to **cut** him but he was driving too fast.*
- (61) *Rahman **cut** me by only two marks to become the first boy in class.*
- (62) *The shopkeeper **cut** twenty cents for that breakage when he gave back the change.*

Likewise *open* has an extended range of meanings taking the following direct objects: *blinds, curtains*, (StE ‘draw’); *light, electrical appliances* (StE ‘switch on’); *shoes, socks* (StE ‘remove’); *tap* (StE ‘turn on’); *clothes* (StE ‘take off’, ‘undress’); *zip, buttons, hooks* (StE ‘unfasten’, ‘undo’).

Semantic restriction:

Some of the lexemes in MalE are used in a narrower sense, confined to specific referents only. Some noteworthy examples are the lexemes *windy, heaty* and *cooling* as applied to foods and drinks. Another example of restricted reference is the lexeme *tuck-shop* – referring specifically to the canteen or refectory of schools. Likewise *coffee-shop, five-foot, one kind* – meaning ‘weird or peculiar’ as in (63):

- (63) *She is **one kind** really – won’t even smile at you although she knows you.*

Informalisation:

Many of the lexemes used by the MalE speaker tend to be informal (colloquial) substitutions of StE words. As has been stated earlier, MalE in its most representative state is of widest currency among the mesolectal speakers. Thus it is not su-

prising to find a profusion of lexemes indicating a more informal style and register – words like *kids* (for ‘children’) or *hubby* (for ‘husband’) appearing in headlines style in the StE local dailies, as in *Eight kids burnt to death as fire guts Kampung Jawa* and *Amok woman stabs hubby*. Other such examples are:

<i>flick</i>	-	‘steal’
<i>line</i>	-	‘profession’
<i>fellow</i>	-	‘person’ (male or female)
<i>sleep</i>	-	‘go to bed’
<i>spoilt</i>	-	‘out of order’
<i>follow</i>	-	‘accompany’
<i>spend</i>	-	‘give a treat’

#### Formalisation:

On the other hand, there are occasions, when the MalE speaker has a tendency to use more formal words in an informal context. Sey (1973: 38) termed this ‘precision’ in connection with Ghanaian English, while Goffin (1934: 14) described this as the “Latinity” of Indian English. It is not rare, therefore, to read letters of a personal nature asking a friend to *furnish* him with the details regarding a group tour (instead of *providing* or *sending him*) Likewise a friend may ask *Did you witness the accident last night along Jalan Bangsar?* (instead of *see*).

#### Directional reversal:

There are certain lexemes, especially verbs, that MalE speakers tend to use in reverse direction. This is a frequent phenomenon with converse pairs like *go/come*, *bring/send*, *fetch/take* and *borrow/lend*. This could be attributed to the absence of two separate lexemes in the local language for such a meaning. In Bahasa Malaysia, the concepts of ‘borrow’ and ‘lend’, for example, are subsumed under one lexeme *pinjam*, although the difference between the meaning of ‘borrow’ and ‘lend’ is shown by the benefactive suffix *kan*:

- (61) *She **borrowed** me her camera.*  
‘...lent...’
- (62) *He always likes to **lend** my books.*  
‘...borrow...’
- (63) *We’ll **go** over to your house to-night.*  
‘...come...’
- (64) *Can you **send** me home first?*  
‘...take...’
- (65) *I **take** my daughter here everyday.*  
‘...bring...’

MaLE usage seems to indicate the reverse in directional terms.

College colloquialism:

The student population being a major group of MaLE usage, it is inevitable that certain StE lexemes have been localised for informal use especially among students in school (secondary), at colleges (tertiary), and universities. Such words relate to studies, examinations and youth, for example:

- |                                      |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>mugger</i> (or <i>book-worm</i> ) | - | 'an extremely studious person'                  |
| <i>frus</i>                          | - | 'frustrated'                                    |
| <i>fantab</i>                        | - | a blend of <i>fantastic</i> and <i>fabulous</i> |
| <i>worst type</i>                    | - | a friendly term for criticising a colleague     |

### Selected references

Please consult the General references for titles mentioned in the text but not included in the references below. For a full bibliography see the accompanying CD-ROM.

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# **Synopses**

The editors



# Synopsis: morphological and syntactic variation in the British Isles

Bernd Kortmann

## 1. Introduction

With the exception of British Creole, all varieties or regional groups of varieties spoken in the British Isles covered in this Handbook are L1 varieties, which makes the British Isles the second major L1 region in the Anglophone world, besides North America. Since this is, from the present-day perspective, the most distinctive characteristic of this world region, this synopsis will largely confine itself to these eight varieties or groups of varieties. More exactly, the focus will be on (the distribution of) the most salient properties and patterns of the so-called Celtic Englishes (IrE, ScE, WeE) as well as of the non-standard varieties spoken in the Orkney and Shetland Isles, in East Anglia, in the North, the Southwest, and the Southeast of England. Of these, IrE and the dialects in the North of England exhibit the largest number of non-standard morphosyntactic features, while the Orkney and Shetland dialects are the least non-standard of all British Isles varieties covered in this Handbook.

British Creole (BrC) is the only Creole spoken in the British Isles and exhibits typical Creole properties like preverbal tense and aspect particles (e.g. the progressive marker *a* or the anterior marker *did*), *no* as a preverbal negator, deletion of *be*, and a *say*-based complementizer, as in *tell him seh we ready fe him* (Sebba, this volume). These properties are not attested in other varieties in the British Isles and not found in L1 varieties of English in general (cf. the Global Synopsis by Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi, this volume). Moreover, as pointed out by Sebba (this volume), giving an adequate account of BrC is even more complex than for Jamaican Creole, on which it is based, since variability in BrC also results from code-switching and L2 acquisition strategies. This makes the grammar of BrC even less suitable for inclusion in the present synopsis, as for most areas of morphosyntax special comments would be necessary setting BrC apart from all other, exclusively L1, varieties in this world region.

A synopsis is necessarily subject to severe constraints concerning the breadth and depth of coverage. As a consequence it may give the impression of a much higher degree of homogeneity and pervasiveness than is appropriate, especially for regional groups of varieties like the dialects of North England, where in a number of respects the dialects of the Far North(east) behave differently from those in the Central North (especially in Lancashire and Yorkshire). Below only

the most remarkable features, patterns and tendencies will be addressed, based on the 76-features catalogue which forms the basis of the interactive maps on the CD-ROM (for an in-depth account cf. Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi, this volume) and the individual Handbook chapters, to which the reader is referred for detailed information. For easier reference, the number code of those features which are part of this catalogue is specified in square brackets. All examples are taken from Handbook chapters unless indicated otherwise.

## 2. Tense, aspect and modality

Especially when compared with the L1 varieties in the US, the varieties of the British Isles, seen as a whole, do not exhibit many non-standard tense and aspect features, even if interesting (combinations of) properties may be attested in individual varieties.

The two most widely attested tense and aspect features, found in five varieties each, are the levelling of the difference between the **Present Perfect** and the Simple Past [25], which is especially pronounced in ScE, IrE, and the Southwest, and the use of *be* as a perfect auxiliary [26]. The conservative Germanic *be*-perfect is a typical northern feature (Orkney and Shetland, IrE, ScE, North), but also attested in the Southeast. In the Orkney and Shetland Isles the *be*-perfect has even taken over the entire territory of perfect marking, i.e. to the exclusion of *have*, as in *I'm seen it*. IrE makes use of both features and is, in general, that variety with the broadest array of perfect markers and constructions in the British Isles. Besides the *be*-perfect for mutative verbs and the use of medial objects (for resultative uses of the perfect, as in *And you eat nothing till you're, have the stations made*), both of which are recessive features, witness the use of the Simple Past for the experiential perfect (*Were you ever in Kenmare?*), of the Simple Present for the continuative perfect (*I'm in here about four months*), and of the clearly substratal (and most stereotypically Irish) *after*-perfect [33] for events in the recent past, as in *And when the bell goes at six you just think you were only after going over*. The medial-object perfect is also attested in ScE. Other special uses in ScE corresponding to the Present Perfect in StE include *there* with (a) the past participle in resultative contexts (*There's something fallen down the sink*) and (b) the Past Progressive for events in the recent past, as in *I was speaking to John on Friday there*.

For many non-standard varieties of English across the world (and spontaneous spoken English, in general) it has been observed that the **Progressive** is used with a wider range of verbs and displays a wider range of uses. This has resulted in suggestions that the English Progressive may indeed be on its way, or having developed already, into a general Imperfective (Gachelin 1997: 34-36, 43-44). This tendency is less pronounced in the British Isles, where we find a kind of north-south divide (see section 11 for more details of this divide). In the southern

varieties (Southwest, Southeast, East Anglia) a widening use of the Progressive [21] is not reported. In fact, in traditional East Anglian dialect the simple form sometimes does service for *be* + *Ving* as a progressive marker, as in (*The*) *kettle bile!* ('The kettle's boiling!'). On the other hand, in ScE, the Northern dialects, and especially in IrE and the Orkney and Shetland Isles, the tendency for the Progressive to conquer further territory is confirmed. Beyond the widespread habitual use of the Progressive in WeE (*He's going to the cinema every week*), special meanings of the Progressive are attested mostly in the northern parts of Wales for older speakers with Welsh as their first language, suggesting Welsh influence on WeE. Concerning constructions coding progressive aspect, WeE, IrE, and the dialects of Northern England share a feature which is found only very rarely outside the British Isles, namely *was sat* and *was stood* with progressive meaning [32], as in *when you're stood there* 'when you are standing there' (which in IrE is the less frequent of the two).

Special markers of **habituality** are characteristic of the SW, WeE and IrE. Relevant markers are *do* [23] (*As I do say to my niece, I say, ...*; SW), *be('s)* [22] especially in Northern Irish dialects and Ulster Scots (*It's better, because you be's bored doing nothing at home*), and *do be* [24], as in (*They does be lonesome by night ...*; IrE). *Be(s)* and *do be* can be used both with the simple and progressive forms of the verb. In IrE habitual marking involving *do* is typical of urban working-class people and southern rural dialects.

Beyond the domain of habituality, IrE, WeE and the dialects of the SW share the use of *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27]. In WeE, for example, special progressive constructions involving *do* are attested, and in both WeE and, especially, the SW we find the use of unstressed *do* as an analytic tense marker, as in *She did do a lot of needlework*. The use of (forms of) *do* as tense and aspect markers is also attested for BrC and in many non-standard varieties outside the British Isles, especially in Pidgins and Creoles (cf. Kortmann 2004).

In the domain of **modality**, clear examples of **double modals** [34], as in *They might could be working in the shop*, are attested only in ScE and, as the only dialect area in England, in the Northeast, i.e. Northumberland and Tyneside. More combinations of modals are possible in ScE than in the Northeast, where the second element always needs to be *can* or *could* and where, in general, this feature is recessive. In general, the Northeast modals system resembles ScE much more than StE. In Orkney dialect only *can* 'be able to' is found in double modal constructions (e.g. *He'll no can deu that*). Another noteworthy modals feature which only these three northernmost British varieties share is that they categorically make use of **epistemic *mustn't*** [35], i.e. *mustn't* generally (in ScE indeed *must* generally) has the conclusion meaning, as in *This mustn't be the place*. This use is also found in IrE and the Southeast of England, but is categorical in neither of these two varieties. What applies to all non-standard varieties in the British Isles is the absence or very rare use of the StE modals *shall*, *should*, *may*, and *ought to*. In some varieties

(e.g. ScE, North), for example, *will* is used instead of *shall* even in questions, as in *Will I open the window?*, and *can* is regularly used with permission sense, as in *You can have this afternoon off*. **Special (uses of) modal verbs or constructions** include *böst* ‘had to, must’ (Shetland), *man* ‘must’ (Orkney and Shetland), archaic past tense forms of *dare* (*dursn*’t/*dussn*’t ‘dare not’ in East Anglia), *want* meaning ‘should’ (ScE), and constructions with *need* or *want* combining with the past participle, as in *your hair needs cut* (North). Surprisingly rare, or at least rarely commented on, in the British Isles is the use of *would* in *if*-clauses [31] (attested only in ScE and the Southeast).

### 3. Verb morphology

For **non-finite forms** the most widely and pervasively attested morphological feature in the British Isles is the levelling of the morphological distinction between preterite and past participle forms. In seven out of eight varieties this is due to the use of either unmarked forms [37], as in ... *and he come up to me and wanted to know*, or preterite forms also serving as past participles [38] (e.g. *you had to find out which one was broke*). The sole exception is WeE, which appears to make use of neither of these strategies, preferring the regularization of irregular verb forms [36], which indeed is the third levelling strategy used in Orkney/Shetland, the North, East Anglia, the Southwest and the Southeast. This strategy is not found in ScE and IrE, though.

Only the southern varieties (East Anglia, Southwest, Southeast) and WeE have *a*-prefixing on present participles [41] (e.g. *I’m a-runnen*). *For to* is regularly used as an infinitive marker in ScE (and BrC), whereas in more varieties it is used in infinitival purpose clauses [70] (see section 6 below).

With regard to **finite forms**, East Anglia is unique in the British Isles in that it categorically uses zero marking for the third person singular in the Present Tense [53] (*he go, she come, that say*), a pervasive feature in almost all other regions of the English-speaking world. In East Anglia, invariant present tense forms are found even for *be*, if only in a specific context, namely the so-called presentative invariant *be*, as in *Here I be!* Otherwise there is a wide array of variety-specific inflected forms of *be* (non-negated as well as negated) in all tenses, such as *bees* for the Present subjunctive in Orkney and Shetland. Attested in a number of varieties, especially in the Southeast, is the morphological distinction in the Past Tense between full verb and auxiliary for *do*, namely *done* full verb vs. *did* auxiliary, as in *She done it, didn’t she?* For the Southeast, more exactly Reading, something similar has been reported for *have*: only for the full verb is *has* used as the invariant Present Tense form for all persons in singular and plural, as in *We has a muck around here*.

#### 4. Agreement

There is a pervasive tendency in non-standard varieties of English to do away with the last remnants of subject-verb agreement which we still find in StE (cf. also Hudson 1999). The most pervasive features in the British Isles in this respect are the following three. By far most widely attested is **existential/presentational *there's***, *there is*, *there was* with plural subjects [55], which appears to be categorical in all eight varieties investigated (e.g. *There's no columns*, *There was quite a few mines*), and which may indeed be considered to have crossed the threshold of spontaneous spoken StE. Attested in six varieties (not in the Southwest and Orkney/Shetland) is the **generalization of past tense *be*-forms** [59], i.e. either *was* for all persons in the singular and plural (*You was thirsty and they was thirsty, too*) or *were* for all persons in the singular and plural (*I were thirsty and he were thirsty, too*), closely followed by **invariant present tense forms** due to the generalization of third person singular *-s* [54], which is found in five varieties (but not in ScE, Orkney and Shetland, the northern dialects of IrE, and East Anglia). East Anglia does not exhibit the latter feature because, as the only variety in the British Isles, it uses just the opposite strategy for creating invariant present tense forms, namely zero marking of third person singular *-s* [53]. In only two varieties has each of the two following non-agreement features been observed: in East Anglia and Orkney/Shetland the use of **variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses** [56] (e.g. in the Orkney dialect *der* 'there is/are' and *they/dey wir* 'they was/were', as in *They wir a coo lowse in the byre*), and in (northern conservative) IrE and the North of England the so-called **Northern Subject Rule** [60], which can roughly be formulated as follows: every verb in the present tense can take an *s*-ending (as in *Aye, and your sister and your mam comes out*) unless its subject is an immediately adjacent simple pronoun. (Third person singular verbs always take the *s*-ending, as in StE.) In other words, the Northern Subject Rule involves a type-of-subject constraint (pronoun vs. common/proper noun) and a position constraint (+/- immediate adjacency of pronominal subject to verb); for a comprehensive analysis of the Northern Subject Rule compare Pietsch (2005). Something related to this feature is attested for the Shetland dialect where plural subject nouns often combine with verbs ending in *-s*, as in *dis horses poos weel* 'these horses pull well' or *Dem at comes oonbid* 'those who come uninvited'.

#### 5. Negation

The two by far most pervasive negation features in the British Isles, attested everywhere except for the Orkney and Shetland Isles, are **multiple negation** [44], as in *I couldn't find hardly none on 'em*, and unstressed **never as preverbal past tense negator** [49], as in *He never dropped like a set... against anybody* (referring

to a specific tennis match). Multiple negation is far more frequently used in the South than in the North of England (see section 11 below). Two other stereotypical negation features in non-standard varieties are *ain't* and invariant *don't*. These two are, however, found in far fewer varieties (and with more restrictions) than in the other world regions of English investigated in this Handbook. Both features are not attested in the two northernmost varieties of the British Isles (ScE, Orkney and Shetland). **Ain't** is primarily a southern phenomenon: as the negated form of *have* [46], as in *Him and I ain't been fishing for these last six weeks*, it is found only in the Southwest, the Southeast and East Anglia; as the negated form of *be* [45] (*He ain't heavy, he's my brother*) it is found in these three varieties as well as in WeE and IrE. Across all regions, *ain't* for negated forms of *have* is used much more frequently than for negated forms of *be*. **Invariant don't** [48] is a pervasive feature in WeE, East Anglia and the Southeast, but also attested in the dialects of North England. Interestingly, the Orkney and Shetland dialects exhibit none (!) of the nine non-standard negation features in our 76-features catalogue.

In East Anglia, the Southeast and the North we find an interesting phenomenon which has been observed in few other non-standard varieties of English around the world, namely the **was-weren't split** [51], as in *You was, weren't you?*. These varieties use *was* for all persons in the singular and (!) plural in affirmative sentences, while using *weren't* for all persons in singular (!) and plural in negative sentences, thus remorphologizing the number distinction of StE as a polarity distinction. What we have here is a showcase example of iconicity: a maximal difference in form (*was* vs. *weren't*) codes a maximal semantic and cognitive difference (affirmation vs. negation). The relevant non-standard varieties of English have clearly developed a more iconic polarity pattern than StE has.

**Special negative markers** are used in individual varieties. Best known is *nae*, which is a bound form in ScE (*They cannae sell it now, He isnae interested*), a free form in Orkney and Shetland (also *na*), and used both as a free and bound form in northern IrE. Also well known from these varieties in the northern parts of the British Isles is the use of *no* instead of *not* (most frequently with *be* and *have*), as in *She's no leaving* and *I've no seen him the day*.

**Invariant concord tags** of the type *innit/in't it/isn't it* [52] are a phenomenon typical of the three southern varieties (Southwest, Southeast, East Anglia). Otherwise an invariant tag particle is reported only for ScE, namely the agreement-seeking particle *e*, as in *He's coming, e?* or *He hadnae gone, e?* Other non-standard varieties have **tag systems** differing in interesting ways from the one of StE. In Tyneside English, for example, the tag system seems to be organized on the basis of the difference between questions seeking information and questions seeking confirmation. A special characteristic of IrE is that it allows *amn't* in tag questions (*I'm here, amn't I?*).



## 6. Subordination

The two most important domains to be discussed in this section are relativization and complementation. The most widely found **relativization strategies** in the British Isles are the following three (cf. also Herrmann 2005). First of all, across all regions, the use of **relative particles** (e.g. *that, what, as, at*) is much preferred over the use of relative (*wh-*) pronouns; moreover these relative particles are used in restrictive and non-restrictive contexts alike [62]. Of the non-standard relative particles, *what* [61] has the widest distribution and is indeed spreading: it is found everywhere in the British Isles except in the northern varieties (i.e. not in Orkney/Shetland, ScE, IrE; it is very rare, too, in Northumberland and Tyneside). Also found in five varieties (ScE, North, WeE, SW, SE) are **analytic possessive forms** (e.g. *that his, that's, what his, what's*) instead of *whose* [65], and (in IrE, North, East Anglia, Southeast, Southwest) **gapping** (or: zero-relativization) in subject position [66], as in *My friend's got a brother used to be in the school* and especially in existential and cleft constructions like *There was a parson went away from the village here*. In four varieties **resumptive (or: shadow) pronouns** [67] are regularly used, especially in IrE and the North, but also in the Southwest and ScE (e.g. *Out of the three questions we got two of them*). Regionally most restricted in the British Isles is the use of the **relative particles *as* and *at***, both of which are recessive. *As* [63] is found both in the North and the South (Southeast and Southwest), e.g. in *my dear sister as is dead and gone*, while *at* [64] is exclusively a northern feature attested only in the (middle) North of England (e.g. *Kelvin at my first husband came out of*), Ulster Scots (here also *ats* 'whose'), and Orkney and Shetland. Another non-standard property of relative clauses which does not seem to have a wide regional reach is the omission of prepositions attested in ScE (e.g. *of course there's a rope that you can pull the seat back up* [*with* omitted]).

For **complement clauses**, the two most pervasive features in the British Isles are **inverted word order in indirect questions** [69], as in *He asked me had I seen her*, and **unsplit *for to*** in infinitival purpose clauses [70], as in *there was always one man selected for to make the tea*. The former feature is found in all varieties except Orkney and Shetland, East Anglia and the Southeast. The only variety where unsplit *for to* is not attested is East Anglia. In ScE the infinitive is regularly marked by *for to*, also in non-purposive contexts like *You werenae allowed at this time for to go and take another job on*. ScE also offers many examples, which upon closer examination may as well be observed in other varieties, of different verb complementation patterns than in StE, e.g. verbs taking both infinitives and gerunds as complements where StE allows only one of the two, or verbs taking the infinitive where StE takes the gerund and vice versa. In ScE, young speakers, in particular, seem to prefer gerunds over infinitives. For certain verbs taking infinitival complements individual non-standard varieties omit the *to* (e.g. IrE for the verbs *order, compel, allow* and *help*).

The most pervasive and (near-) categorical subordination feature in the British Isles is to be found neither among relative nor complement clauses, but for **comparative clauses**, namely the use of *as what / than what* [71] (*He's older than what he looks, more than what you'd think*). Only in the Orkney and Shetland Isles is this feature not attested, otherwise it may be considered one of the top candidates for a non-standard feature on the brink of becoming part of the (informal) spoken standard.

For other types of subordinate clauses, notably **adverbial clauses**, many variety-specific connectives and uses of subordinators different from StE can be observed. Consider, for example, IrE *from* 'since' and *what time* 'when', or in traditional dialects of East Anglia the subordinating conjunctions *time* ('while' in *Go you and have a good wash time I git tea ready*) and, perhaps most strikingly, *do* ('otherwise, or else', as in *Don't you take yours off, do you'll get rheumatism*). Among special uses made of conjunctions known from StE we find, for example, IrE *whenever* 'when' (single occasion) or *while* 'until' in the Northern dialects, as in *Come home, see your horses, work while six o'clock*. One feature which has reached fame in the Celtic substrate debate is subordinating *and* in IrE (e.g. *I only thought of him there and ['while'] I cooking my dinner*) and, with restrictions also known from spontaneous spoken English, in ScE, where it is also used as an element introducing non-restrictive relative clauses. In ScE, Tyneside, and East Anglia we also find a special use of the StE coordinator *but*, namely as a sentence-final conjunctive adverb equivalent to *though*, as in *Well I warn't so very old but*.

## 7. Pronouns

The **most pervasive pronominal features** in the British Isles are the following three: *me* instead of *I* in coordinate subjects [10], as in *Me and my mam and dad are going out for a meal*, is pervasive in all eight varieties. Pervasive everywhere except in the Orkney and Shetland dialects is the use of *them* instead of demonstrative *those* [1], as in *Eat you them carrots*. Pervasive in all varieties except for ScE and Orkney/Shetland is *me* instead of possessive *my* [2] (*me mum, me brother*). Another distinctive pronominal property of the British Isles varieties is **the use of *us***. In no other world region are there so many varieties which use *us* in functions different from those in StE [11]: this applies to all varieties apart from WeE and, again, Orkney and Shetland. Widest currency has singular *us* 'me' (*show us, give us a kiss, you're the first person that's give us a tip*), which is the only non-standard use of *us* in IrE and East Anglia, but frequent is also plural *us* 'we' in expressions like *us kids*. Of all varieties in the British Isles, the Northern dialects exhibit the widest functional range of *us*, notably possessive *us*, as in *We like us town*, which is largely restricted to the North. In the North we also find *us* in subject function (*Us'll do it*), which is part of a broader phenomenon known as **pronoun**

**exchange** and documented only in the North, the Southwest and southern East Anglia: non-coordinated object forms are used in subject position [13] and, much more frequently (in East Anglia as the only option of the two), non-coordinated subject forms in object position [12], as in *Uncle Willy, they used to call him, you remember he?* The latter scenario is restricted to the first person plural in the North (*He got we out of bed*). Possibly, emphasis offers the key to understanding pronoun exchange (see Trudgill, this volume): subject pronouns occur as objects when they are emphasized, object pronouns as subjects when they are not emphasized. In East Anglia, emphasis (i.e. stress) also plays a role in the choice between *it* (only unstressed) and *that* (for stressed *it*), as in *Thass rainen vs. Ah, that wus me what done it*, on the one hand, and *they vs. thee*, on the other hand (*they* when stressed, *thee* when unstressed ‘they’, as in *Where are thee?*). These two features are not attested anywhere else in the British Isles.

Attested in more varieties, but nevertheless much more rarely in the British Isles than in non-standard varieties in other parts of the English-speaking world are **special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun** [3]: this feature is found pervasively in IrE and the Northern dialects, less so in ScE and East Anglia. The following pronominal forms are used: *yous(e)* is used in IrE (also *yez/yiz*), ScE (also *yins*) and Tyneside English (as well other areas in the North heavily influenced by Irish immigrants, such as Liverpool and inner-city Manchester). An analytic form can be found in East Anglia (*you... together*, as in *Where are you together?*). For the second person singular pronoun, we find in these (and other) dialects *you* or the conservative forms *ye*, *thou/thee*. In the Orkney and Shetland dialects *du/you* variation corresponds to **thou/thee variation** in the more traditional dialects of the North (especially in the Central North, like southern Yorkshire) and is an accommodation phenomenon.

In Orkney and Shetland, the Southwest and IrE we find a phenomenon which in the recent literature has come to be known as **pronominal gender**, gender animation or “gendered” pronouns (e.g. Wagner 2004, 2005). *She/her* is used for inanimate referents [7], as in *She was burning good* [about a house]. In Shetland English, for example, *lamp, fish, kirk, world* and some time expressions are feminine (*Da millennium is comin, but shö ...*). In IrE this usage seems to be largely restricted to cars and bikes. Much rarer, and a prominent feature only in the Southwest, is generic *he/his* for all genders [8], as in *I bet thee cansn’ climb he* [about a tree]. This pronominal feature is also attested in Orkney and Shetland for tools and natural phenomena such as tide and (perhaps due to Norwegian substratum) weather, but in general much less pervasively than in the SW.

As for **reflexive pronouns**, regularized reflexives paradigms [4], as in *they did it theirself/-ves*, are attested everywhere in the British Isles except for WeE as well as Orkney and Shetland. In IrE this regularization does not include *hissself*. In five varieties (but not in ScE, WeE, and East Anglia), object pronoun forms may, additionally or alternatively to feature [4], be chosen as the base for reflex-

ives [5], e.g. *meself*. In Orkney/Shetland the object pronoun forms by themselves may even serve as reflexives (e.g. *him* ‘himself’). Besides these two properties of reflexives, three varieties exhibit a third one, namely a lack of number distinction in reflexives [6] (plural *-self*; IrE, Southeast, Southwest). Another relatively frequently found reflexives feature across the British Isles (attested in five varieties) is the use of *myself/meself* in a non-reflexive function [9], as in *this is me husband and meself*. By contrast, the absolute use of reflexives seems to be restricted to very few varieties, and is particularly prominent in IrE (e.g. *And by God, he said, ... he’d be the devil, if himself wouldn’t make him laugh*) where it can be interpreted as a kind of ‘topic’ marker.

Special **demonstratives** exhibiting remnants of the original three-term (close-distant-remote) system known from Middle English and traditional dialects of ScE and IrE are reported only for the dialects of the North, Orkney and Shetland (*yon* or *yonder* indicating remoteness). Moreover in a number of dialects (e.g. in the North, the Southwest and East Anglia), *this* and *that* are reinforced by *here* and *there* respectively, yielding *this here/that there*.

## 8. Noun phrase structure

The **two pervasive properties** which the British Isles varieties exhibit in the noun phrase are the absence of plural marking after measure nouns [14] (e.g. *four foot, three mile*) and the irregular use of articles [17]. Unusual uses of the definite article are reported for Orkney and Shetland, the North and in the Celtic Englishes, e.g. in IrE *the maths nowadays seems to be complicated*, or *poor people were starved with the hunger*. On the other hand, in some northern dialects (especially in Lancashire and Yorkshire) the reduction (e.g. to /t/ or a glottal stop) or even deletion of the definite article (especially in East Yorkshire) or indefinite article can be regularly observed. In Orkney and Shetland we find the invariant form *a* for the indefinite article, regardless whether the following noun begins with a consonant or a vowel.

The only varieties where **group plurals** [15] (e.g. *two Secretary of States*) and **group genitives** [16] (e.g. *the man I met’s girlfriend*) are not reported are the northernmost variety (Orkney/Shetland) and the two southernmost varieties, i.e. the Southwest and the Southeast. For individual nouns many irregular plural forms could be reported (e.g. *knives* or *wives* in the Northern English dialects); similarly, for possessive forms, in the dialects of the North plurals and proper nouns ending in *-s* nevertheless take the possessive *-s* ending, yielding *Marks’s* (for *Marks and Spencer*), *Joyce’s* or *other folks’s*.

With regard to **adjectives**, the two pervasive features in the British Isles, again with the exception of the Orkney and Shetland dialects, are the use of double comparatives and superlatives [19], as in *I’d be more happier out there than what*

*I should be haymaking*, and regularized comparison strategies [20] (e.g. *one of the most pretty sunsets*, or *the regularest kind of person*), with restrictions in some varieties on the latter (e.g. in IrE *most pretty*, but not *regularest*).

## 9. Adverbs and prepositions

As in almost all non-standard varieties of English around the world, there is no formal distinction between adverbs and adjectives in the British Isles varieties, i.e. adverbs have the same form as adjectives. For example, this is a pervasive and exceptionless property for **manner adverbs** (*he came quick*) [42]; only for East Anglia it seems as if **adverbs used as degree modifiers** [43] keep their adverb ending *-ly*, different from the vast majority of non-standard varieties of English in the world (e.g. *a high technical job*).

Prepositional usage in non-standard varieties is certainly a field which merits systematic investigation, not least from a cognitive semantic perspective. However, no larger regional patterns can be identified in the British Isles. Interesting examples of prepositional usage in individual varieties include the following from Northern dialects: *down* instead of *in/to* (*He works down Manchester*), *off* or *with* instead of agentive *by* (*I won't do nothing unless I get paid for it. Not off my mam and dad anyway*), *off* instead of *from* in *my sister tapes some canny songs off the charts like*, and the omission of the prepositions *to* and *of* in double object constructions, as in *So, she won't give us it* (see also section 10). In Yorkshire *while* is used instead of (*un*)*til* (e.g. *working nine while five*), not only as a preposition but also as a subordinating conjunction (see section 6 above). In East Anglia, for example, StE *of* is pronounced *on*, as in *What do you think on it?* In other varieties *on* does service not only for StE *of* but also StE *for*, as in the WeE expressions *the name on* or *the term on* (e.g. *there's a word on that*).

## 10. Discourse organization and word order

Two syntactic features which are pervasive among the non-standard varieties in all six other world regions covered in this Handbook are surprisingly rarely attested in the British Isles: the **lack of inversion or lack of auxiliaries in *wh*-questions** [73] (*What you doing?*) and the **lack of inversion in main clause *yes/no* questions** [74] (*You get the point?*), both of which can be considered a firmly established part of spontaneous spoken English. If these two features are reported at all in the British Isles then in the northern varieties (ScE, IrE, North of England; not in Orkney and Shetland). The varieties in the South of England (East Anglia, Southeast, Southwest) do not seem to exhibit them at all, and in WeE only [74] is attested.

By contrast, the **presence of the subject in imperatives**, as in *Go you there!*, is widely found. In **double object constructions**, either order of direct and indirect object is possible in northern dialects in the case of two pronominal objects (*He couldn't give him it; I tan* ['took'] *it her back*); if only one of the objects is a pronoun, then the pronominal object precedes the non-pronominal one (e.g. *Open me t'door*).

A characteristic property of the Celtic Englishes (and a likely case of Celtic substrate influence) is a predilection for **clefting and fronting**, with the former being slightly more common in IrE (*It's looking for more land a lot of them are*; cf. also reverse clefts in ScE, such as *And this was him landed with a broken leg*) and the latter in WeE (e.g. *Coal they're getting out mostly*). Of course, typical spontaneous spoken structures like **left-dislocation** (*Joan, she's an angel*) and, less frequently, **right-dislocation** (*He was some man him, He's got his head screwed on, has Dave*) are recurrently reported for many varieties.

As a focussing device, almost all non-standard varieties of the British Isles, especially those in the North (except for Orkney and Shetland) and the Celtic Englishes, employ **like as a focussing device** [75]. The dialects in the North of England exhibit a particularly broad range of uses of *like* in this function: clause-finally as a reinforcing element of right-dislocation (*I'm a Geordie, me, like*) or as an element indicating interest or surprise (*How'd you get away with that like?*), clause-initially as an element introducing a new topic (*Like for one round five quid, that was like three quid, like two-fifty each*). Especially in the speech of young people, **like is pervasive as a quotative particle** [76], as in *And she was like "what do you mean?"*.

## 11. Conclusion

Perhaps the most interesting result of the comparative study of the morphology and syntax of the non-standard varieties of the British Isles is a recurrent regional pattern. What emerges when viewing together the information in the Handbook chapters and in the large-scale comparative analysis of the British Isles varieties based on the 76-features catalogue investigated worldwide is a **north-south divide** for a range of morphosyntactic properties, with the core of the north constituted by ScE, Orkney/Shetland and the dialects of North England, and the south constituted by the Southwest, the Southeast, and East Anglia. For most of the relevant features, IrE (not least due to northern IrE) patterns with the varieties in the north, and WeE with those in the south. Table 1 illustrates those features which are exclusively or almost exclusively found in the varieties of the north, Table 2 the corresponding set for the south:

Table 1. North-South divide I: Morphosyntactic features exclusively or predominantly found in the northern parts of the British Isles

	NORTH				SOUTH			
	O/S	ScE	N	IrE	WeIE	SW	SE	EA
3		✓	!	!				✓
21	!	✓	✓	!				
26	!	✓	✓	!		✓		
34	!	!	!					
35	!	!	!	✓			✓	
67		✓	!	!		✓		
73		✓	!	!				
74		✓	!	!	!			

✓ attested, but not frequently used

! pervasive

3 special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun (e.g. *youse*, *y'all*, *aay'*, *yufela*, *you ... together*, *all of you*, *you ones'/uns*, *you guys*, *you people*)21 wider range of uses of the Progressive (e.g. *I'm liking this*, *What are you wanting?*)26 *be* as perfect auxiliary (e.g. *They're not left school yet*)34 double modals (e.g. *I tell you what we might should do*)35 epistemic *mustn't* ('can't, it is concluded that... not'; e.g. *This mustn't be true*)67 resumptive / shadow pronouns (e.g. *This is the house which I painted it yesterday*)73 lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in *wh*-questions (e.g. *What you doing?*)74 lack of inversion in main clause *yes/no* questions (e.g. *You get the point?*)

To these we may add the Northern Subject Rule [60], found exclusively in northern IrE and the North of England, as well as the relative particle *at* [64] in the North of England as well as Orkney and Shetland.

Table 2. North-South divide II: Morphosyntactic features exclusively or predominantly found in the southern parts of the British Isles

	NORTH				SOUTH			
	O/S	ScE	N	IrE	WeIE	SW	SE	EA
41					✓	✓	✓	!
45				✓	✓	✓	✓	!
46						✓	✓	!
52		✓			!	✓	✓	
61			!		✓	✓	✓	!

✓ attested, but not frequently used

! pervasive

41 *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms (e.g. *They wasn't a-doin' nothin' wrong*)45 *ain't* as the negated form of *be* (e.g. *They're all in there, ain't they?*)46 *ain't* as the negated form of *have* (e.g. *I ain't had a look at them yet*)52 invariant non-concord tags (e.g. *innit/in't it/isn't* in *They had them in their hair, innit?*)61 relative particle *what* (e.g. *This is the man what painted my house*)

Another syntactic feature supporting this north-south divide is multiple negation (or: negative concord), as in *I've **never** been to market to buy **no** heifers*. As in most regions of the English-speaking world, multiple negation [44] is widely attested, too, in the British Isles, with the sole exception of the Orkney and Shetland dialects. However, a most surprising and as yet undocumented regional skewing is reported in Anderwald (this volume, to appear) for England, Scotland and Wales. In analyzing (a) the spoken subsample of the British National Corpus and (b) the data in the Freiburg English Dialect corpus (FRED), Lieselotte Anderwald found a clear south-north cline, with rough proportions of multiple negation usage of 40-45% in the South of England, 30% in the Midlands, and around 10% in the North of England, Scotland and Wales.

Beyond this major north-south divide, which has not been observed before and needs to be explored further, two points seem worthwhile mentioning. The first of these relates to the varieties in the North of the British Isles. Although the grammar of the Orkney and Shetland dialects is allegedly closely modelled onto the grammar of ScE, more parallels can be found between the grammars of ScE and the dialects of the North (especially Northeast) of England than between those of ScE and the Orkney and Shetland dialects. Of the 76-features catalogue investigated worldwide, five features attested in Orkney and Shetland are not attested in ScE, and 24 morphosyntactic features attested in ScE are not documented for the Orkney and Shetland dialects. In general, the Orkney and Shetland dialects exhibit the by far smallest number of non-standard morphosyntactic features in the British Isles. Secondly, it is in the tense and aspect domain that IrE and WeE, often joined by the dialects in the Southwest of England, exhibit properties not or hardly found in other varieties. Relevant features are the use of special habitual markers and constructions, and *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning.

Finally, this comparative analysis allows us to identify **the most and the least widely attested morphosyntactic features** in the non-standard L1 varieties of the British Isles. Of the 76 features investigated in the non-standard varieties of English around the globe (see Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi, this volume), the following are attested in only one or at most two varieties in the British Isles. Four features are attested in only **one variety**: generic *he/his* for all genders [8] in the Southwest, habitual *be* [22] in (especially Northern) IrE, the *after*-Perfect [33] in IrE, and invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular [53] in East Anglia. Attested in no more than **two varieties** are, for example, non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12] and, vice versa, non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13] in the North and Southwest, *would* in *if*-clauses [31] in ScE and the Southeast, variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses [56] in East Anglia as well as Orkney and Shetland, the Northern Subject Rule in northern IrE and the North of England, and the relative particle *at* [64] in the dialects of the North as well as the Orkney and Shetland Isles. On the other hand, we can also pinpoint the most pervasive



grammatical properties in the British Isles. In **all eight non-standard L1 varieties** do we find existential/presentational *there's*, *there is*, *there was* with plural subjects [55], *me* instead of *I* in coordinate subjects [10], adverbs (other than degree modifiers) derived from adjectives lack *-ly* [42], and the absence of plural marking after measure nouns [14]. Attested in at least **seven varieties** are *them* instead of demonstrative *those* [1], the irregular use of articles [17], double comparatives and superlatives [19], levelling the distinction between preterite forms and past participles via the use of unmarked forms [37] or via preterite forms replacing the past participle [38], degree modifier adverbs lacking *-ly* [43], multiple negation/negative concord [44], *never* as preverbal past tense negator [49], *as what / than what* in comparative clauses [71], and *like* as a focussing device [75].

Whether the top British Isles features are equally pervasive, and the rarest features in the British Isles equally rare, in the other world regions covered in this Handbook will be explored in the Global Synopsis (Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi, this volume). It is there, too, that the regional distribution of 76 morphosyntactic features will be put in perspective against a comparison of the structural properties of non-standard L1 varieties, L2 varieties, and Pidgins and Creoles.

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# **Synopsis: morphological and syntactic variation in the Americas and the Caribbean**

Edgar W. Schneider

## **1. Introduction**

Varieties of English spoken in North America and in the Caribbean share a number of structural phenomena with other Englishes world-wide, but there are also several distinctive traits with regional extensions. Of course, the most obvious question that stands behind a comparison of varieties in this region is that for typological differences between the dialect grammars of the mainland and the “creole” grammars of the Caribbean and its vicinity. In approaching this question I have tried to steer a compromise between categorizations reported in the literature and more recent lines of thinking which accept blurred boundaries. The following discussion categorizes morphosyntactic features into broad grammatical categories, largely as suggested to authors in the original project phase. In summarizing the variability found I started out from the feature lists provided by authors as input for the interactive map display on the CD-ROM. Subsequently, I have supplemented these categorizations extensively with data drawn from the papers (to which the reader is primarily referred as the sources of the statements made below) and, occasionally, from further references. It should be noted that such a synopsis unavoidably needs to abstract from many details, i.e. it tends to overgeneralize and ignores some facts. Otherwise, no broader picture, the goal of such a survey, would emerge. Readers interested in specific phenomena and their exact diffusion patterns are warned to be cautious, to take the statements below with a grain of salt, and to consult the original sources for details.

## **2. Tense, aspect and modality**

Most grammars of English analyze the language as realizing two distinct aspectual categories, the perfect (expressed by the auxiliary *have* plus a past participle and expressing something like ‘current relevance of an earlier action or state’) and the progressive (formally marked by the auxiliary *be* plus a present participle and expressing an inside perspective of an activity, viewing it as ongoing or inconcluded). Broadly, AmE dialects share this system, with some slight modifications, while creoles mark a wider range of aspectual relations but pay less attention to tense marking.

In AmE, a clear-cut functional distinction between the **perfect** and the past tense is typically not upheld as consistently as it is in the grammar of British standard English; such a difference is reported as missing in CollAmE, OzE, ChcE and NfldE (as well as in a few of the creoles) and as weakened in a few other varieties [feature list no.25]. The auxiliary *have* may be omitted in several dialects of AmE. AAVE has recently developed a new formal variant, *had* with a past participle, with a simple past or perfect (rather than a past perfect ‘past-before-past’) reading; this is now also reported for some varieties of ChcE as well as for the English of Anguilla in the eastern Caribbean. A formal variant found elsewhere in the English-speaking world, the use of the auxiliary *be* with the perfect, is rare in the Americas, restricted to a few conservative dialects where close historical ties with a British origin can be hypothesized (NfldE, SEAmE, AnBahE); however, in Lumbee English in the Southeast this feature has been restructured as a distinctive ethnic marker [26]. AppE and NfldE allow a direct object to be placed between *have* and the past participle; AppE also has a perfective *never did* construction. The originally Irish *after*-perfect is documented for NfldE only, though with fewer functional restrictions than in Ireland proper [33]. NfldE also allows a perfective reading for simple non-past verb forms. A sequence-of-tenses rule is weak in AmE and generally fails to apply in Caribbean creoles [30].

An extension of the uses of the **progressive**, e.g. to stative verbs (*be wanting*, *was liking*), characterizes the conservative dialects of AmE (AppE, OzE, SEAmE, NfldE) and CollAmE in general; it occurs occasionally in ethnic varieties (ChcE and AAVE); and extends to the closest kin of AAVE in the Caribbean region, BahE; but it is not found in the Caribbean creoles proper [21]. The pattern *was stood* with progressive meaning [32] characterizes NfldE only. AppE and SE enclave dialects display several “**ingressive**/incipient” constructions (e.g. *got to coming*, *took to raising*, *went to driving*). For the formal variant of “*a*-prefixing”, see the section on verb morphology.

On the other hand, a wider range of aspectual categories characterizes creoles in particular (though not exclusively), and these languages tend to express them in formally different ways, typically by analytic **preverbal markers** (at least in basilectal varieties) – presumably this is their most distinctive, certainly their most widely cited, structural trait.

The choice of a **habitual** marker distinguishes individual varieties. A habitual *be* is found in North America (AAVE, Gullah, BahE, also NfldE, where the form, recessively used, is also *do be*, and some, apparently regional, varieties of ChcE). BahE and BIE have the formal variant *does be*, sometimes reduced to *'s be* in the Bahamas. Invariant *be* followed by a verbal *-ing* form with a habitual meaning (*he be playin'* ‘he always plays’) has been documented to be a vigorously spreading innovation of urban and adolescent varieties of AAVE. A form derived from *do* in this function is noted for Gullah (*duhs/does*), PanC, the eastern Caribbean (*doz*) and mesolectal TrnC and TobC, while other forms predominate in other Carib-

bean creoles (zero or *a*, with *da/de* as possible regional variants, in JamC). [23, 24] AppE, AAVE, NfldE and the dialect of Anguilla may mark actions as habitual by a verbal *-s* suffix. The habitual category cannot always be distinguished from **durative / continuative / progressive** events; in some varieties these fall together under one form as **imperfective** (as in the SurCs, expressed by *(d)e* or *ta*). For this function Gullah employs *duh/do*, JamC has *a*, less commonly also *de* (with  $\emptyset + Vin'$  occurring in the mesolect), and other creoles also have either *a* (eastern Islands, TobC, LimC), *de* (most CAmCs) or *e* (Dominica). The form *Vin* is stated to express habituality only in the Windward Islands but habituality or progressivity in the entire eastern Caribbean. In Anguilla, the progressive aspect can be expressed by *do be Vin*.

A **perfective** or 'completive' *done/don* is extremely widespread; it occurs both in most AmE dialects (most notably in AAVE and southern varieties) and in the Caribbean creoles [28]. AAVE has also a "sequential" *be done*. A pattern with perfective *done* preceded by a primary (tense-marked) auxiliary (e.g. *He is done gone, I had done quit*) seems restricted to earlier AAVE, however. Some SEAmE dialects (notably on the Outer Banks and among the Lumbee in North Carolina) have a functionally similar form, *slam*. With respect to *don*, some Caribbean creoles behave differently from North American dialects by allowing not only a preverbal but also a postverbal position (JamC; with the latter being restricted and considered an older variant in the eastern Caribbean). The corresponding form in SurCs, Portuguese-derived, is *kaba*, in VP-final position.

A form *been/ben* as a marker of **anteriority** is found in practically all creoles as well as, with restrictions, in AAVE (with reference to a distant past) and NfldE (where it is strictly localized and precedes a past participle verb form, not a bare root form) [29]. In JamC and Tob/TrnC *ben* is considered rural and basilectal, corresponding to *did* in the mesolect (a form also found in some eastern Caribbean locations). Variants of this form appear to be regionally distributed in the Caribbean, with *ben* being the western, mostly JamC, form (also in SurCs) but a variant form *mi(n)* predominating in the chain of eastern islands, e.g. in Antigua, Barbuda (locally also as *ming*), Dominica and TobC (also *in*). SurCs have *be/bi* as formal variants; BelC and other CAmCs have predominantly *me* but also *men / wen / we* in this function, as well as, in mesolects, *did* and *woz*. St. Lucian CE has *had* before bare root verb forms for anteriority. It should be noted that a realistic and more comprehensive account of these markers (and similar ones) needs to go beyond distributional patterns of forms, as pointed out here, to take into account finely-graded functional usage conditions, like co-occurrence restrictions with the stativity of the following main verbs (nonstative verbs tend to receive a default past time interpretation even without overt marking) or the discourse flow of time orientation in a given context. In general, *ben* tends to be used less frequently than expected in Caribbean creoles, marking a change or disruption of temporal organization rather than a global time orientation.

To mark **future** events, creoles have a wide range of preverbal markers, including *ga* (Gullah), *gwine* (Gullah, JamC, CAAmC), *go/goin'* (eastern CarCs, TobC, TrnC; reduced to *o* in SurCs), *gon* (Turks Island, Anguilla), *wi* (Turks, CAAmC), *sa* (GuyC, SurCs), and *wan* (BelC and other CAAmCs). Combinations of anterior and future markers in CarCs typically mark a counterfactual proposition, as in BelC *me wan*.

The most unusual phenomenon concerning the uses of **modal verbs** in the Americas is the occurrence of “**double modals**”, considered a hallmark of Southern AmE (and here reported for all conservative dialects, in weak form also in Gullah) and found also in JamC [34]. In OzE, the first element of a double modal is predominantly *usetá*; in SAmE and AppE it tends to be *might* (with *might could* being particularly common). An epistemic meaning of *mustn't* to mark a statement which is probably not true is reported for NfldE and Gullah (where epistemic *must* tends to associate with *be*) as well as, in weaker form, for south-eastern US dialects and ChcE. SAmE dialects, in particular OzE, AppE, and SE enclave dialects have developed **new quasi-modals**, in particular a ‘counterfactual’ *liketa* (cf. *had liketa* in NfldE) and the forms *supposeta*, *usetá*, and *fixin' to* (for an immediate future action; sometimes reduced to *finna*). Innovative auxiliaries in AAVE include *come* (to express indignation) and *steady* (for a persistent activity). Caribbean creoles display a range of modals which have some distinctive syntactic and semantic properties. For JamC, for instance, we get *mosi*, *cuda*, *wuda*, *shuda*, *wi*, *kyan*, *hafi*, *fi*, and others. It seems worth noting that JamC modals are reported not to allow elliptical constructions. For TobC, *bina*, *fu*, *binago*, (*h*)*afu*, *bongtu* and others are listed. Distinctive modals in the SurCs include *sabi* (from Portuguese, expressing learned ability), *kam*, *man*, *mag*, *sa* (from Dutch, all for ability), *musu/mu* (necessity), and others.

### 3. Verb morphology and syntax: Auxiliaries, agreement, verb forms, serialization

It is not uncommon for nonstandard dialects to violate the **concord** rules that govern the choice of forms of the **verb be** in StE, e.g. to generalize the form *is* to grammatical persons other than the third singular (e.g. *The rocks is still there*, AppE; similarly in AAVE, ChcE, and some forms of BahE). In NfldE the form *am/'m* may generalize in similar ways. In existential sentences in particular, the form *there's* with plural subjects is common in all North American dialects and weakly reported for BahC and Belize as well [55]. Similarly, in the past tense the generalization of *was* (called “default singulars” by Chambers 2003: 266; less commonly *were*) is practically universal [59]. For the emergence of a polarity distinction with past tense copula forms, see the section on negation.

An invariant, or **finite**, use of the form *be*, frequently with habitual meaning, characterizes AAVE, some enclave dialects of SEAmE, BahE, and NfldE, and is obsolescent (without functional specifics) in AppE. Occasionally the form accepts a verbal suffix, yielding *bes/bees* (a distinction which largely sets off AnBahE from AfBahE, for example).

The deletion of the **copula** *be* characterizes Caribbean creoles as well as AAVE and Gullah in the USA and is also found, with restrictions, in AppE, rural AmE dialects, ChcE and BahE. In addition, the basilectal creoles of the Caribbean are characterized by a considerably wider range of distinctive uses of the copula, depending upon the grammatical environment, respectively: Typically, before adjectives there is no copula form at all (so that in that respect adjectives behave like stative verbs, and they may be preceded by the plain preverbal negator, e.g. *no*). Distinctive copula forms occur before noun phrases, e.g. *a* (with *da* as an older variant) in JamC (also TrnC, TobC, eastern CarCs, with *be*, *is* or zero as variants; SurCs have *na/da*), and before locatives, mostly *de* (e.g. in JamC, TobC, TrnC, eastern CarCs, CAmCs, SurCs). Minor, regional copula-like forms include *tap* (Barbuda), *tan* (Antigua) and *stay* (Panama). A copula-like form frequently serves as a topicalizer as well (see section 8).

The deletion of the auxiliary *have* is reported, and mapped accordingly, for some American varieties (SEAmE, AppE, AAVE, BelC, JamC), but essentially this process is difficult to diagnose, as its output is identical with a widespread morphological phenomenon, the confusion of past and past participle forms (see below) [58].

The variability of the **verbal suffix** *-s* is conditioned by structural, social and regional factors. Creoles are marked by invariant verb forms, so typically (except for intermediate forms like BahC and uses approaching the acrolect, where a suffix may appear variably) there are no verbal suffixes. In North America, invariant verb forms are primarily associated with AAVE (and, of course, also found in Gullah, its close kin), but they are also found variably in a number of North American dialects (ChcE, OzE and CollAmE in general) [53]. Conversely, a suffix *-s* may appear in persons other than the third singular in a number of varieties, notably the conservative ones (freely in NfldE and OzE, and, frequently with conditions and limitations, several others, including BahE, especially AfBahE; in AAVE this feature marked earlier forms but seems to have largely disappeared by today) [54]. NfldE has “regularized” forms of *have* and *do*, viz. *haves* and *doos* [duz]. The so-called “Northern Subject Rule”, where in the third person plural *-s* ending is promoted by a full noun phrase subject (*dogs barks*) but avoided after the pronoun *they* (*they bark*) or after words intervening between subject and predicate (*dogs that bark*), characterizes a few south-eastern varieties (where historical continuity from Britain, notably through the so-called “Scotch-Irish” or Ulster Scots, can justifiably be hypothesized), namely SEAmE, AppE and BahE [60]. A possible habitual function associated with *-s* in some varieties was mentioned earlier.

**Past tense and past participle forms** of verbs show a great deal of variability in nonstandard dialects; some of this is lexically idiosyncratic, but parts of it can be described as structurally systematic processes. Preterites and past participles are frequently leveled. The target of this leveling process can be a regularized form, i.e. one regularly derived by means of an *-ed* suffix from the base form of a verb which in standard English shows irregular forms (e.g. *caught*, *knowed*); to varying extents this occurs in all dialects of North American English, including Gullah, AAVE and BahE [36]. The same applies to the uses of unmarked verb forms in past and past participle functions (e.g. *give*, *run*); in addition, this pattern also corresponds to the Caribbean creole tendency for verbs to occur without morphological variation [37]. Furthermore, there are the possibilities of a standard past form functioning as the past participle in nonstandard varieties (e.g. *He had went*), and vice versa (e.g. *He gone*); again, both patterns are to be found throughout most of North America and the Caribbean, at times subject to certain (mostly lexical) restrictions [38, 39]. The lack of a past tense *-ed* morpheme on regular verbs is found in all Caribbean creole basilects, including Gullah and JamC, and it occurs variably in some dialects as well (CollAmE, OzE, ChcE, AAVE, NfldE, AfBahE) [40]. Mesolectal Caribbean varieties tend to have variable past tense marking.

Finally, the **prefixing of *a-*** before verbal *-ing* forms, as in *he come a-runnin'*, sets off a tightly circumscribed group of conservative North American dialects (AppE, OzE, SEAmE, and NfldE) [41] (and this tendency to prefix *a-* may also extend to other parts of speech, e.g. *a-back*). In NfldE this is also found but recessive with past participles (*acome*).

**Serial verb** constructions (*I run go home*) are typical of creoles (BelC, TrnC, TobC, JamC, Gullah, SurCs, CAmCs), with conditioned variants occurring in other contact varieties (ChcE, AAVE) [74].

#### 4. Negation

**Multiple negation** is practically universal in the varieties under consideration; only for ChcE restrictions on its occurrence are reported [44]. In AAVE and southern dialects the effect of negative copying may in fact cross a clause boundary and affect an indefinite constituent of a subordinate clause as well.

The form ***ain't*** to represent negations of either *be* or *have* is also regularly used in all North American varieties and in some of the Caribbean ones (BahE, T&TC) [45, 46]. On the other hand, as a generic main verb negator, equivalent to *didn't*, *ain't* is reported as generally occurring only in Gullah and the T&T creoles as well as, with limitations, in ChcE, AAVE (where this use is documented rarely in earlier sources but has been spreading), and basilectal BahE – but not for European American dialects [47].

A morphologically **invariant** use of *don't/don* for all grammatical persons in the present tense is also found everywhere (except for Suriname) [48], though the precise conditions of its use vary: in Gullah, for example, this is restricted to imperative and habitual sentences; in ChcE, it is considered a transitional phenomenon. The use of **never** to negate single events in the past is equally widespread (with limitations in SEAmE dialects, Gullah and AAVE, and BahE) [49]. In earlier AAVE (and occasionally in mesolectal JamC) a pattern with *never did* plus a verb occurs, with unclear conditions of usage. In most Caribbean creoles *neva/neba* is considered a general past time negator (e.g. JamC).

On the other hand, the **preverbal negator** *no/na* characterizes the Caribbean creoles exclusively (with limitations in BahE) [50]. In JamC it may coalesce with the progressive marker *a*, yielding *naa*. Another possible form of an invariant negator in some CarCs is *en* (e.g. in some eastern CarCs) or a nasalized  $\tilde{e}$  (TrnC).

As to **past tense copula** forms, a morphological split between a positive form *was* as against a different negative form, i.e. *weren't*, is unique to SEAmE dialects [51]. Invariant tags, like *innit*, are also relatively rare, being reported for Gullah (with the forms reported as *aini/inni*) and the T&T creoles as well as, with restrictions, JamC (*no/na* or *duont*) and BelC. For distinctive “negative inversion” patterns, see section 8 below.

## 5. Subordination: relativization, complementation

In the American context, the only nonstandard **relativizer** that occurs fairly regularly is *what*; it occurs in CollAmE and OzE, recessively or with restrictions also in SEAmE dialects, AppE and NfldE, as well as, regularly and formally reduced to something like *we(h)*, in creoles (Gullah, BelC, TrnC, TobC, BahE and JamC) [61]. In AAVE, relative *what* was found in earlier forms but has largely disappeared from the modern dialect; earlier AAVE also shows traces of *that which* and non-spatial *where*. The use of *that* or *what* in non-restrictive contexts is reported for some Caribbean creoles as well as CollAmE, NfldE, and, with limitations, rural AmE dialects and ChcE [62]. On the other hand, the relative particles *as* and *at* are rare, occurring only occasionally in AppE and in the south-east [63, 64]. The SurCs have a relativizer *di* or *disi*, derived from *this*, and Sranan increasingly uses relativizers derived from interrogatives. Analytic possessives, like *what's* or *that his*, are reported for BelC and BahC, and occasionally for SEAmE and AAVE [65]. In contrast, the possibility of omitting a subject relativizer is much more widespread; it is documented in JamC and BelC as well as in Gullah and AAVE, AppE and SEAmE, NfldE, and, in weaker form, ChcE [66].

**Resumptive pronouns** are reported for JamC, BelC, AAVE, Gullah, and SEAmE dialects, also for ChcE and SurCs [67]. Using a pronoun copy of a subject NP (so-called “pronominal apposition”, “left dislocation”, or “double subject”



constructions; e.g. *My brother, he did ...*) is almost a universal strategy in spontaneous spoken language, presumably a focusing device. In contrast, ChcE is the only variety for which the possibility of omitting a direct object is reported, and this dialect sometimes also features zero subject pronouns in main clauses (presumably a transfer feature reflecting the pro-drop parameter of Spanish).

The use of *would* in *if*-clauses is regularly reported for NfldE only; with restrictions it is also found in SEAmE dialects, ChcE, AAVE and BelC [31]. Variants of *there* as the dummy subject in existential clauses (including *they* or *it*) are common throughout the region, except for SurC, JamC and ChcE [56]. In Caribbean varieties forms of *get* and *have* occur as predicates in existentials (e.g. JamC, TobC, TrnC, CAMCs).

Some American dialects have distinctive **subordinators**, like *whenever* meaning ‘as soon as’ (AppE, Midlands and SE dialects), *fraid* ‘so that ... not’ in NfldE, or a “redundant *that*” (*because that, where that*; a conservative feature with familiar roots in Early Modern English) in AppE. NfldE also shows the IrE subordinating *and* for concessives. A complementizer form derived from *say* (often spelled *se*) and introducing object clauses after speech act verbs characterizes the Caribbean and creole-related varieties (JamC, TrnC, TobC, BelC, AAVE, Gullah; *taki* in the SurCs) but not, except for traces in ChcE, the North American dialects [68]. ChcE has some distinctive reported speech patterns (*tell* ‘ask’; *tell that* with direct speech).

The use of *for to* in infinitival purpose **clauses** is common in conservative and ethnic North American dialects (SEAmE, OzE and NfldE, weaker in AppE, ChcE and AAVE). The distribution of *as/than what* in comparative clauses is similar (regular in CollAmE, SEAmE, OzE, NfldE, AAVE and also JamC; under conditions in ChcE and Gullah) [73]. Midwestern CollAmE has a distinctive pattern of quasi-modals followed by past participle verb forms (e.g. *The car needs washed, The cat wants petted, The baby likes cuddled.*)

Caribbean creoles (like JamC) have **non-finite clause complements** with bare root verb forms (not necessarily with the marker *to*, and in basilects normally not as *-ing* forms). The form *fi* is a widespread infinitive marker or complementizer, sometimes (though not necessarily) expressing a purpose (JamC). Similarly, in the SurCs *fu* introduces non-factive complement clauses.

## 6. Noun phrase structure

Throughout North America and the Caribbean after numerals and in nouns of measure the lack of a **plural** marker is common [14]. In AAVE, and even more so earlier variants of this dialect, this restriction is less effective, i.e. the omission of a plural marker is possible in other contexts as well. In creoles, the plural typically remains unmarked morphologically; if needed, it tends to be expressed by a form

*dem*, which can be preposed to the noun, as in basilectal Gullah (*dem boy* ‘those boys’; also in some eastern Caribbean locations), postponed (*di bwai-dem*, JamC, similarly TobC or CAmCs), or also co-occurring with an inflectional suffix, as in BahE (*de boys-dem*) or, rarely, JamC. In the eastern Caribbean *an dem* predominates as a variant of the plural marker (also T&TCs); *an de* is unique to Barbuda. A plural suffix *-s* in creolized varieties remains restricted to mesolectal forms (e.g. mesolectal Gullah). Regularized noun plural forms (*deers*, *corns*) as well as, less widely, double plurals (*firemens*) occur with regional and social restrictions. AppE has syllabic plural forms (*deskes*, *postes*). Group plurals are also quite common, being reported for CollAmE, SEAmE, OzE, AAVE, BelC and the T&T creoles as well as, less regularly, ChcE, NfldE and BahE [15]. The same applies to group genitives (regular in CollAmE, SEAmE, OzE, AppE, NfldE and JamC; with restrictions in ChcE, AAVE, and BahE) [16]. AppE, NfldE, AAVE, Gullah and CarECs (JamC) display “associative” plurals after a noun form to suggest a collective reading (*and them*, *and all*, *dem*), designating the family or associates of the person referred to.

A tendency to omit or insert **articles** in unusual ways, at varying degrees of regularity, occurs both in AmE dialects and in CarECs, though this seems difficult to generalize, given that many of these phenomena are lexically bound (for instance, SE enclave dialects use articles with diseases, as in *the toothache*) [17]. In terms of article uses, Caribbean creoles differ quite fundamentally from North American dialects in having different forms and expressing different functional distinctions (like specificity rather than definiteness); most notably, an indefinite but specific form *wan* is common (like in JamC, BelC and CAmCs, the SurCs, or, with a nasalized vowel, TobC).

Contrary to zero plural forms, the omission of a genitive suffix (*my daddy brother*) is only rarely found among European American dialects, so this feature sets off AAVE from related varieties in North America. In the Caribbean, this pattern is fairly widespread, however (e.g. JamC, Anguilla, SurCs). Postnominal *for*-phrases to express **possession** are a conditioned possibility in most North American dialects, also found in the Caribbean (e.g. in SurCs; see below for corresponding pronoun forms) [18].

Both double **comparatives** and **superlatives** (*more cheaper*, *bestest*) and regularized comparison strategies (*gooder*, *the regularest*, *most pretty*) occur in most of the varieties under discussion, regularly or to some extent [19, 20]. AppE, and to some extent CollAmE elsewhere, allow comparatives and, especially, superlatives of participles (*fightingest*, *singingest*).

## 7. Pronominal systems

Interestingly enough, loosened conditions for uses of **gendered pronouns** are more widely reported for the North American dialects than for the Caribbean creoles. In particular, *she* for inanimate referents is fairly common (general in CollAmE, SEAmE, OzE, and NfldE; conditioned in AppE, ChcE, AAVE, and BahE), while generic *he* seems somewhat more restricted to NfldE and contact varieties (unconditioned also in Gullah, where gender-neutral *he* co-exists with gender-specific *she* and *it*, JamC, BelC and SurCs, with the form *a*; with limitations in ChcE and AAVE) [7, 8].

A functional conflation of **subject and object forms of pronouns** is also considered more characteristic of creoles (e.g. JamC, eastern Caribbean) than of English dialects, though to some extent it does occur in the latter as well. “Pronoun exchange” seems robust in NfldE in particular. Both subject pronoun forms in object function and vice versa can occasionally be observed in NfldE and in a few of the CarCs (notably, BelC and, in the former case, also TrnC and TobC) [12]. On the other hand, most varieties, including creoles, have retained a distinction between subject and object forms of pronouns (like *(h)e* vs. *(h)im/um* in Gullah).

In the third person singular, AppE has preserved a conservative neuter form *hit* and, in the possessive, *hit's*. In NfldE a distinctive third person object form *en/un* has been retained from British sources.

Nonstandard uses of *us* are found in AAVE, NfldE, BelC, and occasionally in SEAmE dialects [11]. Gullah has object *we* in addition to *us*. In general, *we* is claimed to be a western Caribbean subject and object form, distinguished from *aawi* (with a variant *aabi* in some islands) in the eastern region. In the Rastafarian variety of JamC the element *l'ai* is widely productive.

Remarkably, all of the varieties in our area, whether or not creolized, have developed distinct **second-person plural** pronoun forms [3]. The southern hallmark *yall* has found a corresponding *you guys* elsewhere in CollAmE. The form *you 'uns* is found in the South Midlands and western Pennsylvania and in AppE. Further options are *yous* (NfldE) and *ye* (AppE, NfldE). Creoles have an African-derived form *una/unu*, which occurs marginally in Gullah (in performance discourse) and normally in JamC, CAmCs or SurCs. Variant forms of this type include *yinna/yunna* (reported for BahE). A regional split separates the western Caribbean, where *unu* and its variants occur, from the eastern Caribbean, where the predominant forms are *aal-you* or, less commonly, *you-aal*.

With respect to **possessives**, the form *me* for *my* marks most creoles (Gullah, SurCs, TrnC, TobC, JamC) and NfldE and can be found under certain conditions in SEAmE and BahE (in AfBahE but not normally AnBahE) [2]. Similarly, some varieties, like Gullah, have the second-person singular possessive form *ye*. The possessive of southern *yall* is *yall's*. A possessive form *they* seems strongest in AAVE, but it is also documented in AfBahE. In Gullah, all possessives may add

the form *own*. Basilectal Caribbean creoles allow for a productive formation of possessives by means of a prefix *fi-* with personal pronouns, e.g. *fi-mi* ‘my’, *fi-im* ‘his, her’ and also *fi-huu* ‘whose’ in JamC (similarly in TobC and TrnC). Possession may also be expressed by bare juxtaposition, both of pronouns and of nouns (e.g. *di uman biebi*, JamC).

Some AmE dialects (mostly southern and Midland ones) have variant forms of the absolute possessive pronouns (*hisn*, *ourn*; AAVE also has *mines*). A benefactive “personal dative” construction (*I got me something*) may also be found, mostly in southern and related dialects, including AAVE.

The paradigm of **reflexive** pronouns tends to be regularized somehow everywhere [4], with object forms forming the basis of reflexives mostly (though not exclusively) in the creoles [5] and the number distinction being given up generally or variably in a wide number of dialectal and creole varieties as well [6].

The use of a non-reflexive *meself/myself* characterizes all North American dialects as well as some contact varieties (Gullah, AAVE, SurCs, ChcE, the T&T Cs) [9]. In AppE an emphatic reflexive with *own* (*my own self*) may be formed. In coordinate subjects, *me* rather than *I* is the regular choice everywhere [10].

**Demonstrative** *them* for *those* is almost universal in North America and the Caribbean [1]. In CollAmE of the South and the Midlands and AppE demonstratives may be reinforced morphologically, yielding *this here* and *them there*, a pattern also documented in earlier AAVE and, in a similar fashion, in JamC (*dis-ya*, *dat-de*). In the SurCs demonstrative meaning is also achieved by a combination of pronominal determiners and postnominal locative adverbs (*di ... ya/aki/de*). Traces of a system with a third (distant as against intermediate) demonstrative, *yon/yonder*, can be observed in AppE. AppE also has interrogative pronouns with *ever-* (*everwhich*, *everwho*). NfldE uses the article as a proximal demonstrative with measures of time (*the* ‘this’ *fall*).

## 8. Adverbs

Adverb forms without the *-ly* suffix are widespread everywhere, both for degree adverbs and for others [41, 42]. Southern dialects (in particular, AppE, OZE and SE enclaves) have a characteristic set of intensifying adverbs (*right*, *plumb*, *mighty*, *powerful*, *slam*); the same applies to NfldE (*right*, *some*, *wonderful*, *terrible*) and AnBahE (*right*). In AppE, a characteristic set of place and time adverb forms occurs (*anywheres*, *beforehands*; *thataway*; *yon*).

The use of *anymore* in non-interrogative clauses has spread from AppE and OZE to CollAmE in wider regions of the Midlands. SE enclave dialects have a vestige negative adverb *nary*.

## 9. Word order and discourse organization

Many of the Caribbean creoles are characterized by a “topicalizer”, which morphologically is mostly equal to a copula form (frequently *is* or *a*), placed in sentence-initial position immediately before the highlighted constituent (which may be repeated in the following clause structure). Gullah has *duh* as such a sentence-initial focus marker but, unlike many other creoles, fails to accept VPs in the following, clefted position. In JamC this focus marker is *a*, and it may also mark “predicate clefting” (e.g. *A swell it swell* ‘it certainly swelled up’). In TrnC, TobC and SurCs the form *a* is also attested in this function. In CAmCs it tends to be *da*, with *iz* as a mesolectal equivalent.

An inverted V-N word order in indirect questions, unlike in standard English, is common in all North American dialects, including AAVE, and also found in some creoles (Gullah, BelC) [69]. In main clauses, both in *wh*-questions and in *yes/no*-questions uninverted question patterns are practically universal [70, 71]. Some North American varieties (notably OzE, AppE and AAVE) have “negative inversion” patterns with sentence-initial inverted negative auxiliaries, as in *Didn’t nobody show up*; Gullah has such a structure with *Ain’t* as a negative focus marker.

One of the new functions that the word *like* has developed, that of a focusing device, is reported for a few dialects and creoles (strongly for AppE, NfldE, ChcE and BelC; weakly for SEAmE dialects and the T&T creoles) [75]. More commonly, however, *like* occurs as a quotative form – generally in North American dialects (though not in Gullah), also in BahE, and less regularly in BelC and T&T [76].

# Synopsis: morphological and syntactic variation in the Pacific and Australasia

Kate Burridge

*To write a grammar of a language in one chapter is like attempting to carry away the sea in a bucket. It is an impossible task* [Loreto Todd 1984: 208]

## 1. Introduction

If Loreto Todd is correct – writing a grammar of a language is something like trying to secure the sea in a bucket – then what we are attempting in this brief synopsis chapter must be akin to capturing numerous seas in one very small teacup. And yet, to follow on from Todd's analogy, the contents of either buckets or teacups will actually reveal quite a lot about sea-water. Of course, we cannot convey anywhere near the grammatical richness of these languages, but what we expose here are those morphosyntactic features that are most striking for this part of the world. Accordingly, we have divided the discussion into two sections. The first includes native Englishes (Australian and New Zealand English), the second contact Englishes (Kriol, Torres Strait Creole, Bislama, Tok Pisin, Solomon Islands Pijin, Hawai'i Creole, Fiji English and Norfolk), even though the grouping of individual of these varieties is subject to debate (e.g. Aboriginal English as a native variety or Norfolk as a contact variety).

The following brief descriptions highlight the constant problem of identifying shared grammatical features that are the result of contact influences and those that represent parallel but independent developments. For example, Fiji English speakers employ *one* as an indefinite article. The grammaticalisation of numerals into articles is commonplace and not surprisingly a widespread feature among creoles. Furthermore, both Fijian and Hindi (the mother tongues of many Fiji English speakers) use the numeral 'one' in this way; so the chance of contact-induced change is also high. The seeds for the change might even have been sown earlier on. Fiji English has historical links with the other Pacific creoles and these links are still evident in lexical and grammatical relics left by Melanesian Pidgin. Perhaps all we can say in such cases is that contact accelerates changes that are, in a sense, in-grained.

## 2. The grammatical features of Australian and New Zealand English

This section focuses on those features that are genuinely Antipodean English and also those that are used either more or less frequently in these as opposed to other varieties, especially the two Northern Hemisphere standards. Also included here are some of the non-standard features of the vernaculars of this region. Note, that in the case of Aboriginal English, creole influence can be strong and accordingly this variety has many features typical of the contact varieties we go on to describe in more detail in section 2. Throughout the following sections the number code of those morphosyntactic features will be given in square brackets which are part of the 76-features catalogue investigated in the Global Synopsis (Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi, this volume).

### 2.1 Pronouns

#### 2.1.1 Gender and number

The vernacular varieties of Antipodean English have the usual second person plural pronoun forms [3] that have become ubiquitous in the English-speaking world; namely, *yous* and *you guys*, as in *Yous'd worked on it*. But the indigenous populations of New Zealand and Australia have contributed significantly to diversity here. Some Maori speakers, for example, show a three-way distinction in second person forms: *you* (singular), *yous* (dual) and *yous fullas* (plural). Aboriginal English has gone even further in the transfer of creole pronominal features into their speech. These include distinct forms for dual (second person *you two*, *you-n-him*; third person *dattufela* ~ *distufela*); inclusive and exclusive forms for first person plural (*we* ~ *afla* versus *mifela*) and 2nd person plural forms (including *youse*, *you mob*, *youfla*). In addition, Aboriginal English does not always maintain the gender distinctions of the standard. The pronoun (*h*)e tends to be used as a general third person singular [8], as in *That he dress* 'That's her dress', *this old woman he started packing up*.

A striking characteristic of Australian Vernacular English (most notably that spoken in Tasmania) is the appearance of gender marking for both animate and inanimate nouns. Items of food and drink, for instance, are always feminine [7]: *I put 'er [= the bottle of beer] down that bloody quick that I blew the top off 'er*. And [*he*] *took 'er [= leg of lamb] in and put 'er on the plate!*

#### 2.1.2 Case selection

As in other places, all varieties here show the declining use of *whom* in favour of *who*. *Whom* is now virtually confined to relative clauses, and in positions following prepositions. It is stylistically highly marked and considered very formal us-

age. Also not surprising is the preference for the oblique case over the nominative for pronouns following *than* [13] (as in *He's bigger than me*). Both these features illustrate the general trend in English towards case selection dictated by position rather than function – the nominative is largely confined to clause-initial preverbal position; accusative appears elsewhere. Preference for the accusative also extends to pronouns preceding the gerund participle, as in *He was angry at me scoring a goal*.

The features just described are commonplace for standard speakers of NZE and AusE. In addition to these, there are the non-standard pronominal forms typical of the vernacular varieties in these two countries. Once again, features like those below reveal the general preference for accusative personal pronouns:

- *them* in place of demonstrative *those*, as in *one of them things* [1]
- *me* in place of possessive *my*, as in *He's me youngest* [2]
- object forms in reflexive pronouns, as in *I thought to meself* [5]
- object forms in coordinated pronouns, as in *Me and Fred / Fred and me are coming too; Me and her were the last to go* [10]

Variation is rife within the last mentioned feature, the coordinated pronouns. There are at least two other patterns in evidence: (1) the ‘standard’, where function dictates the form of the coordinated pronoun (*Fred and I were the last ones left; He gave it to Fred and me*); (2) the so-called ‘hypercorrect’ pattern with extended uses of the nominative (*He gave it to Fred and I*). There are also hybrid structures such as *Her and I are coming too*.

Another feature of vernacular AusE (AusVE) is the use of the 1st person plural accusative pronoun *us* in place of the 1st person singular accusative pronoun *me* [11], especially after verbs of giving and receiving; for example, *Give us a light for me pipe*.

Aboriginal English shows a mixture of standard possessive pronouns and very distinctive forms such as *moofla* ‘my’. In addition, oblique personal pronouns can function generally as possessive pronouns; for example *im dog* ‘his dog’. Interestingly, as is typical for non-standard L1 varieties in all parts of the English-speaking world, reflexives typically generalise possessive rather than object pronoun forms, as in *hisself* and *theirself / theirselves*.

## 2.2 Nouns and noun phrases

### 2.2.1 Nominal morphology

Descriptions provided by the authors in this Handbook suggest that the Antipodean varieties are lagging behind in the general trend towards greater use of the inflected genitive. Aboriginal English stands out by not marking possession at all on the noun – juxtaposition is sufficient (*That my Daddy car*). Moreover, speakers



of ‘heavy’ varieties have incorporated creole possessive markers such as *belong* and *for* (see section 3.2.1).

Aboriginal English tends not to mark the noun consistently for number. The plural inflection is often absent when plurality is obvious [14], either from context or via some other means; for example, *Two man in a jeep* ‘There are two men in a jeep’. Where plural does occur, it is not uncommon for irregular nouns to be doubly marked, as in *childrens*. Occasionally the creole plural marker *-mob* is used; for example, *clean water-mob* ‘lots of clean water’.

English dialects do not necessarily see eye to eye as to whether nouns are individuated entities or groups of unindividuated entities. In short, what is a count noun in one variety may be a mass noun in another and vice versa; for example, Aboriginal English *woods* ‘bits of wood’, *dusts* ‘clouds of dust’, *glasses* ‘bits of glass’.

### 2.2.2 Articles

Aboriginal English commonly shows articles missing where they are required in the standard [17], as in *We was playing game*. Also widespread is the tendency (attested in creoles) to substitute demonstratives for definite articles (*That door bin close* ‘The door closed’) and the numeral *one* for the indefinite article (*They seen one green snake tangled round a tree* ‘They saw a green snake tangled round a tree’).

A feature of AusVE is the use of the adjective *old ~ ol’* before definite common nouns and personal names to refer to characters that are particularly salient in a narrative. For example, *And on the corner was this ol’ mountain duck with some little fellas, y’know’*.

### 2.2.3 Adjectives

Doubly marked comparatives and superlatives [19] are commonplace in the vernacular varieties of this region; for example, *most rottenest*. In Aboriginal English adjectives may also go unmarked for degree. Note that when the superlative is used in this variety, it is typically for the purpose of emphasis, as in *biggest mob o emus* ‘a very bit flock of emus’.

## 2.3 Verbs and verb phrases

### 2.3.1 Tense, aspect, mood

Both AusE and NZE are showing the extended uses of the progressive [21] that have been reported for other varieties (for example, in combination with stative verbs such as *hear* and *think*). However, corpus evidence also suggests that the use of the progressive may well be more frequent here than elsewhere.

Both varieties share with many others the generalisation of the present perfect to simple past contexts of use [25], AusE more markedly so. For example, both show the present perfect used with past time adverbials (*Then she's broken her leg*). In AusVE and NZE the perfect auxiliary *have* is frequently dropped [58]; for example, *We haven't started this year but we done it before*. In Aboriginal English auxiliary deletion is more widespread and includes *be*-deletion [57] in the progressive construction, as in *I sitting down*. Note that this variety can also omit copula *be* (e.g. *That a pretty snake* or *He blind*). If past time is relevant, *bin* can be used, as in *I bin young fella den* 'I was a young chap then'.

The use of the subjunctive after expressions of recommendation, demand, and intention (the so-called 'mandative subjunctive' as in *I insist that he be on time*) is enjoying the same revival that is evident in AmE and BrE usage. Papers in this Handbook suggest that Antipodean usage is not yet as advanced as in AmE and falls somewhere between the Northern Hemisphere varieties.

### 2.3.2 Modals

AusE and NZE show an increasing use of *of* in place of *have* after (preterite) modal verb forms *could*, *should* and *would*, as in *I would of waited*. Undoubtedly this is due to the equivalent pronunciation of the reduced forms of both *of* and *have* (-ve), perhaps also reinforced by hedging phrases such as *kind of* and *sort of*, which also convey unreality.

#### *Shall/Will*

In Antipodean usage the modal *shall* is very much in decline. Only vestiges of *shall* usage remain as more and more modal *will* encroaches on its territory. This includes first person interrogatives, such as *Will I sit in the back?*

#### *May/Might*

NZE and AusE follow the world-wide trend for *may* and *might* to be unmarked for tense. Both appear in similar contexts to indicate past possibility and hypothetical possibility, although for some speakers *might* is marginally more tentative; for example, they report less certainty in *I think he might come* than *I think he may come*. Tentativeness is also apparent in contexts of permission. A polite request like *Might I have another piece of cake* is very indirect. However, both *may* and *might* in the permitting sense is extremely formal and is now rare in these varieties.

#### *Must*

Both NZE and AusE show an increasing use of epistemic *mustn't* [35], as in *he mustn't have arrived yet* meaning 'he can't have arrived yet'.

#### *Have (to), Need (to), Dare (to), Ought (to)*

Both varieties mirror trends reported elsewhere for these marginal (or quasi-) modals. They share with American usage a preference for *do*-support for the first

three verbs (rather than the auxiliary variant without *do*); for example *He doesn't need to get a haircut* over *He needn't get a haircut* (where *need* lacks the 3rd person present singular ending and has a following infinitive without *to*). Blended constructions based on both the auxiliary and full verb pattern also exist, especially for *dare*; for example, *I didn't dare eat a peach* (showing *do*-support and *to*-deletion). Both varieties show the same declining use of *ought* in favour of *should* that occurs in other varieties.

### *Better/Gotta*

The tendency for vernacular varieties to omit the auxiliary *have* has meant that both *better* and *gotta* are now showing modal-like behaviour, as in *we better go* and *you gotta do it*. This usage is considered very colloquial and is rarely encountered in the written language.

### 2.3.3 *Voice*

Trends in both varieties strongly suggest a growing use of the *get*-passive in writing and in speech. It is still considered to be more informal than the *be* version. In Aboriginal English the passive is rare, but when it does occur it is typically with the *get* auxiliary (*Uncle Steve, he got hit*) or without any auxiliary verb altogether (*Most books made of paper*).

### 2.3.4 *Morphology*

AusE and NZE speakers are continuing the on-going regularisation process that has been affecting strong verbs since Old English times. This levelling is particularly evident in the shift of strong verbs over to the weak [36]; for example, *show-showed-showed*. Also clearly in evidence is the collapse of the preterite and past participle forms within the diminishing class of strong verbs; in particular, the past forms such as *came*, *did* and *saw* are being replaced by participle forms *come*, *done* and *seen* [39]. For example, *Me Mum seen it*. There are also examples of verbs where the past form replaces the participle form; for example, *He's bit me* and *Someone might 'a took 'em* [38].

Vernacular varieties of NZE and AusE show invariant past tense forms for the verb *be*. *Was* is used for all persons and for both singular and plural subjects, as in *You was late again*, *We was winning* and *'Course they was*. The use of invariant *is* (*Things is going crook*) appears to be in decline. Singular marking in existentials with plural subjects [55] is also widespread. It now appears in writing, especially in the contracted form *there's*; for example, *There's fairies at the bottom of my garden*. In Aboriginal English existential constructions are either verbless (as in *Some sand there*) or *got* is used in construction with *e* (*E got some sand there* 'There is some sand').

This regularisation of verb morphology is generally more extensive in Aboriginal English, both urban and rural. The unmarked verb is frequently used for copula and auxiliary *be*, as in *I be cold* 'I am cold'. Zero marking for third person is also usual for verbs in the present tense [53]; for example *he get wild* 'he gets/got wild'. As this gloss illustrates, the verb can also be unmarked for past tense [40], especially if past time is clear from the context; for example *he hook him* 'he hooked him'. In narratives past tense is often indicated early and the verbs that follow are then unmarked.

Where past tense marking does occur, Aboriginal English shows the same leveling of preterite and past participle verb forms for strong verbs [36] (for example, *seen, done, come, run* to express past tense). There are also some irregular strong verb forms such as *brang* and *brung*. In English generally these monosyllabic strong verbs ending in nasals more successfully resist regularisation. They also acquire new members. Frequent in rural Australia, for instance, is the past tense form *skun* in the context of skinning a rabbit. Occasionally doubly marked past tense forms occur; for example, *came* and *didn't stayed*. There is also evidence of the creole past tense marker *bin*, sometimes *been* [29] (see section 3.3.2). Note, that varieties of Aboriginal English spoken in remote communities also demonstrate use of the transitive verb suffix *-em* or *-im*. This is essentially a creole feature and we go on to discuss it below (section 3.3.1).

Both AusE and NZE show an increasing use of *gotten*, especially in spoken language. The resurgence of this form in these Southern Hemisphere varieties is often attributed to American English influence. But since there have always been pockets of dialectal *gotten* users downunder (Scottish immigrants, for example), its expansion may well be due to colonial lag, accelerated by AmE influence. This is also suggested by the different patterns of use. In AusE, for example, the *gotten* form is preferred for intransitive constructions and *got* for transitive constructions; for example *She's gotten really angry* versus *She's got a new car*. Moreover, the American pattern where the *got-gotten* distinction indicates something possessed versus something acquired is not apparent in these varieties.

## 2.4 Adverbs

It is commonplace for speakers to use adverbs (including intensifiers) without the *-ly* suffix [42] that is required of the standard language. For example, *You can easy do it*. Some varieties of Aboriginal English also have an array of adverb-forming suffixes that do not appear elsewhere; for example, *long-way, quick-way, dark-time, late-time*.

## 2.5 Prepositions

Vernaculars in this part of the world occasionally omit prepositions where they are required in the standard, as in (Southland, New Zealand) *He came out hospital*. This feature is most striking in Aboriginal English; for example, *Afela going Back Beach* ‘We’re going to Back Beach’. Extreme varieties that lie close to the creole end of the continuum may replace locative prepositions with *la* or *longa*, as in *We always go la ol’ town* ‘We always go to the old town’.

## 2.6 Negation

Well attested in vernacular speech is *don’t* [48] in place of standard *doesn’t* (*E don’t run away with it, y’see*), as well as the all-purpose negative auxiliary *aint* for the verb forms of *be* [45] and *have* [46]. Double negation [44] is also commonplace. Usually this involves indeterminates inside the clause; for example, *I never said nothing for a while*. Widespread, too, is the use of *never* [49] as a general negator in place of auxiliary plus *not* (for example, *You never opened it* [= ‘You didn’t open it’]). Aboriginal English has additional possibilities; for example, *not* and *no more*, as in *Nail not float* ‘The nail doesn’t float’.

An additional feature that has been reported from Southland, New Zealand (probably originating in the distinctive Scottish English of that area) is a stranded *not* in questions, as in *Did you not say that?*

## 2.7 Interrogatives

In these varieties, as elsewhere, it is possible to pose a *yes-no* question simply by rising intonation [74]. The following example has the structure of an ordinary declarative and is distinguished only by intonation: *So, you want to become a benthic geologist?* Increasingly in evidence is also the invariant negative tag *isn’t it* [52], as in *You’re going home soon, isn’t it?* Both these examples come from speakers of Standard AusE. Aboriginal English has an even more elaborate array of simplified tags, including *init*, *ini*, *ana* and *na*. These take the place of standard tags like *weren’t they*, *didn’t he*. A type of tag that Aboriginal English shares with many vernaculars is *eh*, as in *He can walk, eh?*

## 2.8 Composite sentences

In Aboriginal English discourse, long loosely connected structures are the norm and there is little in the way of subordination. This is the characteristically paratactic structure of spoken discourse, although it appears to be more extensive in this variety. Clause markers are often absent, as in *I bin go dere work* (with a missing complementiser). This variety also has a type of verb chaining construction

where two main verbs are linked (with or without a conjunction) to express both an activity and a motion that is closely associated with that activity, as in *they go there chargin on don't they* and *Nother mob go down long creek and go and drink water*.

Relative clauses with zero marking for subjects [66] is widespread in the different vernacular varieties of this region. For example, *I knew a girl worked in an office down the street*. If relative markers are used in Aboriginal English, the relative particle *what* [61] often substitutes for *that*, as in *I got one mate what goes to a Catholic school*. In AusVE non-standard possessive relative pronouns such as *that its*, *thats* and *what's* [65] occasionally appear in place of standard *whose* (especially when the antecedent is inanimate).

Also widespread are the 'linking' relative clauses typical of spoken English elsewhere. These differ from standard relatives by having no antecedent (they elaborate on a stretch of discourse, often reiterating earlier information) and no missing argument in the relative clause (*which* has no grammatical function and can be replaced by a coordinating conjunction such as *and*). The following example comes from spoken AusE: [...] *unless you get 88 which some universities are not going to give those marks*.

The Southland variety of NZE is reported to have an unusual feature for this region; namely, past participles following the verbs *need* and *want*, as in *that shirt wants washed*. It is likely that this has originated from the Scottish English of the settlers in that area.

## 2.9 Word order

Commonly reported for Aboriginal English is expressive word order. Particularly striking is the repetition of phrases and sentences, as well as highly topic-oriented structures such as left-dislocation (*The policeman he heard this banging*) and right-dislocation (*E got lots of trucks an cars, toy one*). While these constructions are typical of spontaneous spoken language generally, it is the relative frequency and the special combination of these features that make this variety different from others.

## 2.10 Hypocoristics

A distinguishing characteristic of Antipodean English, especially AusE, is the rich system of nominal derivation that produces forms like *breaky* (< *breakfast*) and *rellie* or *rello* (< *relative*) and *arvo* (< *afternoon*), or what are called *hypocoristics*. Speakers shorten words and add a suffix, either *-i* or *-o*. These endings are far more extensive than the diminutive endings on pet names like *Robbo* and *Susy*. They also have very different functions.

### 3. The grammatical features of the contact varieties

The following represents the most significant morphosyntactic features of the contact varieties of this region: Bislama, Pijin, Tok Pisin (varieties of Melanesian Pidgin), Hawai'i Creole, Fiji English (creole-like, but not technically a creole), Norfolk Island/Pitcairn English (typologically closer to Atlantic creoles), and the two Australian creoles Kriol and Torres Strait Creole. These languages show remarkable regional and idiolectal diversity, much of which derives from the fact they are not developing in isolation. Not only are there varying degrees of contact with local languages, many speakers know English and switch regularly between this and their creole. Readers are also reminded of the existence of the creole continuum. Languages range from the so-called 'light' varieties closest to Standard English (the 'acrolects') to the 'heavy' varieties (the 'basilects') furthest from English. We will focus the discussion on the basilectal end of the continuum, since this is where the most distinctive grammatical features are to be found.

#### 3.1 Pronouns

The pronominal paradigms of these creoles are at the same time more simple and more complex than that of the standard. While forms are not generally distinguished for case or for gender (for example, Bislama 3rd person singular *hem* is gender neutral), the systems allow for a much more elaborate set of distinctions involving, for example, dual and perhaps even trial. Hence the two-way number system of English may expand into a four-way system – singular, dual, trial and plural. 1st person non-singular forms also distinguish between inclusive and exclusive, such as Australian creole forms *yumi* ('1st dual, including you'), *yumpla* (1st plural, including you) versus exclusive *mitu* (1st dual, excluding you), *mippla* (1st plural, excluding you). These categorial distinctions have clearly arisen from the substrate languages.

Fiji English shares many of its pronouns with the standard, but shows some of the features just mentioned. For example, the basilectal variety often lacks a gender distinction for 3rd person singular, although it can distinguish human referents (*fella*) from non-human referents (*thing*). Moreover, it has a 1st person dual inclusive pronoun *us-two*, as well as a 1st person plural (more than two) exclusive pronoun *us-gang* (*gang* is on its way to becoming a general plural marker for pronouns). Hawai'i Creole also indicates plural by adding *gaiz*. Like the standard, it has distinct subject and object forms, but there are some interesting differences, most notably, object pronouns can appear in subject position [13] (*her sik* 'she's sick').

## 3.2 Nouns and noun phrases

### 3.2.1 *Morphology*

Contact situations are generally calamitous for inflectional morphology – we need only look at English to see this. Contact with French and Norse speakers had the effect of bringing about a speedier end to inflections already undermined by normal phonological processes. Not surprisingly, then, all these contact varieties display limited morphology for both nouns and verbs.

Number tends to be implicit in the context and if it is indicated at all, it is generally not on the noun but via some kind of freestanding quantifier, such as Melanesian Pidgin *olgeta ~ ol* ‘all’.

Possessive constructions generally show the possessor following the thing possessed, connected with a freestanding marker such as *blong/blo* or *fe*. For example, Australian creole *Dog blong / blo maan* ‘the man’s dog’ and Norfolk *aa kau fe mais bradhas* ‘that cow of my brother’. These speakers also use constructions that are closer to standard English. In the case of Australian creoles, examples like the following are typical of more formal social situations: *Maan dog* and *Maanz dog*.

### 3.2.2 *Determiners*

Standard English nouns are either definite or indefinite (*the emu* versus *an emu*). This is not the case for many creoles, however. For example, in Australian creoles *iyimu* can mean ‘the emu’, ‘an emu’ (and also ‘the emus’ or ‘some emus’). However, if speakers want to include this information they can draw from elsewhere, such as the system of demonstratives and numerals: *dem iyimu* ‘the emu’, *wan iyimu* ‘an emu’, *plenti iyimu* ‘some emus’. This is an area of rapid change in these varieties and many of the forms are well on their way to grammaticalising into determiners. In Pijin, for example, the quantifier *wanfala* ‘one’ is currently being reanalysed as an indefinite singular article and the demonstrative pronoun *ia* (from English *here*) as a definite article.

### 3.2.3 *Adjectives*

In these varieties the class of true adjectives is small. Indeed, given the overall paucity of inflectional morphology and the fact that adjectives often reduplicate according to the same patterns as verbs (see section 3.3.1), it is sometimes difficult to make a clear distinction between these two word classes. (Note, reduplication in adjectives usually has some kind of intensifying quality, as in Bislama *fas* ‘stuck’ versus *fasfas* ‘well and truly stuck’.)

Generally adjectives will appear before the noun and often with a derivational suffix such as Tok Pisin *-pela* (or *-pla*) and Pijin *-fala* (from English *fellow*); for example *dispela tupela naispela liklik pik* ‘these two nice little pigs’. A handful of



(usually intensifying) adjectives follow, as in *tok nogut* ‘bad language’. Nominal modifiers also typically follow, as in *bikpela sospen ain* ‘a big iron saucepan’. Australian creoles, especially those in rural areas of Western Australia, show an interesting feature with respect to the positioning of adjectival modifiers. If there are several, one usually precedes the noun. The others follow and a pronoun form *one* may be added, as in *we get five sheeps fat one*.

### 3.3 Verbs and verb phrases

#### 3.3.1 Verb morphology

The creoles are creating new inflectional morphology all the time. Rather than representing the continuation of superstrate morphological patterns, however, these developments usually involve the reanalysis of what were originally English lexical forms. For example, many of the creoles in this area add some kind of suffix (-*Vm*) to the end of (most) transitive verbs, as in Pijin *huk* ‘to hook’ versus *hukum* ‘to hook something’. This represents the reanalysis of the third person singular masculine object pronoun *him*. It has become an extremely productive suffix in these languages and will appear on any new verb borrowed from English; for example, *faksim* ‘to fax’ and *imelim* ‘email (someone)’.

Creole verbs are typically unmarked for tense. Depending on the context, Torres Strait Creole *Mi baiim kaikai* can mean ‘I buy some food’, ‘I bought some food’ or ‘I will buy some food’. If required, speakers can add extra auxiliary verbs or sentence modifiers such as *bin* or *go* to indicate either past or future time: *Mi bin baiim kaikai* ‘I bought some food’ and *Mi go baiim kaikai* ‘I will buy some food’.

Reduplication is widespread and a productive feature of verb morphology that is markedly different from other varieties of English. In these creoles it is usually partial reduplication, involving the repetition of the first syllable or first two syllables of the verb root (or material from these syllables). The pattern generally indicates intensity, duration or repetition of an action: Pijin *karae* ‘cry’ versus *kakarae* ‘cry continuously’. There may be other meanings as well, such as reciprocal action: Bislama *save* ‘know’ versus *savsave* ‘know each other’.

#### 3.3.2 Tense, aspect, modality

Temporal, aspectual and modality distinctions are indicated by (usually preverbal) freestanding forms. Tok Pisin, for example, has a number of grammatical markers that it shares with other creoles of this region. These include temporal particles *bai* ‘future’, *laik* ‘proximal future’ and *bin* ‘past’ [29], aspectual particles *klosap* ‘inceptive’, *pinis* ‘perfect’, *save* ‘habitual’ [24] and *stap* ‘continuous’ and also modality markers *inap* ‘ability’, *ken* ‘permission’ and *mas* ‘necessity’. It is interest-

ing to note that *bin* as a past tense marker [29] occurs across the board for all the contact varieties described here.

### 3.3.3 *Predicate marking*

The various off-springs of Melanesian Pidgin have in common what can be thought of a type of verb phrase marker, namely *i*. It is generally accepted that *i* has its origin in a (third person) resumptive pronoun as part of a left dislocation structure (*That fellow, he's a fool*) and elements of this earlier construction are still apparent. For one, *i* is systematically excluded after first and second person subjects, as evident in Tok Pisin *mi kam, yu kam* 'I come, you come' versus *e i kam* 's/he comes'. However, the grammaticalisation process has already taken it a long way from its original focus construction. This is a hotly debated grammatical feature of these languages and readers are advised to check the details given in the individual chapters of this Handbook.

### 3.3.4 *Serial verbs*

A striking characteristic of all the contact varieties described here is the serial verb construction [72]. Typically this involves a series of verbs with no marker conjoining them. There is a single subject preceding both verbs and a single object following. Moreover, where there is a predicate marker *i*, it only appears once and has scope over the entire verb series. The following is an example from Tok Pisin: *Em i brunim rausim ol pipia* 'S/he swept away the rubbish'. There are other construction types where the verb sequences are less tight, as in this Bislama example: *Kali i sendem buk i kam* 'Kali sent the book hither'. Note, that the Standard English *come see* and *go see* constructions come nowhere near the extensive patterns of verb serialisation that are found in these varieties. This represents a significant typological divergence from English and gains its motivation primarily from the substrate languages. It is also an extremely complex and varied construction and readers are advised to check the individual Handbook chapters for precise details, especially with respect to Bislama where it features more extensively.

## 3.4 Prepositions

The Melanesian Pidgin varieties have a small set of prepositions, as is typical of their Oceanic substrate languages. The forms have a high functional load; for example, Bislama *long/lo* can indicate location (*lo taun* 'to town', *lo Vila* 'in Vila'), source (*lo taun* 'from town'), instrument (*lo naif* 'with (the) knife'). It can also precede patient noun phrases in construction with formally intransitive verbs.

### 3.5 Negation

These varieties have a range of negators, including *no* [50], *nomo*, *neba* [49]. Overwhelmingly they appear in front of the verb and any tense markers (without *do*-support); for example Torres Strait Creole *Mi no bin baiim kaikai*. 'I didn't buy any food'. Many also have a number of special negative verbs. For instance, Norfolk has *duu* or *dan* to express negative imperatives and also *ent* 'am/is/are not'. Double negation [44] is reported as occurring in Hawai'i Creole, as in *Nomo nat-ing insai dea* 'There isn't anything in there'.

### 3.6 Interrogatives

These varieties all use rising intonation to form a *yes-no* question [74]. There is also a range of invariant tags, such as *e* or *o(wat)* [52]. For example (Torres Strait Creole): *Yu bin pikimup manggo?* and *Yu bin pikimup manggo, e?* 'Did you pick up the mangoes?'. Open interrogatives also lack inverted word order [73]. Moreover, the forms that correspond to the English 'wh-words' (for example Melanesian Pidgin *wanem* 'what') do not necessarily move to the front of the sentence, but remain in the structural position of the corresponding declarative. The following example (from Bislama) has the same structure as the Standard English echo question that speakers use when they find a piece of news astonishing: *Yu wokem wanem?* 'You did what?'

### 3.7 Composite sentences

The contact varieties discussed here share a characteristically paratactic structure; in other words, clauses are strung together, either without any linking item or joined by some sort of coordinating element (see also section 2.8). When subordinate clauses do occur they are indicated by a range of markers that have grammaticalised from prepositions, such as *for/fo*, *blong/blo* and *long/lo*. For example, in Hawai'i Creole what are *to* infinitives in English are introduced by *for*, as in *I too chicken fo say anyting* 'I was too scared to say anything'. An interesting development is the current reanalysis of the Melanesian Pidgin form *se* [68]. This was originally used to introduce quotative clauses, but is in the process of extending its contexts to include a range of complement clauses beyond locutions, as in the Bislama *mi hop se bai yu kam* 'I hope that you will come'.

The creoles have various ways of forming relative clauses. One is by simple embedding with no overt marking; Tok Pisin *tupla brata mama i bin dai stap wantain papa* 'the two brothers whose mother had died lived with their father'. They have also developed a number of optional relative markers (usually from pronouns) such as *husat* and *we*, as in Tok Pisin *em papa bl' em we helpim em* 'It was his father who helped him'. Non-subject noun phrases often leave a pronoun

copy that appears in place of the deleted co-referential noun phrase [67]; Tok Pisin *Em putim tupla lo wanpla ples we ol sa putim man longen* ‘He put them in a place where they kept people (in it)’.

### 3.8 Word order

The constituent order of these creoles is basically SVO. Pronominal objects (especially those with inanimate reference) are often omitted, as in Bislama *mi laikem* ‘I like (it)’. Similarly, third person singular subjects can also be unexpressed, the only signal being the predicate marker *i*; hence, *em i laikem ~ i laikem* ‘(S/he) likes (it)’.

The contact varieties of this region typically do not have a passive construction. Speakers can manipulate word order to exploit different sequences of noun phrases for highlighting and contrasting salient information. Speech exchanges are typically full of highly topic-oriented structures, such as fronting (with or without special focus markers), left- and right-dislocation.

These varieties generally lack a copula corresponding to English *be* [57]. Equational sentences are therefore non-verbal constructions involving the simple juxtaposition of the topic and comment noun or adjective phrase, as in Kriol *Olabat bigbala yem* ‘They (are) big yams’. Where the topic constituent is a noun phrase there might be an intervening predicate marker, as in Torres Strait Creole *Mislam i boi blo Kemuel* ‘Mislam (is) Kemuel’s son’. In Hawai‘i Creole and Norfolk the presence or absence of a copula-like verb can convey different meanings. For example, the following Hawai‘i Creole sentence has no copula before the predicate adjective phrase because it involves a permanent quality: *Da wahine shawt* ‘the woman (is) short’. In contrast, the stative verb *stei*, as in *Shi stei sik* ‘She is sick’, indicates that the quality is short-term.

### 3.9 Summary

It is not only between the creoles of Melanesian Pidgin origin that grammatical similarities exist. English-based creoles in the Pacific and Australasian regions generally, indeed world-wide, share striking resemblances. Examples of these shared features include the following. (Note, many of them also occur in non-standard varieties of English around the world; for details see the Global Synopsis by Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi, this volume).

- fixed basic word order, usually subject-verb
- little in the way of grammatical morphology: plural and possessive noun suffixes typically omitted; no concord between subject and verb in the present tense; past tense expressed with the base form of the verb [40]
- particles often used to indicate plurality

- possession expressed by the juxtaposition of the possessor and possessed noun phrases, or by some particle
- no case distinctions for pronouns
- prepositions frequently omitted
- *he/'e* often used as a general third person singular [8]
- elaborate pronoun systems, distinguishing, for example, dual/plural number and inclusive/exclusive (first person)
- particles used to signal tense and aspect; for example, *been/bin* for past [29], *gon(na)* or *gotta* for future
- serial verb constructions common [72]
- systematic use of reduplication (especially on verbs)
- invariant tag questions like *isn't it, init, ini, ana* and *na* [52]
- main and auxiliary verb *be* often omitted [57]
- frequent use of repetition for rhetorical effect.

When creoles are written down it is tempting to think of them as simplified forms of English. But they are very different varieties with their own distinctive grammars, and when spoken by fluent speakers they are not mutually intelligible with Standard English. Symbolically, too, it is important to emphasize their linguistic distinctiveness. In Australia, for example, the widespread destruction of indigenous languages has meant that varieties like Kriol are now an important part of these speakers' Aboriginality. As languages in their own right, these creoles have become an important means of signalling their speakers' cultural and social identity.

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# Synopsis: morphological and syntactic variation in Africa and South and Southeast Asia

Rajend Mesthrie

## 1. Introduction

The chapters describing the morphology and syntax of varieties of English from Africa and south and southeast Asia (henceforth *Africa-Asia*) show a high degree of similarity. This similarity particularly pertains to the L2 varieties of English spawned by British colonialism in Africa-Asia. In fact the main linguistic divisions discernible amongst varieties described in this section of the Handbook are not so much by individual country *per se*, but according to the following dimensions:

- (a) L1 English (South Africa and St. Helena)
- (b) L2 Englishes (Africa and Asia)
- (c) Pidgins and Creoles (Africa).

This trichotomy is nonetheless a fuzzy one for many reasons. Within South Africa language shift has caused some former L2s to turn into L1s (CFE, InSAfE), with linguistic characteristics that overlap between (a) and (b) above. Whilst StHE is grouped here as an L1 it also shares many features with group (c), owing largely to the influence of the linguistic practices of slaves upon BrE settler dialects. Within west Africa, L2 English has been influenced by the rapidly spreading West African Pidgin (WAP), and *vice versa*. In India there is some overlap between the features of ButIE and certain sociolects within vernacular IndE. ButIE has always been a difficult variety to classify within contact studies (see further below) and a comparison of the relevant chapters in this Handbook shows that it does not really share much in common with WAP. This stands in contrast to the immense similarities amongst L2 Englishes in Africa-Asia. Recent Pidgin and Creole Linguistics has debated the status of Pidgins and Creoles (henceforth *P & Cs*) as a natural class that contrasts with other categories like L1 regional dialects of the superstrate or L2 versions of the superstrate. The chapters in the Africa-Asia section of this Handbook, however, appear to uphold the traditional division, showing clearcut differences between L1, L2 and P & Cs. However, it must be conceded that intermediate varieties between this threefold distinction do exist, showing a blend of L1 and pidgin (StHE), or characteristics akin to both L2 formation and a degree of creolisation (InSAfE and to a lesser extent SgE). Finally ButIE looks like an L2 arrested at an early stage of development (i.e. it seems intermediate between fossilised L2 and pidgin).

It is also interesting to chart the relations of the Africa-Asia varieties with varieties of English in other continents. WhSAfE has much in common with other Southern Hemisphere Englishes, especially its Antipodean cousins in Australia and New Zealand. A link between the African and Asian varieties is provided by InSAfE, which is influenced by its position in Africa, whilst sharing a great deal with IndE (and L2 Asian Englishes generally). Likewise LibSE forms a link between African American English and P & Cs of west Africa. The only other variety in Africa-Asia which has American, rather than British roots is PhIE. StHE also has affinities with varieties outside the territory and will no doubt make a useful point of comparison with Caribbean, Pacific and Atlantic Englishes.

A few cautionary notes are in order before launching into a synopsis of the features to be found in Africa-Asia. The difficulty of compressing information from nineteen chapters into one inevitably leads to a degree of idealisation that does not always do justice to the specifics of a construction in a particular territory. Furthermore the comparability of data gathered under different circumstances by different researchers at different times brings its own challenges. For sociolinguistics this is the general methodological challenge between fidelity to an *emic* orientation and the demands of a broad comparative perspective.

In the sections that follow the main focus will fall on the L2 varieties. The P & Cs are better treated as a group on their own, as are the L1 varieties. For an account of the most important parallels and differences in the morphology and syntax within and across these three groups of varieties compare the Global Synopsis by Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi (this volume). For easier reference, the number code of the morphosyntactic features investigated there will be specified in square brackets below.

## 2. Tense, aspect and modality

### 2.1 *Tense and aspect*

The broad PRESENT – PAST – FUTURE tense distinction using StE morphemes is largely unaltered in L1 and L2 Englishes of Africa-Asia, in contrast to the P & Cs. Where variation occurs in the L1 and L2 varieties it is especially in the combination of tense with aspect. Unmarked verbs for the simple past [40] are noted in SgE (frequently) and NigE and CFE (occasionally). Conversely doubly marked forms (with *did* + *-ED*) are reported in NigE and EAfE (rarely in both varieties). The use of perfect forms with *HAVE* in place of the simple past [25] (completive aspect) is noted for GhE, IndE and PakE. Conversely the use of the past for perfect occurs in (at least) CFE and BISAfE. The past perfect for present perfect is reported for GhE. Complex tenses (involving combinations of progressive and perfective aspect and tense) tend to be avoided in at least EAfE. Few innovations in tense are reported:

one such is the use of *would* for the remote distant future in contrast to *will* for the immediate future in MalE.

The P & Cs show a major restructuring of the English tense and aspect system, with pre-verbal particles used to mark tense, aspect and modality that differ not just structurally, but semantically from the English tense and aspect system. Some of these particles in WAP are: zero for simple past [40]; *go* for future and irrealis; *bi* or *bin* for anterior [29]; *de* for incomplete, *don* for complete [28] etc. There are differences within WAP as well, e.g. GhP uses zero rather than *bin* for anterior marking. In LibSE the future particle is *gan* or *will*; the incomplete, *de* (and others); and the complete, *don*. StHE does not have a system of pre-verbal particles, but does make use of *don* for complete and *is* before other verbs in stem form.

The use of present *BE* for ‘have been’ (*I’m here for twenty years*) is reported in InSAfE and SAfE generally. StHE occasionally uses *is* for *will*.

A striking and almost universal characteristic among L2 varieties in Africa-Asia is the extension of *BE* + *-ING* to stative contexts [21]. It is reported as a frequent characteristic of NigE, GhE, EAfE, BISAfE, IndE, PakE, MalE, and as an occasional feature of InSAfE. It also occurs in SgE, though perhaps not as commonly because *be* tends to be deleted [57] in this variety. In ButlE the suffix *-ing* is over-generalised as a verb ending for a variety of tenses and *BE* is frequently deleted. Nevertheless the basic principle stands: there is frequently no distinction between stative and non-stative verbs. This feature does not occur in the L1 varieties of WhSAfE and StHE. For WAP the very different system of pre-verbal particles makes this feature inapplicable. Noteworthy forms of semi-auxiliaries that perform aspectual work are *steady* for continuous and *come* for expressing disapproval in LibSE; *busy* for ‘in the process of’ in all varieties of SAfE; *an’ stay* for habitual and *an’ leave* for complete in InSAfE; and *kena* and *give* for adversative passives in SgE.

## 2.2. Modality

The semantics of the modal auxiliaries is subject to much variability in the L2 Englishes. *Will* for ‘would’ and *can* for ‘could’ in certain contexts is reported in BISAfE, InSAfE, CFE, GhE, NigE and MalE. Similarly *shall* for ‘should’ occurs in NigE. Other substitutions include *can* for ‘might’ in BISAfE and *may* for ‘might’ in NigE.

Politeness effects are also responsible for some variation in modal usage. *May* is used for polite obligation with passives in IndE; it occurs with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun in BISAfE (*May you please give me a chance*). *Wouldn’t* is used as a softener in place of *don’t* in InSAfE (*I wouldn’t know*). *Would* for ‘will’ and *could* for ‘can’ are reported as polite forms in IndE, in contrast to the reversal noted for other varieties in the previous paragraph. *Won’t* is a directive softener in WhSAfE: *Won’t you do this?* instead of ‘Please do this’, though it can be taken to be



presumptuous if overused. Conversely, in some varieties *must* does not generally carry the semantics of obligation or ‘bossiness’ understood in StE. Thus *must* for ‘have to, ought to, should’ is reported for SAfE generally and for NigE where the form is often *must have to*.

*Should* in SAfE has the unique semantics of ‘used to’ (even in upper mesolectal speech) with a negative equivalent *shouldn’t*. Stressed *can* in this dialect means ‘really can’ (with overtones of disapproval).

### 3. Verb morphology and syntax: Auxiliaries, agreement and verb forms and serialization

Not surprisingly in view of its instability in BrE dialects, the third person singular *-s* ending is quite frequently absent [53] in L2 varieties: NigE, EAfE, BISAfE, CFE, InSAfE, SgE. It is generally absent in WAP, LibSE and ButLE; and occasionally absent in StHE. Conversely an *-s* ending may be used with first person pronouns in StHE, LibSE and CFE, though not with any great frequency. In the same vein the distinction between singular and plural for forms of *BE*, *DO* and *HAVE* may not always be made. *Was* for ‘were’ [59] is reported in StHE, EAfE, CFE, InSAfE; *is* for ‘are’ in StHE and CFE; *don’t* for ‘doesn’t’ [48] in at least CFE and InSAfE, and *was* for conditional ‘were’ in EAfE and InSAfE.

Copula deletion [57] is not very commonly reported in L2 varieties in Africa. It does occur in SgE as a grammatical deletion and in CFE and InSAfE as a phonological rule. It is common in ButLE, LibSE and StHE. A special locative copula (*de*, *dey*) occurs in WAP, but is not reported in any other L1 or L2 variety. Habitual (invariant) *be* is used in StHE and InSAfE. Addition of *is* to forms of habitual *be* [22] is common in StHE, making a kind of ‘double *be*’ construction; in ButLE an occasional feature is the addition of *is* to modals like *can*.

Absence of dummy *do* is reported in IndE, PakE and InSAfE. The survival of unstressed *do* is reported in StHE and CFE. Completive *done* [28] occurs in WAP, LibE and StHE. An irrealis *be done* construction occurs in LibSE and StHE. *Did* in place of ‘have’ (*Did you bring my books?*) occurs in SAfE varieties; whilst *done* for full verb ‘did’ (and *seen* for ‘saw’ and *been* for ‘have been’) occur in ‘lower’ InSAfE sociolects.

*Got* as auxiliary in place of existential *be* is reported for SgE, MalE, InSAfE, WAP.

Phrasal and prepositional verbs are subject to immense variation in L2 Englishes. In some cases the preposition may be deleted, as in the type *pick* for ‘pick up’. This type (not necessarily the exact token) is reported in EAfE, GhE and NigE. The converse (addition of an ‘underlying’ preposition) in the type *discuss* for ‘discuss about’ is more common and reported for EAfE, GhE, NigE, BISAfE, IndE and InSAfE. Variation in the exact preposition used as in the type *congratu-*

*late for* (= ‘congratulate on’) is reported for EAfE, GhE, NigE, BISaFE, IndE and InSAfE.

Verb serialization [72] is a salient characteristic of WAP, but is not really common in the non-P & C varieties. CFE has a small measure of them, mostly limited to sequences of two verbs. In particular the use of a serial verb with prepositional function is unknown in the L2 varieties.

#### 4. Negation

The only variety showing multiple negation (or ‘negative spread’) [44] is LibE. Double negation is more widespread, being reported as rare in BISaFE and InSAfE, and common in StHE, GhE and ButLE. It is explicitly mentioned as not occurring in NigE and WAP. Another form common in non-standard varieties of English around the world, *ain’t* [45, 46, 47], is conspicuous by its absence in Asia-Africa, except in StHE and LibE. *Never* in place of ‘didn’t’ [49] is reported for InSAfE, CFE and WSAE.

The different system underlying the responses *yes* and *no* to questions couched in the negative (explained in Mesthrie’s account of BISaFE morphology and syntax) is widespread, being reported for BISaFE, NigE, GhE, EAfE, and IndE.

The Pidgins and Creoles are different in their system of negation, usually having an invariant negator rather than clitics on auxiliaries: *no* or *neva* in WAP; *no* or *not* in ButLE [50].

#### 5. Subordination: relativization and complementation

##### 5.1 Relative Clauses

Resumptive pronouns [67] are in common use, being reported in BISaFE, EAfE, NigE, GhE, CamE and InSAfE. *What* [61] as a relativizer is reported in LibSE, StHE, NigE and InSAfE. Preposition chopping, i.e. the deletion of a preposition in a relative clause (e.g. ... *like a big yard that you do gardening an’ all*, with the preposition *in* deleted), is reported for CamE, GhE and InSAfE. PakE, IndE and InSAfE use reduced relative phrases that precede rather than follow the head noun (*detrimental-to-health medicines*). Related compound relatives and other preposed types occur in InSAfE. In SgE a local variant of the standard relative clause involves the use of *one* at the end of the relative clause as its sole marker, and the verb within the relative clause in stem form.

The dichotomy between L2 English and P & C is upheld with WAP using *where* as the relative marker in place of the full range of *who*, *which* etc. ButLE, being a minimal pidgin, does not appear to have a relative clause strategy.

## 5.2 Complementation

The *to* infinitive is subject to a fair amount of variation. In some varieties (EAfE, NigE, GhE, IndE and PakE) it replaces a gerundial form in *-ing* (*Instead of him to travel home...*). In these varieties it may also replace a preposition + gerundial form (... *forbade me to do it*). Conversely *to* may be replaced by *that* + *S* in PakE and IndE (*I wanted that I should get leave*). In EAfE and NigE *to* may be variably deleted (*Allow him [ ] go*). In BISAfE frequently and NigE occasionally, *to* may be added in phrases like *He let me to go*. In GhE the use of *V* + *-ing* and *to* + *V* are sometimes interchangeable.

Complementiser *that* also occurs in novel ways in some varieties. As discussed above it may replace the *to* infinitive construction. In some varieties verb sub-categorization restrictions are different, so that *V* + *NP* + *that* is replaced by *V* + *that* (hence *He has deplored that...* in PakE). *That* is overgeneralised in CamE in two ways: firstly, as a replacement for ‘saying that’ (*She mocked me that I failed my exam*); and, secondly, as a substitute for *because* (*He is crying that I left him behind*). The complementiser *say* [68] occurs in WAP in place of *that*; in LibSE both forms occur, with *say* limited to verbs of communication.

## 5.3 Questions

Several varieties (CamE, InSAfE, IndE, PakE, MalE, ButIE) do not apply the rule of auxiliary inversion mandatorily in *yes/no* questions [74] and *wh*-questions [73] (hence *What you would like?*). In SgE there is little room for inversion as subject pronouns are frequently deleted anyway. The space and function of inversion is somewhat usurped by the *can or not* tag. In indirect questions where StE mandatorily disallows auxiliary inversion, many varieties allow it: BISAfE, InSAfE, EAfE, SgE, PakE, IndE, MalE. In addition some varieties do not require *do*-support in *yes-no* and *wh*- questions: StHE, InSAfE, IndE (*What he wants?*). And again, in contrast to StE, many varieties (e.g. NigE, IndE, InSAfE) allow *do*-support in indirect questions (*I asked him what did he want*).

Some varieties do not use *wh*- movement mandatorily, frequently leaving the *wh*- word or phrase *in situ* (CamE, SgE, NigP). IndE allows COMP to be doubly filled with *wh*- (*What who has eaten?* as one rare but permitted way of expressing ‘Who has eaten what?’)

The use of invariant tag questions [52] emerges as another overwhelming rule in L2 Englishes: BISAfE, NigE, EAfE, CamE, CFE, InSAfE, IndE, SgE, MalE and ButIE. This tag is frequently *isn't it*, though other forms may also be in use: *is it* in SgE and MalE; *isn't* in InSAfE; *né* in CFE and a host of other forms in CamE. Responses to *yes/no* questions couched in the negative were discussed above in section 4. Variation in the form of *wh*- words is discussed under pronouns (section 7).

## 6. Noun phrase structure

Articles are another area where New Englishes are united in their differences from StE. Occasional absence of the article [17], whether definite or indefinite, is noted in all the L2 varieties represented and in the P & Cs. By contrast, article absence is not a feature of L1 WhSAfE, which is the only variety that has a relatively clear unilinear descent from BrE. In InSAfE (also largely an L1) article absence does occur, but at a relatively infrequent level. This is also the case with CFE. The article *one* as a variant of the indefinite *a* is reported in StHE, InSAfE and WAP. The use of an article where StE favours zero [17] is reported in BISAfE, NigE, GhE, PakE, IndE and in special idioms like *a pant* for ‘a pair of trousers, pants’ in CFE. Occasional substitution of *the* for *a* is reported in NigE, GhE and IndE.

Equally widespread is the use of plural *-s* for what are non-count nouns in StE: all the L2 Englishes studied have this as a prominent feature. Again, there is an ‘isogloss’ between L2 and L1 varieties, with no attestations in WhSAfE. InSAfE falls on the L2 side of the boundary this time; there is no information on CFE. There is no data from the P & Cs, possibly because in the case of a rudimentary pidgin like ButLE the words concerned (*staff, machinery, luggage*) belong to a more advanced vocabulary set not typical of the variety. There is also some regularization of the plural, with at least InSAfE having forms like *childrens* and *oxens*.

For demonstratives the use of a single form *this* for both singular and plural is reported for CFE and WhSAfE and *that* for both singular and plural is reported in WhSAfE and InSAfE.

There is some variation in the form of adjectives, especially in, but not limited to, the comparative forms of irregular ones. Thus *worst* for ‘worse’ in NigE and InSAfE; *more worse* [19], also in InSAfE; and *worser* in LibSE. There are occasional forms like *biggerer* and *betterer* in lower sociolects of CFE; *most easiest* in WhSAfE; *more wiser* and *more better* in LibSE. *Too* may be used in place of ‘very’ as an adjectival qualifier in BISAfE, InSAfE and NigE. An adjective may stand alone for ‘Adj + Noun’ combinations in BISAfE (*rurals* for ‘rural people’); or it may be preceded by an article (*He’s a British*) in InSAfE and NigE. In some varieties like BISAfE and NigE the basic adjective form is used rather than the superlative, when the comparative marker *than* makes the relation clear (*He is one of the radical students that you can ever find*). In these varieties *than* may replace *more than* in similar comparisons (*He loves his car than his children*). As far as the P & Cs are concerned there are clearcut differences, with predicative adjectives of WAP and LibSE capable of functioning as verbs, insofar as they take preverbal particles. WAP is also strikingly different in its use of a form of the verb *pass* as comparative form (*A waka pas* ‘I walked most’).

Zero possessive forms (*the people cows*) occur in LibSE and WAP. In the latter *for* is an alternative to zero [18] (*knife for John*); this pattern also occurs in lower sociolects of BISAfE.

## 7. Pronouns

Pronouns admit of some variability in all the varieties. *Us* for ‘we’ occurs in StHE [13]; *we* as a variant of ‘our’ in LibSE; *me* for ‘I’ [13] and *im* for ‘he/she/it’ in WAP. Special second person plural pronouns [3] filling a gap in StE can be found regularly in LibSE and InSAfE; in the latter the form is *yall* or *you-all*, with genitive *yall’s*. The equivalent form *youse* is used occasionally by some speakers of WhSAfE and CFE. This is matched in IndE in the plural interrogative pronoun *who-all*; in InSAfE the plural interrogative is the reduplicated form *who-who*, with the semantics of ‘individuated’ rather than ‘group’ plural. The associative plural form *them* is affixed to a definite human noun, prototypically a name or family relation (*Roy-them*; *my grandfather-them*) in LibSE and InSAfE. The related form *and them* occurs in all varieties of SAfE. The genitive form in InSAfE is *them’s* or *and them’s*. *Them* is also a demonstrative in LibSE (*them days*). *Dem* is the object pronoun in WAP (for ‘them’) and a low tone equivalent is the subject form. It does not appear to function as an associative plural marker in this variety. The fluctuation between *he* and *she* is reported for BISAfE, NigE and GhE, motivated by the absence of sex as a grammaticalised category in the substrate languages. The use of singular *it* for plural *them* is reported for BISAfE, InSAfE and MalE. The indefinite use of *they* for some unspecified person(s) understood as agents of a passive construction is common in NigE and CamE. The WAP pronoun system is more intricate than that of StE; with tonal distinctions being largely responsible for a three-way differentiation between an emphatic form on the one hand and a subject and an object form on the other. WAP also has bimorphemic *wh-* question words; these are not generally found in the other varieties reported on, except in InSAfE which has some such forms in the basilect.

Pro-drop, the non-use of pronouns in certain contexts, is reported to be much more widespread in IndE, InSAfE, SgE, MalE, ButLE and WAP than in StE. In WhSAfE it is common with object rather than subject pronouns. Similarly dummy *it* (as in *It’s clear that...*) may be dropped in IndE and in certain sociolects of BISAfE. In IndE dummy existential *there* (as in *There is food*) occurs in predicate position (*Food is there*).

In NigE possessives coupled with a demonstrative or adjective admit of variable order, e.g. *teacher our new* for ‘our new teacher’.

## 8. Adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions

In EAfE, at least, adverbial forms are frequently the same as adjectival ones, without *-ly* [42]. Adverbials like *already*, *now* and *only* are relatively free in their placement in EAfE, CFE and MalE compared to StE. *Already* is a perfective mark-

er in CFE and MalE. In the latter a double use of *already* - one local, one standard - might occur: *She's already gone already*. In addition to occasional standard usage, *only* and *too* are focus markers in IndE and InSAfE.

Prepositions are underdifferentiated in all the (L1 and L2) varieties reported on. In WAP the form *for* is particularly wide in its functioning. In IndE, PakE and InSAfE prepositional phrases may be reduced by deleting the preposition and proposing them to the head noun in a compound construction: a *cold-touch* for 'a touch of cold'. With verbs of motion directional prepositions may be deleted (*She went town*) in StHE and InSAfE.

Amongst conjunctions InSAfE uses clause-final *but*, equivalent in semantics to 'though' (*It's nice and quiet here, but*). Elliptical *but* in CamE in a sentence like *I am going to eat but bread*, leaves unstated a whole proposition regarding the worse alternatives. Some varieties use double conjunctions like *suppose if* for 'if' (NigE, BISafE, InSAfE). Double conjunctions in another sense occur across clauses where StE uses a conjunction only once; this is the case in BISafE, InSAfE, IndE, NigE (e.g. *Although you are smart, but you are not appreciated*). BISafE has a construction that replaces 'some... other' in parallel contrastive clauses by 'other... other' (e.g. *Other people are nice, other people are not so nice*).

## 9. Word order and discourse organisation

Major perturbations to English word order are reported in InSAfE, in matters of relative clauses, placement of conjunctions and kinship syntax (*George uncle* is respectful, *uncle George* is formal). Likewise CamE in its avoidance of movement rules for *wh*-questions [73] and the like is also a major disrupter of StE word-order conventions. In addition every variety studied is reported to have a notably higher degree of topicalisation phenomena, especially involving left dislocation, than StE. Although the amount of left dislocation in ordinary colloquial L1 English should not be underestimated, it does seem to be the case from the data and ensuing discussions that InSAfE, BISafE, IndE and all other varieties might well favour a 'pragmatic' word order more than a strict 'syntactic' SVO order. Inversion of subject and auxiliary in the Germanic 'V2' construction does not occur in PakE and MalE (*Never I have seen such waste*).

## 10. Other miscellaneous constructions

The passive is rare in several varieties (e.g. WAP) and replaced by an active construction with indefinite focus in NigE and CamE. In SgE an innovation using the Malay verb *kena* for 'adversative' passives occurs. This remarkable use of an indigenous lexicon-grammatical item for a major grammatical function in an L2

English is worthy of future monitoring. An alternative in SgE is to use *give* as a passive marker.

The dative of advantage (*I'm gonna buy me a car*) survives in CFE, and a dative of obligation appears to be an innovation in CamE (*I am going me away for 'I must go away'*).

Reduplication is widespread in almost all the varieties researched in Africa-Asia. Almost all varieties (NigE, BISaFE, CFE, InSaFE, IndE, SgE, WAP, SAfE) reduplicate adverbs. Adjectives are reduplicated in many of these (NigE, InSaFE, IndE, SgE, WAP); verbs in InSaFE, IndE, SgE, WAP; and nouns in InSaFE, SgE and WAP. In WAP the reflexive *sef* may also be reduplicated.

Clefting of the sort *It's tiredness that tires me* is a striking characteristic of WAP but is not found elsewhere in Africa-Asia.

## **11. Conclusion: from description to explanation**

The morphology and syntax of new varieties of English has long been the Cinderella within SLA studies, contact linguistics, typology, sociolinguistics and other branches of linguistics. The chapters in this section of the Handbook show, on the contrary, that many exciting challenges await the analyst in this area. In particular, the large number of similarities across L2 Englishes (cf. also Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi, this volume) needs to be explained more carefully than in the past, where the default assumption has often been interference from the substrates. Since there are over a thousand of these substrate languages in Africa-Asia, the explanation of interference has to be considerably fine-tuned. It is *prima facie* implausible, areal linguistics notwithstanding, that over a thousand languages should induce the very same (or very similar) influences. This would be tantamount to claiming that all the languages of Africa-Asia are the same in structure, united in their differences from English. Such an explanation may at a pinch apply for articles and invariant tags, but does not have a great deal of merit in other areas of grammar. We await more sophisticated work on the psycholinguistics of second-language processing of a cognitive system like English, on the precise role of the classroom, and on the contributions made by early providers of input outside the classroom. It is time Cinderella found her slipper.

# Global synopsis: morphological and syntactic variation in English

Bernd Kortmann and Benedikt Szmrecsanyi

## 1. Introduction

Compared with the regional synopses, it is in this chapter that we shall adopt a truly bird's-eye, or even satellite, view at morphosyntactic variation across the non-standard varieties in the English-speaking world. Relevant questions that will be addressed include the following: Which are the least and, more interestingly, most frequent morphosyntactic features in non-standard varieties of Englishes worldwide, and thus true candidates for what Chambers (2001, 2003, 2004) has called *vernacular universals* (section 4)? What in this respect can be said and which distinctive patterns and correlations can be identified for the seven world regions investigated in this Handbook (section 5), for first (L1) and second (L2) language varieties and Pidgins/Creoles within and across the seven world regions (section 6), and for individual areas of morphosyntax (section 7)? It will turn out that the patterns identified in section 6 are a crucial key to understanding the patterns in sections 5 and 7.

The primary source for the answers to these and other questions addressed in this global synopsis is a catalogue of 76 morphosyntactic features from 11 domains of grammar which was sent to the authors of the morphosyntax chapters of this Handbook (see section 2). For each of these 76 features the authors were asked to specify into which of the following three categories the relevant feature in the relevant variety (or set of closely related varieties) falls:

A pervasive (possibly obligatory) or at least very frequent

B exists but a (possibly receding) feature used only rarely, at least not frequently

C does not exist or (especially for Pidgins and Creoles) does not apply

This feature catalogue and the classifications going with it are also the basis for the interactive world maps on the CD-ROM showing the regional distribution of individual (groups of) morphosyntactic features in non-standard varieties of English. In the first place, the feature catalogue is a method necessary for determining whether a feature not mentioned in a given Handbook chapter really does not exist in the relevant variety or set of varieties, or was simply not deemed salient enough by the author(s) to be worth mentioning (for example, because it is a typical feature of non-standard varieties in general). The 'A' vs. 'B' classification was introduced in order to provide us with more information than simply on the presence or



absence of a given feature; this distinction, coarse as it is, gives us at least an idea of how salient, or entrenched, a given feature is in the relevant variety.

It is, of course, necessary to stress right from the beginning the inevitable problems and potential drawbacks of such an approach. None of these must be forgotten throughout the reading of the regional synopses and, especially, this global synopsis. Such reductionist judgments as the Handbook contributors were asked to make on the basis of this catalogue and classifications (A-B-C) must be taken with a grain of salt, in the case of the many L2 varieties, Pidgins and Creoles (accounting, after all, for more than half of the non-standard varieties in this investigation) even with a generous pinch of salt. A bird's-eye view approach necessarily abstracts from many details and (partly necessary) qualifications in individual varieties (e.g. contextual, lexical, stylistic, age-group restrictions on the [frequency of] use of individual features), as indeed several authors added to their judgments. For individual features and varieties, some authors felt happier to give in-between judgments like 'A/B' or 'B/C'. It is also obvious that where authors were responsible for a group of closely related non-standard varieties (e.g. the dialects of northern England) they indicated where classifications diverge among the individual varieties.

For L2 varieties and, especially, Pidgins and Creoles the problems involved in such a feature catalogue and classification are even larger. To start with, the feature catalogue is not designed to cater specifically for the description of the morphosyntax of L2 varieties and Pidgins and Creoles. Rather, the focus of interest is (a) on supraregional L2 and Pidgin/Creole properties, and (b) on the extent to which English L2 varieties and English-based Pidgins and Creoles exhibit properties of non-standard L1 varieties of English, thus highlighting properties to be seen independently from the relevant L1 and substrate languages. This is why creolists, on the one hand, found many features in the catalogue absent from or simply inapplicable to their varieties (both resulting in a 'C' classification) and, on the other hand, would have liked to add features which help to bring out the distinctive properties of Pidgins and Creoles, in general, and the Pidgin(s) or Creole(s) they were responsible for, in particular. Then there is the notorious problem of the continuum of speakers from the basilectal to the acrolectal level. For our purposes most contributors chose, as in their Handbook chapters, the mesolect as their reference variety. In a few cases, however, the category 'A', for example, was given if a feature occurred in any segment of the Creole continuum of a given variety. This includes the possibility that features received an 'A' or 'B' marking even if different (often basilectal) morphemes are used in a Creole which may or may not be reflexes of the English items included in the original feature list (e.g. in Belizean Creole *we* instead of *what* as relative particle, or *unu* as special second person plural pronoun). The reader may rest assured that the authors of this global synopsis are aware of these and other problems and potential drawbacks of the method adopted here, and will present the results and their interpretations of

them with all due caution. For example, throughout most of our discussions more importance will be attributed to the presence or absence of a feature than to the classification as ‘A’ or ‘B’.

On the positive side and, in our view, more importantly, the approach used as the basis for this global synopsis (and the interactive world maps on the CD-ROM) is a unique and first-ever attempt at helping to see the wood for the trees. To the best of our knowledge, it offers for the first time a comprehensive standard of comparison for determining the degree and nature of “non-standardness” of varieties of English. Distributional patterns and correlations can be identified on a much larger scale than has ever been possible within the individual research traditions in which the non-standard varieties covered here are traditionally studied (e.g. dialectology, sociolinguistics, contact linguistics, Pidgin and Creole studies, second language acquisition and the study of L2 varieties). There is a certain parallel between the approach used here for the mapping of intralinguistic (or microparametric) variation and the degree of abstraction we have come to get used to in the study of cross-linguistic (or macroparametric) variation by typologists. The present approach may, and in some respects possibly must, be refined and improved, but even as it stands it is a valuable tool which complements and helps putting in perspective the available descriptions of morphosyntactic variation in English in this Handbook and in the literature. In the following sections, we can confine ourselves only to the most important tendencies and observations at a rather general level. Detailed discussions of individual (groups of) features or varieties will be possible only exceptionally. For relevant information and discussions the reader is referred to the regional synopses.

This global synopsis and the interactive maps on the CD-ROM on morphosyntactic variation are based on the feature classifications of 40 Handbook authors for 46 non-standard varieties of English, i.e. more than 85 % of all non-standard varieties covered in the morphosyntax chapters of this Handbook. For the individual world regions coverage varies between 62.5 % (Caribbean) and 100 % (America, Pacific). These and other details are given in Table 1. Note that in this chapter *America* is used as a shorthand for North America, *Caribbean* as a shorthand for the Caribbean, Central and South America, and *Asia* as a shorthand for South and Southeast Asia.

Table 1. Distribution of 46 non-standard varieties across world regions

World region	Varieties for which feature classifications are available	Proportion of varieties of this world region in Handbook	Total L1	Total L2	Total P/C
British Isles	Orkney and Shetland, ScE, IrE, WeE, North, East Anglia, Southwest, Southeast	89 % (missing: BrC)	8	0	0
America	NfldE, CollAmE, AppE, OzE, SEAmE, Urban AAVE, Earlier AAVE, Gullah, ChcE	100 %	7	1	1
Caribbean	BahE, JamC, Tob/TrnC, SurCs, BelC	62.5 % (missing: Baj, GuyC, Eastern CarC)	0	0	5
Australia	CollAusE, AusVE (Tasmania), AusCs, AbE	100 %	2	0	2
Pacific	Bislama, TP, SolP, Fiji E, Norfolk, regional NZE; HawC	100 %	2	1	4
Asia	ButlE, PakE, SgE, MalE	80 % (missing: IndE)	0	4	0
Africa	NigP, GhE, GhP, CamE, CamP, EAfE, WhSAfE, InSAfE, BISAfE	69.2 % (missing: NigE, LibSE, CFE, StHE)	1	5	3

The present authors would like to issue a sincere invitation to all specialists for individual non-standard varieties to provide information on those varieties not covered here and, for the varieties included, to check on the classifications which the features in the catalogue have received. Consider sections 2 and 3 for what kind of information would need to be provided in order to be included in this survey.

## 2. The feature catalogue

The features in the catalogue are numbered from 1 to 76 (for easy reference in later parts of the chapter) and provided with the short definitions and illustrations given as input to the Handbook contributors serving as informants. They include all usual suspects known from survey articles on grammatical properties of (individual groups of) non-standard varieties of English, with a slight bias towards features observed in L1 varieties. The 76 features fall into 11 groups corresponding to the following broad areas of morphosyntax: pronouns, noun phrase, tense and aspect, modal verbs, verb morphology, adverbs, negation, agreement, relativization, complementation, discourse organization and word order.

### Pronouns, pronoun exchange, pronominal gender

1. *them* instead of demonstrative *those* (e.g. *in them days, one of them things*)
2. *me* instead of possessive *my* (e.g. *He's me brother, I've lost me bike*)
3. special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun (e.g. *youse, y'all, aay', yufela, you ... together, all of you, you ones/uns, you guys, you people*)
4. regularized reflexives-paradigm (e.g. *hissself, theirselves/theirsself*)
5. object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives (e.g. *meself*)
6. lack of number distinction in reflexives (e.g. plural *-self*)
7. *she/her* used for inanimate referents (e.g. *She was burning good* [about a house])
8. generic *he/his* for all genders (e.g. *My car, he's broken*)
9. *myself/meself* in a non-reflexive function (e.g. *my/me husband and myself*)
10. *me* instead of *I* in coordinate subjects (e.g. *Me and my brother/My brother and me were late for school*)
11. non-standard use of *us* (e.g. *Us George was a nice one, We like us town, Show us 'me' them boots, Us kids used to pinch the sweets like hell, Us'll do it*)
12. non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function (e.g. *You did get he out of bed in the middle of the night*)
13. non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function (e.g. *Us say 'er's dry*)

### Noun phrase

14. absence of plural marking after measure nouns (e.g. *four pound, five year*)
15. group plurals (e.g. *That President has two Secretary of States*)
16. group genitives (e.g. *The man I met's girlfriend is a real beauty*)
17. irregular use of articles (e.g. *Take them to market, I had nice garden, about a three fields, I had the toothache*)
18. postnominal *for*-phrases to express possession (e.g. *The house for me*)
19. double comparatives and superlatives (e.g. *That is so much more easier to follow*)
20. regularized comparison strategies (e.g. in *He is the regulariest kind a guy I know, in one of the most pretty sunsets*)

### Verb phrase: Tense & aspect

21. wider range of uses of the Progressive (e.g. *I'm liking this, What are you wanting?*)
22. habitual *be* (e.g. *He be sick*)
23. habitual *do* (e.g. *He does catch fish pretty*)
24. non-standard habitual markers other than *be* and *do*
25. levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past (e.g. *Were you ever in London?, Some of us have been to New York years ago*)
26. *be* as perfect auxiliary (e.g. *They're not left school yet*)
27. *do* as a tense and aspect marker (e.g. *This man what do own this*)
28. completive/perfect *done* (e.g. *He done go fishing, You don ate what I has sent you?*)
29. past tense/anterior marker *been* (e.g. *I been cut the bread*)
30. loosening of sequence of tense rule (e.g. *I noticed the van I came in*)
31. *would* in if-clauses (e.g. *If I'd be you, ...*)
32. *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning (e.g. *when you're stood 'are standing' there you can see the flames*)
33. *after-Perfect* (e.g. *She's after selling the boat*)

**Verb phrase: Modal verbs**

- 34. double modals (e.g. *I tell you what we might should do*)
- 35. epistemic *mustn't* ('can't, it is concluded that... not'; e.g. *This mustn't be true*)

**Verb phrase: Verb morphology**

- 36. levelling of preterite and past participle verb forms: regularization of irregular verb paradigms (e.g. *catch-catched-catched*)
- 37. levelling of preterite and past participle verb forms: unmarked forms (frequent with e.g. *give* and *run*)
- 38. levelling of preterite and past participle verb forms: past form replacing the participle (e.g. *He had went*)
- 39. levelling of preterite and past participle verb forms: participle replacing the past form (e.g. *He gone to Mary*)
- 40. zero past tense forms of regular verbs (e.g. *I walk* for *I walked*)
- 41. *a-*prefixing on *ing*-forms (e.g. *They wasn't a-doin' nothin' wrong*)

**Adverbs**

- 42. adverbs (other than degree modifiers) have same form as adjectives (e.g. *Come quick!*)
- 43. degree modifier adverbs lack *-ly* (e.g. *That's real good*)

**Negation**

- 44. multiple negation / negative concord (e.g. *He won't do no harm*)
- 45. *ain't* as the negated form of *be* (e.g. *They're all in there, ain't they?*)
- 46. *ain't* as the negated form of *have* (e.g. *I ain't had a look at them yet*)
- 47. *ain't* as generic negator before a main verb (e.g. *Something I ain't know about*)
- 48. invariant *don't* for all persons in the present tense (e.g. *He don't like me*)
- 49. *never* as preverbal past tense negator (e.g. *He never came* [= he didn't come])
- 50. *no* as preverbal negator (e.g. *me no iit brekfus*)
- 51. *was-weren't* split (e.g. *The boys was interested, but Mary weren't*)
- 52. invariant non-concord tags, (e.g. *innit/in't it/isn't* in *They had them in their hair, innit?*)

**Agreement**

- 53. invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular (e.g. *So he show up and say, What's up?*)
- 54. invariant present tense forms due to generalization of third person *-s* to all persons (e.g. *I sees the house*)
- 55. existential/presentational *there's, there is, there was* with plural subjects (e.g. *There's two men waiting in the hall*)
- 56. variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses (e.g. *they, it, or zero for there*)
- 57. deletion of *be* (e.g. *She \_\_\_ smart*)
- 58. deletion of auxiliary *have* (e.g. *I \_\_\_ eaten my lunch*)
- 59. *was/were* generalization (e.g. *You were hungry but he were thirsty, or: You was hungry but he was thirsty*)
- 60. Northern Subject Rule (e.g. *I sing* [vs. *\*I sings*], *Birds sings, I sing and dances*)

## Relativization

61. relative particle *what* (e.g. *This is the man what painted my house*)
62. relative particle *that* or *what* in non-restrictive contexts (e.g. *My daughter, that/what lives in London, ...*)
63. relative particle *as* (e.g. *He was a chap as got a living anyhow*)
64. relative particle *at* (e.g. *This is the man at painted my house*)
65. use of analytic *that his/that's, what his/what's, at's, as'* instead of *whose* (e.g. *The man what's wife has died*)
66. gapping or zero-relativization in subject position (e.g. *The man \_\_\_ lives there is a nice chap*)
67. resumptive / shadow pronouns (e.g. *This is the house which I painted it yesterday*)

## Complementation

68. *say*-based complementizers
69. inverted word order in indirect questions (e.g. *I'm wondering what are you gonna do*)
70. unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses (e.g. *We always had gutters in the winter time for to drain the water away*)
71. *as what / than what* in comparative clauses (e.g. *It's harder than what you think it is*)
72. serial verbs (e.g. *give* meaning 'to, for', as in *Karibuk giv mi*, 'Give the book to me')

## Discourse organization and word order

73. lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in *wh*-questions (e.g. *What you doing?*)
74. lack of inversion in main clause *yes/no* questions (e.g. *You get the point?*)
75. *like* as a focussing device (e.g. *How did you get away with that like? Like for one round five quid, that was like three quid, like two-fifty each*)
76. *like* as a quotative particle (e.g. *And she was like "What do you mean?"*)

### 3. Feature statistics: Some basic technicalities

There will be many tables and rudimentary statistics in this chapter, but all of them are kept simple and used only because they will tell the reader at a glance more than (or at least as much as) the accompanying text could possibly do, which is why we shall adopt the policy of economizing on the latter. Only five technical terms need to be explained in advance: *feature value*, *feature score*, *feature ratio*, *variety score*, and *variety ratio*.

The basic idea of the **feature value** is to translate the 'A-B-C' classification into a numerical value: we simply opted for 'A=1', 'B=0.5', and 'C=0'. The feature values allow us to do two things. On the one hand, we can sum up and calculate for each of the 76 features how strongly it is represented among the 46 non-standard varieties of English forming the basis for this synopsis: for example, if a given feature has received 20 As, 10 Bs and 16 Cs its **feature score** runs up to 25 (20 times 1, 10 times 0.5, 16 times 0). The feature score thus opens the possibility of

an immediate numerical comparison among the 76 features, allowing us to rank them in the order of their distribution across and salience/entrenchment within the varieties investigated here. This numerical comparison and ranking order we can alternatively arrive at by calculating the **feature ratio (FR)**, namely by dividing the feature score of a given feature by the maximally possible feature score within a given set of varieties. If we take the complete 46-varieties set, then the maximally possible feature score is 46. This would be a feature which received an ‘A’ classification for every single variety in the sample. Thus, returning to our example above, the feature with the feature score 25 has the feature ratio of 0.54 (25 divided by 46). If indeed some feature had received 46 ‘A’ classifications, which none has, then its feature ratio would have been 1.0.

The major advantage of the feature ratio is that it is a normalized value which allows us to make comparisons between and within subsets of the complete 46-varieties set, for example for the British Isles varieties compared with each other or with North American varieties, or for all L2 varieties in the 46-varieties set. Let’s take the British Isles scenario: we have information on eight varieties, in other words the highest possible feature score is 8 (8 times 1 for a feature receiving 8 ‘A’ classifications). In the British Isles varieties, the feature discussed as an example in the preceding paragraph (which, remember, achieved a score of 25 worldwide) may only receive 3 As, 2 Bs, and 3 Cs. This adds up to a feature score of 4 (3 times 1, 2 times 0.5, 3 times 0) and translates in turn into a feature ratio of 0.5 (4 divided by 8). The basic point is that, judged against different subsets of varieties, the same feature score may translate into different feature ratios. For the four Asian varieties, for example, a feature with the feature score 4 has the highest possible feature ratio, namely 1.0.

Once the basic idea of the feature score and feature ratio has sunk in, it is easy to understand the rationale underlying the concepts that we refer to as “variety score” and “variety ratio”. These measures (which may also refer to a group of varieties) gives an impression of “how non-standard” a given variety is, in the sense of how many of the 76 features in the catalogue it exhibits and to what extent it does so. If a variety receives an ‘A’ classification for all 76 features (which in our sample none has received), its **variety score** is 76 (76 times 1) and its **variety ratio (VR)** is 1.0. If another variety has received 30 As, 30 Bs, and 16 Cs its variety score is 45 (30 times 1, 30 times 0.5, 16 times 0), and its variety ratio 0.59 (45 divided by 76). The advantages these two values offer are analogous to those outlined for the feature score and feature ratio above.

None of the scores and ratios introduced above may mean a lot to those readers who doubt the appropriateness and reliability of the ‘A’ vs. ‘B’ classification. (They, in particular, are invited to check on these classifications for those varieties they are most interested or specialized in, and to inform the authors about divergent judgements. For this purpose, the master table underlying this global synopsis and all relevant interactive maps is provided on the CD-ROM.) The good news for

these readers is that essentially the same kind of information, in terms of ranking orders, can be gleaned from simply contrasting ‘C’ classifications with ‘non-C’ classifications (i.e. ‘A’ or ‘B’), since there is a high degree of correlation between feature/variety ratios and the ‘C vs. non-C’ totals. This is why in the following sections the latter classification, i.e. the totals for all varieties exhibiting a given feature or for all features a given variety possesses, will be made the basis for all ranking orders and comparisons within and across the 76-features set and the 46-varieties set (and subsets thereof). Only occasionally will the feature or variety ratios be addressed. Both types of information are given for all varieties and features in the master table on the CD-ROM.

Wherever in the following sections ranking orders will be given in terms of, for example, most or least frequent morphosyntactic features worldwide (section 4), in the seven world regions (section 5), in the L1 varieties, L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles (section 6), or for the 11 areas of non-standard grammar (section 7), the following policy will be adopted: the major threshold will be the 75 % margin. “Most frequent” is to be interpreted as “found in approximately 75 % or more of the varieties in the set under consideration”, correspondingly “least frequent” as “found in no more than 25 %”. Since the 75 % threshold is of course just an arbitrary choice, information will also be given on those features bordering on this margin (down to roughly 65 %). These “runners-up” are the prime candidates for making it to the top groups of most/least frequent features if more varieties are added to the current 46 varieties-set.

#### **4. Most and least frequent morphosyntactic features worldwide**

The recent calls for two independent research endeavours in the study of varieties of English triggered our interest in identifying those morphosyntactic features with the widest distribution among non-standard varieties of English around the globe. There is, first of all, the concept of *vernacular universals* which Jack Chambers has variously discussed over the last few years (e.g. 2001, 2003, 2004), i.e. “a small number of phonological and grammatical processes [which] recur in vernaculars wherever they are spoken” (2004: 128). Secondly, there is the notion of *angloversals*, by which Christian Mair (2003: 84) understands joint tendencies observable in the course of the standardization of postcolonial varieties of English which cannot be explained historically or genetically. The findings in section 4.2 (for Chambers’ *vernacular universals*) and in section 6.4 (for Mair’s *angloversals*) are bound to make a substantial contribution to evaluating and giving more substance to both of these notions if only on a necessarily superficial level. But let us first have a look at the results, beginning with the least frequent morphosyntactic features worldwide.



## 4.1 The least frequent morphosyntactic features

Table 2 lists those 18 features with the lowest distribution across the non-standard varieties of English. They occur in no more than 12 (26 %) and no fewer than three varieties (6.5 %) out of the 46 varieties investigated. The features are ordered according to the number of varieties in which they occur (with the lowest number at the top and the highest at the bottom) and, if a feature occurs in an equal number of varieties, according to their feature ratio (FR):

Table 2. Worldwide Bottom 18 (based on 46 varieties)

<i>feature</i>	<i>no. of varieties where feature is attested</i>	<i>varieties</i>
33 <i>after-Perfect</i>	3	IrE, NfldE, CamE
64 relative particle <i>at</i>	4	Orkney and Shetland, North of England, SEAmE, AppE
12 non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function	5	North of England, Southwest of England, NfldE, BelC, Tob/TrnC
63 relative particle <i>as</i>	6	North of England, Southeast of England, Southwest of England, AppE, NZE, CamE
47 <i>ain't</i> as generic negator before a main verb	7	ChcE, Gullah, Urban AAVE, Earlier AAVE, Tob/TrnC, CamE
60 Northern Subject Rule	8	IrE, North of England, SEAmE, AppE, Earlier AAVE, BahE, CamE, ButlE
13 non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function	8	North of England, Southwest of England, NfldE, BelC, JamC, FijE, HawC, GhP
51 <i>was-weren't</i> split	9	North of England, East Anglia, Southeast of England, SEAmE, Earlier AAVE, NZE, CollAusE, AbE, CamE
32 <i>was sat/stood</i> with progressive meaning	9	IrE, North of England, WeLE, ChcE, NfldE, NZE, CollAusE, NigP, CamE
27 <i>do</i> as a tense and aspect marker	9	IrE, WeLE, Southwest of England, Earlier AAVE, Tob/TrnC, JamC, GhP, CamE, CamP
41 <i>a</i> -prefixing on <i>ing</i> -forms	10	East Anglia, WeLE, Southeast of England, Southwest of England, SEAmE, OzE, AppE, Earlier AAVE, NfldE, CamE

Table 2. (continued) Worldwide Bottom 18 (based on 46 varieties)

<i>feature</i>	<i>no. of varieties where feature is attested</i>	<i>varieties</i>
31 <i>would</i> in <i>if</i> -clauses	11	ScE, Southeast of England, SEAmE, ChcE, Urban AAVE, NfldE, BelC, HawC, FijE, CamE, EAfE
65 use of analytic <i>that his/that's, what his/what's, at's, as'</i> instead of <i>whose</i>	11	ScE, IrE, North of England, East Anglia, Southwest of England, SEAmE, Urban AAVE, BelC, BahE, AusVE, CamE
58 deletion of auxiliary <i>have</i>	11	SEAmE, AppE, Urban AAVE, BelE, JamC, SolP, NZE, AbE, CamE, SgE, MalE
68 <i>say</i> -based complementizers	11	ChcE, Gullah, Urban AAVE, SurCs, Tob/TrnC, JamC, Bislama, TP, GhP, NigP, BISAfE
22 habitual <i>be</i>	12	IrE, Gullah, Urban AAVE, Earlier AAVE, NfldE, BahE, AbE, AusCs, CamE, CamP, InSAfE, ButIE
34 double modals	12	ScE, North of England, CollAmE, SEAmE, OzE, AppE, Gullah, Urban AAVE, Earlier AAVE, JamC, HawC, NigP
23 habitual <i>do</i>	12	IrE, WelE, Southwest of England, Gullah, Earlier AAVE, NfldE, Tob/TrnC, AbE, GhP, CamE, CamP, PakE

To start with, Table 2 confirms what was said in the General Introduction (this volume) about the rarity of morphosyntactic features restricted to one variety or only very few varieties: even the rarest morphosyntactic feature on a global scale (the *after*-perfect) is found in three varieties (IrE, NfldE, CamE), the three next rarest ones have been reported in four to six varieties: the use of a non-coordinated subject pronoun in object function is found in the North and Southwest of England, in NfldE, BelC and Tob/TrnC; the relative particle *at* in Orkney and Shetland, the North of England, SEAmE and AppE; the relative particle *as* in the North, Southwest and Southeast of England, AppE, regional NZE, and CamE.

Not surprisingly, several traditional L1 (i.e. regional dialect) features are part of this list: the relative articles *as* and *at*, *a*-prefixing (especially) on present participles (e.g. East Anglia, OzE, AppE), or the so-called Northern Subject Rule (North of England, OzE). Equally unsurprising is the rarity of a feature like the

*after-Perfect*, which as one of the few safe instances of a Celtic substrate is restricted to Irish English and a transplanted variety thereof (NfldE), although its occurrence in Cameroon English came somewhat unexpected and clearly points to Irish English influence. Most surprising seems, however, that feature [31] (*would* in *if*-clauses), a feature often commented on in spontaneous spoken English and ESL as well as EFL, is so rare. Here it will be interesting to see whether separate analyses for the L1 varieties, L2 varieties and Pidgins and Creoles can shed light on the unexpected rarity of this feature (see below and section 6.3). The largest coherent feature group in Table 2 is the Tense and Aspect group, represented by features [22] and [23] (*be* and *do* as habitual markers, as in AAVE and Irish English respectively), [27] *do* as a tense and aspect marker, as in the Southwest of England, [31] *would* in *if*-clauses, [32] Progressive *was sat/stood* as in the North of England, and [33] *after-perfect*.

Below all Bottom features will be listed which are attested in more than 12, but no more than 23 varieties (i.e. maximally half of the 46-varieties sample):

Attested in 13 to 15 varieties (and thus the immediate runners-up of the Worldwide Bottom 18 set) are completive/perfective *done* [28], *be* as perfect auxiliary [26], and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70].

Attested in 16 to 19 varieties are the non-standard use of *us* [11], *no* as preverbal negator [50], invariant present tense forms due to the generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54], epistemic *mustn't* [35], postnominal *for*-phrases to express possession [18], *ain't* as the negated form of *have* [46], other non-standard habitual markers than *do* and *be* [24], *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45], generic *he/his* for all genders [8], and object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives [5].

Attested in 20 to 23 varieties are group genitives [16], *me* instead of possessive *my* [2], variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses [56], *she/her* used for inanimate referents [7], past tense/anterior marker *been* [29], serial verbs [72], relative particle *that* or *what* in non-restrictive contexts [62], group plurals [15], relative particle *what* [61], and invariant non-concord tags [52].

## 4.2 The most frequent morphosyntactic features

Table 3 lists all those features which are found in at least 34 varieties (74 % of 46). The total of relevant features runs up to 11:

Table 3. Worldwide Top 11 (based on 46 varieties)

	<i>feature</i>	<i>no. of varieties where feature is attested</i>
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	41
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	40
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	40
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	39
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	37
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	36
44	multiple negation / negative concord	35
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	35
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	34
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	34
19	double comparatives and superlatives	34

Of these Top 11, the lack of inversion or lack of auxiliaries in *wh*-questions and main clause *yes/no* questions [73, 74] will not come as a surprise; they are typical of spontaneous spoken English, in general. Also to be expected among the top scorers were multiple negation [44], the levelling of the difference between the Present Perfect and the Simple Past [25], the frequency of double comparatives and superlatives [19], and adverbs and degree modifier adverbs having the same form as adjectives [42, 43]. Most surprising to us is that multiple negation is not even near-categorical (after all, 11 out of 46 varieties do not exhibit this feature at all), and that so many non-standard varieties (34 in all) make use of a special form or phrase for the second person plural pronoun [3].

If we add to these Top 11 the four runners-up in terms of degree of distribution, found in at least 65 % of all varieties in the sample, then features relating to (pro)nouns and in the widest sense NP structure [3, 6, 9, 10, 14, 17, 19] account for almost half of these 15 most widely found morphosyntactic features in non-standard grammars. The runners-up are the following four:

Table 3a. Worldwide Top 12–15 (based on 46 varieties)

	<i>feature</i>	<i>no. of varieties where feature is attested</i>
17	irregular use of articles	33
36	levelling of preterite/past participle verb forms: regularization of irregular verb paradigm	32
9	<i>myself/meself</i> in a non-reflexive function	30
6	lack of number distinction in reflexives	30

Having identified these 15 Top features worldwide, let us briefly put to test those morphosyntactic features which Jack Chambers (most recently in 2004) considers as top candidates for universals of English vernaculars (“Vernacular universals arise in the context of sociolinguistic dialectology as generalizations about intralinguistic variation (so far mainly from English dialects)...”; 2004: 130). Chambers lists the following four: (a) conjugation regularization, or levelling of irregular verb forms: *John seen the eclipse, Mary heard the good news* [36–39]; (b) default singulars, or subject-verb nonconcord: *They was the last ones* [55, 59, 60; marginally 53 und 54]; (c) multiple negation, or negative concord [44]; and (d) copula absence, or copula deletion: *She smart, We going as soon as possible* [57; possibly 58, 73]. In square brackets we have indicated which of the features in our 76-features catalogue correspond most closely to the four morphosyntactic processes named by Chambers. If he is right we should find all, or at least a large number, of these features among the Worldwide Top 11 or at least Top 15.

A quick comparison shows that only multiple negation [44] and the inversion or lack of auxiliaries in *wh*-questions [73] are among the Top features according to our survey, whereas morphosyntactic features with an equally wide or even wider global distribution among non-standard varieties of English are not mentioned by Chambers. To some extent this is due to a certain North American and Pidgin/Creole bias in the studies within sociolinguistic dialectology which Chambers bases his claims on. As will be seen in sections 5.2 and 5.3, for example, multiple negation is a pervasive feature in all American and Caribbean varieties in this survey: there is not a single variety that does not have it. Similarly for America and the so-called default singulars (e.g. *was–were* generalization [59]) or the regularization of irregular verb forms [36; but cf. also 37–39]. These and other features (e.g. deletion of copula *be*) are far more prominent in the American (and in many cases Caribbean) varieties than in the other world regions (cf. also the synopsis by Schneider, this volume).

This test of Chambers’ vernacular universals demonstrates that, for English alone already, not all of his candidates can claim universal status and that, at the

same time, additional candidates can be identified. Thus even more caution should be exercised with regard to Chambers' hypothesis that the morphosyntactic universals in English vernaculars are bound to have counterparts in the vernaculars of other languages:

I have listed the vernacular universals with their English names and illustrated them with English examples. This is misleading, in so far as these processes arise naturally in pidgins, child language, vernaculars, and elsewhere, they are primitive features, not learned. As such, they belong to the language faculty, the innate set of rules and representations that are the natural inheritance of every human being. They cannot be merely English. They must have counterparts in the other languages of the world that are demonstrably the outgrowths of the same rules and representations in the bioprogram. (2004: 129)

Certainly not all "vernacular angloversals", as we may call the Worldwide Top 11/15 features (deliberately deviating from Mair's [2003] usage; see below section 6.2), will be found to have counterparts in the vernaculars of many or even all other languages. Of the four candidates Chambers gives, multiple negation is the only convincing one on a truly universal scale. The others we may find in vernaculars of languages that, like English, have little inflectional morphology and are in the process of getting rid of what little remains, or of ridding themselves at least of syntactic constructions still making use of inflectional morphology, such as (subject-verb) agreement. But what is happening in non-standard varieties of English and, possibly, languages belonging to the same morphological type as English, almost certainly does not apply to vernaculars of inflectional or agglutinating languages (e.g. Italian, Spanish, Turkish). It is not only loss of agreement or loss of redundancy that we can observe in vernaculars; individual vernaculars have, and can indeed be shown to currently develop, a more elaborate inflectional morphology or, for example, agreement system than the standard variety has (cf. several studies in Barbiers/Cornips/van der Kleij 2002 and Kortmann 2004). Nevertheless Chambers' notion of vernacular universals has to be given credit, not only because it was a major source of inspiration for this global survey. It also adds a crucial new, social dimension to research in cross-linguistic variation and language universals, in that "vernacular universals are identified partly in terms of their social patterning, in so far as there are regularities in the way in which they are socially embedded" (2004: 130). They may thus have crucial implications for the further development of language typology (in the direction of what Chambers calls a *variationist typology*) and syntactic theory, given the significance he attributes to vernacular universals for hypotheses on universal grammar.

Below the Worldwide Top 15 features will briefly be put in perspective against the top features of (a) the individual world regions (Table 4) and (b) the L1 varieties, L2 varieties, and Pidgins and Creoles in the 46-varieties sample investigated here (Table 5). The perspective taken in these two tables will be the following: which of the Worldwide Top 15 are also among the relevant top lists of the various sets of varieties? In sections 5 and 6 we will, among other things, adopt the

complementary perspective, i.e. indicate, for example, which of the top features of all British Isles varieties or all L2 varieties are among the Worldwide Top 15.

Table 4. Worldwide Top 15 found in top features of the seven world regions

		no. of varieties where feature is present	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	41		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate sub- jects	40	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense nega- tor	40	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	39	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	37	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxilia- ries in <i>wh</i> -questions	36		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
44	multiple negation / negative con- cord	35	✓	✓	✓		✓		
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	35	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	34		✓	✓	✓	✓		
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	34		✓			✓	✓	✓
19	double comparatives and superla- tives	34	✓	✓			✓		✓
17	irregular use of articles	33	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
36	levelling of preterite/past parti- ciple verb forms: regularization of irregular verb paradigm	32	✓	✓			✓	✓	
9	<i>myself/meself</i> in a non-reflexive function	30		✓					✓
6	lack of number distinction in re- flexives	30		✓	✓		✓	✓	

Feature [49] (*never* as preverbal past tense negator) is the only feature which is a top feature in all world regions, followed by features [10, 14, 42] and [74], which occur in the top lists of six out of the seven world regions.

America and Australia are the only world regions whose top lists include the complete Worldwide Top 11 set, with the Caribbean as the “runner-up” (only [19] and [25] are not among the Top Caribbean features). For all other world regions at least seven out of the Top 11 features (and nine out of the Top 15 features) are among the respective top lists.

Since we commented earlier on multiple negation [44] as exhibiting a lower degree of pervasiveness than expected, Table 5 gives a first idea which varieties this is particularly due to: multiple negation is not among the top lists of the Asian and Pacific varieties. Since all Asian varieties are L2 varieties, the comparatively low degree of multiple negation may specifically be due to these. Indeed, Table 5 confirms that, across all world regions, multiple negation is not among the Top list for the 11 L2 varieties in the sample:

Table 5. Worldwide Top 15 found in top features of L1s, L2s and Pidgins/Creoles

		no. of varieties where feature is present	L1 varieties	L2 varieties	P&C varieties
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	41	✓	✓	✓
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	40	✓	✓	✓
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	40	✓	✓	✓
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	39	✓	✓	✓
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	37	✓		✓
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	36		✓	✓
44	multiple negation / negative concord	35	✓		✓
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	35	✓	✓	
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	34	✓		✓
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	34	✓	✓	
19	double comparatives and superlatives	34	✓	✓	
17	irregular use of articles	33		✓	
36	levelling of preterite/past participle verb forms: regularization of irregular verb paradigm	32	✓	✓	
9	<i>myself/meself</i> in a non-reflexive function	30	✓	✓	
6	lack of number distinction in reflexives	30		✓	✓



Otherwise, Table 5 does not reveal any significant differences between L1 varieties, L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles. The only points worth noting are the following. Ten out of the Top 11 are also among the top features of the L1 varieties (the only exception is the lack of inversion/auxiliaries in *wh*-questions [73]) as opposed to no more than eight for the top L2 and Pidgin/Creole features. However, if we consider the Top 15 set, then L1 and L2 varieties are even (12 features), leaving Pidgins and Creoles clearly behind. This is primarily due to the fact that all four “runners-up” to the Worldwide Top 11 set, i.e. [17, 36, 9, 6], are top L2 features.

Finally, Table 6 reveals the Top 13 non-standard varieties worldwide in terms of total number and degree to which they make use of the 76 features used for this survey. The varieties are ordered according to their variety ratios (VR). This table is provided even though it does not reveal any particular pattern. Conservative L1 dialects are found here just as much as L2 varieties and Creoles. Interesting is the patterning and degree of entrenchment of features in the individual (types of) varieties, not so much the total number of features they exhibit. Doubts with regard to the reliability of the classifications for CamE are in place; as will be seen in section 5.7, CamE has received classifications which make this variety behave very different from all other African and L2 varieties in the sample investigated here. Noteworthy, however, is that seven out of these 13 varieties are spoken in North America, another sign of America standing out among the seven world regions as that one exhibiting the highest degree of non-standardness.

Table 6. Top 13 varieties worldwide according to VR  
(based on 46 varieties and 76 features)

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
Newfoundland English	0.68	57
Cameroon English	0.64	67
SEAmE enclave dialects	0.63	57
Urban AAVE	0.63	57
Irish English	0.57	48
Jamaican Creole	0.57	43
Gullah	0.55	46
Belizean Creole	0.55	47
Tobago & Trin. Creole	0.55	44
North of England	0.53	49
Ozarks English	0.52	42
Chicano English	0.45	53
Earlier AAVE	0.43	53

## 5. The world regions

Table 4 in section 4 indicated which of the features in the Top Worldwide list are also part of Top lists of the seven world regions. The survey in Table 4 will be complemented in this section by, among other things, surveys providing information on the regional top (and bottom) lists and most striking regional patterns.

By way of introduction, the reader needs to be alerted again to a crucial point which will take centre stage in section 6, but is important to keep at the back of your mind when interpreting the regional distributions and patterns presented in this section. Among the seven world regions we have a major divide between world regions with exclusively or predominantly L1 varieties (British Isles, America) and exclusively or predominantly L2 varieties and/or Pidgins/Creoles (Caribbean, Pacific, Africa, Asia). The British Isles varieties represented in the present survey are exclusively L1 (no information on the 76-features catalogue having been available on British Creole). America is predominantly L1 (7 out of 9 varieties), but includes one L2 variety (Chicano English) and one Creole (Gullah). By contrast, we have the Caribbean (exclusively Creoles), Asia (exclusively L2 varieties), Africa (8 out of 10 varieties are L2 or Pidgins) and the Pacific (5 out of 7 varieties are L2 or Pidgins/Creoles). In the present survey, Australia exhibits equal proportions of L1 varieties and Creoles (two of each), but only because non-standard AusE and Australian Vernacular English (AusVE) are discussed as two separate L1 varieties since the primary basis for the AusVE classification is a particular regional variety (Tasmanian Vernacular English).

*Table 7.* Variety ratios for the 7 world regions in descending order

<i>World region</i>	<i>VR</i>	
America	0.53	
Caribbean	0.46	
Australia	0.39	
British Isles	0.38	Variety ratio World: 0.38
Africa	0.32	
Pacific	0.32	
Asia	0.26	

Before we turn to the individual world regions, Table 7 gives a first taste of which general tendencies the reader can expect. As the variety ratios per world region indicate, it is the non-standard varieties of America which, with regard to the 76-features catalogue in section 2, exhibit by far the highest degree of non-stan-

dardness, differing sharply for example from the non-standard varieties of Africa, the Pacific and, especially, Asia. The variety ratios for America (0.53) and Asia (0.26) deviate significantly from the variety ratio World (0.38). The variety ratios per world region have been arrived at by aggregating up the variety ratios for the relevant sets of varieties.

In sections 5.1–5.7 we will highlight the distinctive morphosyntactic properties of the individual world regions in a fairly parallel fashion, namely by identifying those features which are (a) completely absent from the relevant world region, (b) least frequently found, (c) most frequently found (i.e. the top features, distinguished for relevant proportions of ‘A’ and ‘B’ features). For easier reference, the features of categories (a) and (b) will be mentioned explicitly in the text, while those of category (c) will mostly be identified by their respective numbers only, which can easily be found in the corresponding table. For the top features of a given world region, we will also provide an overview showing which of them are also among (a) the World Top 15 and (b) the top features of the other world regions. Further, of course, noticeable region-specific properties and patterns will be pointed out. In section 6 the regional Bottom and, above all, Top features will then be compared to the relevant sets for L1 varieties (important especially for the British Isles and America), L2 varieties (important especially for Asia and Africa), and Pidgins and Creoles (important especially for the Caribbean).

### 5.1 British Isles

With the exception of British Creole, all eight varieties or regional groups of varieties spoken in the British Isles covered in the Handbook are part of the present survey. These are the so-called Celtic Englishes (ScE, IrE, WeE) as well as the non-standard varieties spoken in the Orkney and Shetland Isles, in East Anglia, in the North, Southwest, and Southeast of England.

**The least frequent morphosyntactic features** in these varieties will be presented in three groups. The following ten morphosyntactic features are **not attested, at all**, in the British Isles (the relevant feature number is given in square brackets): postnominal *for*-phrases to express possession [18], completive/perfect *done* [28], past tense/anterior marker *been* [29], zero past tense forms of regular verbs [40], *ain't* as a generic negator before a main verb [47], *no* as a preverbal negator [50], deletion of *be* [57], deletion of auxiliary *have* [58], *say*-based complementizers [68], and serial verbs [72]. Note that some of these features would be documented in the British Isles if it had been possible to include British Creole, the only British non-L1 variety in the present survey.

In at most **one variety** do we find the following four features: generic *he/his* for all genders [8] in the Southwest; habitual *be* [22] in (especially Northern) IrE; *after*-Perfect [33] in IrE; invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular [53] in East Anglia.

Attested in only **two varieties** are the following eight features: non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12] and, vice versa, non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13] in the North and Southwest; non-standard habitual markers other than *do* and *be* [24] in IrE (especially *do be V-ing* in southern IrE) and WeE (*be V-ing* especially in northern Wales); *would* in *if*-clauses [31] in ScE and the Southeast; double modals [34] in ScE and the North; variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses [56] in East Anglia, and Orkney and Shetland; the Northern Subject Rule [60] in northern IrE and the North; and the relative particle *at* [64] in the North as well as Orkney and Shetland.

**The most widespread features in the British Isles**, attested in at least 75 % of the eight varieties, are given in Table 8, including information on which of these features are also among (a) the Worldwide Top 15 in Tables 3 and 3a above and (b) the top features for the other six world regions:

Table 8. Top 20 British Isles (i.e. features attested in at least 6 of the 8 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
55	existential / presentational <i>there's</i> , <i>there is</i> , <i>there was</i> with plural subjects	8		✓					
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	8	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
1	<i>them</i> instead of demonstrative <i>those</i>	7		✓			✓		
37	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: unmarked forms	7		✓			✓		
38	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: past replacing the participle	7		✓			✓		
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
44	multiple negation / negative concord	7	✓	✓	✓		✓		

Table 8. (continued) Top 20 British Isles (i.e. features attested in at least 6 of the 8 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
71	<i>as what / than what</i> in comparative clauses	7		✓					✓
75	<i>like</i> as a focussing device	7					✓		
17	irregular use of articles	7	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
19	double comparatives and superlatives	7		✓			✓		✓
70	unsplit <i>for to</i> in infinitival purpose clauses	7		✓					
2	<i>me</i> instead of possessive <i>my</i>	6			✓		✓		
4	regularized reflexives-paradigm	6		✓	✓		✓		
59	<i>was/were</i> generalization	6		✓	✓				
36	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: regularization of irregular verb paradigms	6	✓	✓			✓	✓	
20	regularized comparison strategies	6		✓	✓				

From a regional perspective, Table 8 shows that none of the Top 20 is uniquely top only in the British Isles. Not surprisingly, the greatest number of parallels we find with the non-standard varieties of America (17 top features shared) and Australia (15 top features shared). For top British Isles features shared by only one other world region, for example, this world region is either Australia (for *like* as a focussing device [75]) or America (for existential/presentational *there's* with plural subjects [55] and *as what* or *than what* in comparative clauses [71]). Similarly, at least one of these two world regions (e.g. for features [2] and [20]), often both (e.g. for [1], [37], [38]), are involved when a top British Isles feature is among the top lists of no more than two world regions. The lowest degree of overlap of the British Top 20 with the top lists of other world regions can be observed for Asia (only

six top features shared), Africa (only five top features shared), and the Pacific (only four top features shared).

Of the British Top 20 in Table 8 those are **most prominent in the British Isles** which are top in one [55, 70, 75] or at most two other world regions [1, 2, 20, 37, 38, 59, 71]. Another way of determining highly widespread and entrenched features distinctive of a given region is to consider the proportions of ‘A’ and ‘B’ classifications they have received. From that point of view, existential/presentational *there*’s, *there is*, *there was* with plural subjects [55] assumes a unique position since it is the only morphosyntactic feature which has received an ‘A’ classification for all eight British Isles varieties investigated. Nearly as high rank the following features all of which have received six or seven ‘A’s’: [1, 2, 10, 42]. Little wonder that four of these features are among the Top 5 of the British Isles in Table 8.

It is also interesting to see which features are overwhelmingly or exclusively ‘B’ features in a given world region. For the British Isles the situation for features attested in more than two varieties is this. Exclusively ‘B’ are the lack of number distinction in reflexives, *she/her* used for inanimate referents, relative particle *that* or *what* in non-restrictive contexts, relative particle *as*; overwhelmingly ‘B’ are group plurals, group genitives, regularized comparison strategies, *ain’t* as the negated form of *be* and *have*, invariant concord tags, the use of analytic *that*’s/*what*’s etc. instead of *whose*, and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses.

Finally, Table 9 ranks the eight British Isles varieties according to their variety ratios (VR) and the number of non-standard morphosyntactic features they exhibit. The figures speak for themselves: Irish English (which includes northern and southern IrE features) and the dialects of the North of England are at the top end, Orkney and Shetland is at the bottom end, and the other varieties cover the middle ground. It is also the Orkney and Shetland variety which is responsible for many of the gaps in the British Isles Top 20 in Table 8.

Table 9. British Isles varieties according to VR

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
Irish English	0.57	48
North of England	0.53	49
East Anglia	0.38	33
Scottish English	0.36	39
Welsh English	0.36	35
Southwest	0.32	43
Southeast	0.28	39
Orkney and Shetland	0.21	17

## 5.2 America

America is the second major L1 region of the anglophone world, with L1 varieties ranging from traditional dialects (e.g. AppE, OzE, NfldE) to younger ethnic varieties which developed under contact conditions (Earlier and Urban AAVE). Moreover this world region includes one L2 variety (ChcE) and one Creole (Gullah). America thus has the broadest range of non-standard varieties of all world regions, which is also the reason why (a) 75 out of the 76 morphosyntactic features in this survey are found in at least one American non-standard variety, and (b) America has the by far highest variety ratio (0.53) of all world regions (compared with 0.38, which is at the same time the World ratio and the variety ratio of the British Isles as the second major L1 world region; see Table 7 above). For the present survey, all nine varieties covered in the Handbook are included. Beyond those mentioned above, these are Colloquial AmE and Southeastern AmE enclave dialects (SEAmE).

**The least frequent morphosyntactic features** in these varieties will be presented in three groups. Indeed, there is only one morphosyntactic feature which is **not attested, at all**, in America (not even in Gullah), namely *no* as a preverbal negator [50].

In at most **one variety** do we find the following seven features: non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12] (NfldE), non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13] (NfldE), non-standard habitual markers other than *do* and *be* [24] (ChcE), *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27] (Earlier AAVE), relative particle *as* [63] (AppE), *after-Perfect* [33] (NfldE), and invariant non-concord tags [52] (Gullah).

**Two varieties** possess the following four features: *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning [32] (ChcE, NfldE), *was-weren 't split* [51] (SEAmE, Earlier AAVE), relative particle *at* [64] (SEAmE, AppE), and the use of analytic *that his/that's, what his/what's* etc. instead of *whose* [65] (SEAmE, Urban AAVE).

**The most widespread features in America**, attested in at least seven out of the nine varieties, will be given in two steps since there are so many of them (39 features out of 76). Table 10 lists only those features attested in every single of the nine varieties considered here and includes information on which of these features are also among (a) the Worldwide Top 15 in Table 4 above and (b) the top features for the other six world regions. Those features which are attested in eight or at least seven varieties will be given in the running text following Table 10.

Table 10. Top 20 America (features attested in all 9 varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	9	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
1	<i>them</i> instead of demonstrative <i>those</i>	9		✓			✓		
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	9			✓	✓	✓		
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
44	multiple negation / negative concord	9	✓	✓	✓		✓		
48	invariant <i>don't</i> for all persons in the present tense	9			✓		✓		✓
59	<i>was/were</i> generalization	9		✓	✓				
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	9	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
9	<i>myself/meself</i> in a non-reflexive function	9	✓						✓
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
45	<i>ain't</i> as the negated form of <i>be</i>	9							
46	<i>ain't</i> as the negated form of <i>have</i>	9							
74	lack of inversion in main clause yes/no questions	9	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
39	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: part. replacing the past form	9			✓				
69	inverted word order in indirect questions	9					✓		✓
4	regularized reflexives-paradigm	9		✓	✓		✓		
38	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: past replacing the part.	9		✓			✓		
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Table 10. (continued) Top 20 America (features attested in all 9 varieties)

	no. of varieties where feature is attested	worldwide	British Isles	Caribbean	Pacific	Australia	Africa	Asia
36	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: regularization of irreg. verb paradigm	9	✓	✓		✓	✓	
37	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: unmarked forms	9		✓		✓		

Especially noteworthy about Table 10 is that, of all world regions, America is the only one with *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45] and *have* [46] as top, indeed pervasive, features in the American vernaculars. By contrast, within the US *ain't* as a generic negator is found only in Gullah (there categorically), in Urban and Earlier AAVE as well as in ChcE. Also the greatest number of parallels can be observed for Australia (15 top features shared), the Caribbean (12 top features shared) and the British Isles (11 top features shared) whereas the features in Table 10 have little in common with the top lists for Africa, Asia and the Pacific (between five and seven shared top features).

The following nine features are attested in eight varieties:

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 55. | existential / presentational <i>there's</i> , <i>there is</i> , <i>there was</i> with plural subjects |
| 56. | variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses  |
| 19. | double comparatives and superlatives  |
| 14. | absence of plural marking after measure nouns   |
| 20. | regularized comparison strategies   |
| 21. | wider range of uses of the Progressive  |
| 71. | <i>as what / than what</i> in comparative clauses   |
| 7.  | <i>she/her</i> used for inanimate referents   |
| 25. | levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past                                       |

Ten features are attested in seven varieties:

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 53. | invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular |
| 76. | <i>like</i> as a quotative particle   |

- 16. group genitives
  - 34. double modals
  - 66. gapping or zero-relativization in subject position
  - 61. relative particle *what*
  - 54. invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons
  - 70. unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses
  - 40. zero past tense forms of regular verbs
  - 6. lack of number distinction in reflexives
- 

In sum, 39 of the 76 features surveyed here are attested in at least seven out of the nine American varieties. In no other world region do varieties of English exhibit such a high degree of non-standardness.

One way of identifying **the most prominent, i.e. markedly American, morphosyntactic features** in the non-standard varieties of America is to look for all features in Table 10 which are not among the top features of any other world region, at all, or part of the top lists of no more than two other world regions. According to this criterion, we arrive at the following features. Top only in America is *ain't* as the negated form of *be* and *have* [45, 46]; top only in one other world region is the levelling of preterite and past participle verb forms by the participle replacing the past form [39]; top features in two other world regions are [1, 9, 37, 38, 59, 69].

Additionally, we may consider the degree to which the individual features have received consistently 'A'-ratings in the nine American varieties. Among the American Top 20 there is not a single morphosyntactic feature which has received an 'A' classification for every single variety, but the following 11 are 'A' features in seven or eight varieties: [1, 3, 10, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 59, 73, 74]. The same goes for [55] and [56] from the runners-up group (i.e. in all eight varieties exhibiting this feature it is pervasive).

As for features which have overwhelmingly or exclusively been rated 'B' in America: exclusively 'B' are [18], [63], [64] and [65], overwhelmingly 'B' are [6, 17, 23, 31, 47, 72].

Finally, Table 11 ranks the nine American varieties according to their variety ratios (VR) and the number of non-standard morphosyntactic features they exhibit. In general, the variety ratios are all very high, which is why seven out of these nine varieties also figured among the Top 13 varieties in the world in Table 6. One major reason why NfldE ranks highest is that it combines features from two sub-varieties, i.e. of those speakers with an IrE background, on the one hand, and Southwest England background, on the other hand.

Table 11. American varieties according to VR

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
Newfoundland English	0.68	57
SEAmE enclave dialects	0.63	57
Urban AAVE	0.63	57
Gullah	0.55	46
Ozarks English	0.52	42
Appalachian English	0.46	46
Colloquial AmE	0.46	38
Chicano English	0.45	53
Earlier AAVE	0.43	53

### 5.3 Caribbean

Whereas in the two previous sections those two world regions were discussed which are exclusively (British Isles) or predominantly (America) L1, it is in sections 5.3 to 5.7 that we will turn to world regions where the situation is different (Australia), or for the most part very different (Pacific, Africa, Asia, Caribbean). The Caribbean varieties, for example, are exclusively Creoles. The five (sets of) Creoles considered for the present survey are BahE, JamC, Tob/TrnC, the SurCs, and BelC. Again it needs to be stressed that the 76-features catalogue was not designed to capture specifically, let alone all, morphosyntactic features distinctive of Pidgins and Creoles, which is especially problematic for radical Creoles as the Surinamese Creoles. This is also why a number of features simply do not apply to Creoles.

**The least frequent morphosyntactic features** in the Caribbean Creoles varieties will be presented in two steps. The following features, for the most part characteristic of (conservative) L1 varieties, are **not attested at all**: *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning [32]; *after-Perfect* [33]; epistemic *mustn't* [35]; *a-*prefixing on *ing*-forms [41]; *was-weren't* split [51]; relative particle *as* [63]; relative particle *at* [64]; and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70].

14 features are found in only **one variety**, in most cases either in BahE (seven features) or BelC (four features): *she/her* used for inanimate referents [7] (BahE); wider range of uses of the Progressive [21] (BahE); *be* as perfect auxiliary [26] (BahE); *would* in *if*-clauses [31] (BelC); invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54] (BahE); Northern Subject Rule [60] (BahE); inverted word order in indirect questions [69] (BelC); generic *he/his* for all genders [8] (BelC); non-standard use of *us* [11] (BelC); habitual *be* [22] (BahE); habitual *do* [23] (Tob/TrnC); levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: regu-

larization of irregular verb paradigms [36] (BahE); double modals [34] and *as what / than what* in comparative clauses [71] (both in JamC).

**The most widespread features in the Caribbean Creoles** are listed in Table 12. The first nine are found throughout the Caribbean, the 16 features following in four varieties. The relatively large number of features in this list should remind us of Table 7, which showed that the Caribbean varieties have the second-highest variety ratio of all seven world regions (0.46, next to America with a VR of 0.53).

Not surprisingly, of all world regions it is America which shares the greatest number of top features with the Caribbean Creoles (18 out of 25), followed by Australia (15 out of 25) and the Pacific (13 out of 25). Concerning their top features, the Caribbean Creoles differ most markedly from the non-standard varieties of Asia (9 out of 25) and Africa (6 out of 25 features).

Table 12 also shows that only one of these 25 features is a top feature exclusively in the Caribbean, namely completive/perfective *done* [28]. The other **most prominent Caribbean features** are those which are top in only one other world region [29, 39, 50, 61] or at most two other world regions [2, 20, 53, 57, 59, 72]. Applying our alternative measure of prominence to the Caribbean Creoles, it turns out that the following 14 features are most strongly entrenched, since they received ‘A’-ratings for every single Creole in which they are attested: [3, 10, 14, 44, 73, 74] have been rated ‘A’ features in all five Creoles, [28, 29, 39, 40, 50, 57, 61, 72] in four Creoles. By contrast, although regularized comparison strategies [20] belong to the Top 25 Caribbean features, this feature is a ‘B’ feature in three of the four Creoles in which it is attested.

Table 12. Top 25 Caribbean (i.e. features attested in at least 4 of 5 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	5			✓	✓	✓		
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	5	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
44	multiple negation / negative concord	5	✓	✓	✓		✓		
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	5	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓

Table 12. (continued) Top 25 Caribbean (i.e. features attested in at least 4 of 5 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
74	lack of inversion in main clause yes/no questions	5	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	lack of number distinction in reflexives	5	✓		✓		✓	✓	
29	past tense/anterior marker <i>been</i>	5				✓			
50	<i>no</i> as preverbal negator	5				✓			
28	completive/perfect <i>done</i>	4							
39	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: part. replacing the past form	4			✓				
40	zero past tense forms of regular verbs	4			✓	✓			✓
57	deletion of <i>be</i>	4				✓			✓
61	relative particle <i>what</i>	4			✓				
72	serial verbs	4				✓	✓		
2	<i>me</i> instead of possessive <i>my</i>	4		✓			✓		
4	regularized reflexives-paradigm	4		✓	✓		✓		
17	irregular use of articles	4		✓			✓	✓	✓
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
53	invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular	4			✓	✓			
59	<i>was/were</i> generalization	4		✓	✓				
48	invariant <i>don't</i> for all persons in the present tense	4			✓		✓		✓
20	regularized comparison strategies	4		✓	✓				

Table 13 reflects the high number and pervasiveness of non-standard features in most of the Caribbean Creoles, especially in JamC, BelC and Tob/TrnC, all three of which also ranked among the Top 13 varieties in the world in Table 6 above. The bottom position of the Surinamese Creoles and their large structural distance from the other four Creoles reflect that the Surinamese Creoles belong to the most radical Creoles in the Caribbean (Winford/Migge, this volume).

Table 13. Caribbean varieties according to VR

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
Jamaican Creole	0.57	43
Belizean Creole	0.55	47
Tobago & Trin Creole	0.55	44
Bahamian English	0.45	45
Surinamese Creoles	0.20	16

#### 5.4 Australia

Two L1 varieties and two Creoles constitute the four non-standard Australian varieties included in the present survey. The L1 varieties are CollAusE and AusVE (dominantly Tasmanian Vernacular English), the Creoles are AbE and the AusCs.

In these four varieties, **none of the following features occur**: non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12]; non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13]; *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27]; completive/perfect *done* [28]; *would* in *if*-clauses [31]; *after*-Perfect [33]; double modals [34]; *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms [41]; *ain't* as generic negator before a main verb [47]; Northern Subject Rule [60]; relative particle *as* [63]; relative particle *at* [64]; *say*-based complementizers [68]; and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70].

The following features are attested in only **one variety**, mostly in one of the L1 varieties: *be* as perfect auxiliary [26] (AusVE); loosening of sequence of tense rule [30] (CollAusE); *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning [32] (CollAusE); *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45] (AusVE); *ain't* as the negated form of *have* [46] (AusVE); invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54] (CollAusE); use of analytic *that his/that's*, *what his/what's*, *at's*, *as'* instead of *whose* [65] (AusVE), and resumptive/shadow pronouns [67] (AusVE). Only in AbE occur habitual *do* [23] and deletion of auxiliary *have* [58]; attested exclusively in the AusCs is *no* as preverbal negator [50].

**The most widespread features in the Australian varieties** are listed in Table 14. The first 14 are found in all four varieties, the second 14 in three varieties:

Table 14. Top Australia (i.e. features attested in at least 3 of 4 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	4			✓	✓	✓		
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	4	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	4	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1	<i>them</i> instead of demonstrative <i>those</i>	4		✓	✓				
5	object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives	4							
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	4	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	regularized reflexives-paradigm	4		✓	✓	✓			
36	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: reg. of irregular verb paradigms	4	✓	✓	✓			✓	
37	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: unmarked forms	4		✓	✓				
44	multiple negation / negative concord	4	✓	✓	✓	✓			
48	invariant <i>don't</i> for all persons in the present tense	4			✓	✓			✓
66	gapping or zero-relativization in subject position	4			✓		✓		
72	serial verbs	3				✓	✓		
17	irregular use of articles	3	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

Table 14. (continued) Top Australia (i.e. features attested in at least 3 of 4 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	3			✓			✓	✓
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
69	inverted word order in indirect questions	3			✓				✓
2	me instead of possessive my	3		✓		✓			
6	lack of number distinction in reflexives	3	✓		✓	✓		✓	
11	non-standard use of <i>us</i>	3							
19	double comparatives and superlatives	3		✓	✓				✓
38	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: past replacing the part.	3		✓	✓				
62	relative particle <i>that</i> or <i>what</i> in non-restrictive contexts	3							
75	<i>like</i> as a focussing device	3		✓					
76	<i>like</i> as a quotative particle	3			✓				

As was to be expected from the respective tables in the previous sections, Australia shares the greatest number of its 28 top features with America (21 features), the British Isles and the Caribbean (both 15). Considerably fewer of its top features does it share with Asia (10), Africa (8) and, surprisingly, the Pacific (9).

As for the **most salient features in Australia**: Only two are top features exclusively in this (and no other) world region: object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives [5] and *that/what* as relativizers in non-restrictive contexts [62]. Top in only one other world region is *like* as focussing device [75] and quotative particle [76]; top in at most two other world regions are [1, 2, 37, 38, 66, 72, 69]. In only one of these cases, serial verbs [72], does Australia share a top feature with the



Pacific. In most cases, the relevant top features are also among the top lists of the British Isles and/or America.

Of the top features in Table 14, the most pervasive features are the following: [3, 73, 74] received 'A'-ratings in all four varieties, [1, 5, 10, 14, 49, 72] received 'A'-ratings in three of the varieties. By contrast, the top features [66] and [76] have been given 'B'-ratings in at least three of the four varieties.

The ranking of the Australian varieties according to their variety ratio in Table 15 concludes this section.

Table 15. Australian varieties according to VR

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
Aboriginal English	0.48	45
Australian Vernacular English	0.39	36
Australian Creoles	0.38	32
Colloquial Australian English	0.32	42

## 5.5 Pacific

The Pacific varieties included in this survey are three Pidgins (Bislama, Tok Pisin, SolP), one Creole (HawC), one L2 variety (FijE) and two L1 varieties: regional NZE as a conservative L1 variety and Norfolk as an L1 variety sharing many properties with Creoles. In particular, it will be interesting to see to what extent parallels and differences between the Pacific varieties and those in Australia, on the one hand, and in the Caribbean, on the other hand, will emerge from the following survey.

But first let us consider **the least frequent morphosyntactic features** in this world region. **Not attested** at all in the Pacific varieties are the following features: regularized reflexives-paradigm [2]; non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12]; habitual *be* [22]; habitual *do* [23]; *be* as perfect auxiliary [26]; *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27]; *after*-Perfect [33]; *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms [41]; *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45]; *ain't* as generic negator before a main verb [47]; Northern Subject Rule [60]; relative particle *at* [64]; use of analytic *that his/that's, what his/what's, at's, as'* instead of *whose* [65]; and *unsplit for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70].

The following 11 features are attested in **only one variety**. Only in regional NZE are found *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning [32], levelling of preterite/past participle verb forms: past participles replacing the past form [39], *ain't*

as the negated form of *have* [46], *was-weren't* split [51], and the relative particles *what* [61] and *as* [63]. The other relevant features are: double modals [34] (HawC), invariant *don't* for all persons in the present tense [48] (FijE), completive/perfect *done* [28] (Norfolk), object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives [5] (SolP), and invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54] (again SolP).

**The most widespread features in the Pacific** are given in Table 16. The prominence of Pidgins and Creoles (and varieties exhibiting many creole features, like Norfolk) in the Pacific shows, for example, in the fact that, of all world regions, the Pacific varieties share the greatest number of top features (13 out of 16) with the Caribbean.

Table 16. Top Pacific (i.e. features attested in at least 5 of 7 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	7			✓	✓	✓		
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	7	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	6	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
40	zero past tense forms of regular verbs	6			✓	✓			✓
53	invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular	6			✓	✓			
57	deletion of <i>be</i>	6				✓			✓
66	gapping or zero-relativization in subject position	6			✓		✓		
67	resumptive / shadow pronouns	6						✓	✓
50	<i>no</i> as preverbal negator	6				✓			

Table 16. (continued) Top Pacific (i.e. features attested in at least 5 of 7 relevant varieties)

	no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>
29	past tense/anterior marker <i>been</i>	6			✓			
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
24	non-standard habitual markers other than <i>do</i>	5						
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	5	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
72	serial verbs	5			✓	✓		

The following turn out to be the **most prominent features in the Pacific**: (a) no other world region has among its top features the use of non-standard habitual markers other than *be* and *do* [24]; (b) among the top features of only one other world region (not surprisingly, the Caribbean) are *no* as preverbal negator [50] and *been* as past tense or anterior marker [29]; (c) top in only two other world regions are [53, 57, 66, 67, 72], again with the Caribbean as one of them in three cases [53, 57, 72].

Of the top features in Table 16, the most pervasive features are the following: ‘A’-ratings in all seven varieties received [3] and [74]; in six varieties [73]; and in five varieties [14, 40, 42, 49, 53, 57, 66, 67].

The most interesting things that can be said about Table 17 below are (a) that the Pidgins have lower variety ratios than the other varieties, and (b) that, for the vast majority of the 76 morpho-syntactic features investigated here, Norfolk patterns with the Pacific Pidgins and not with regional NZE. This should remind us of the fuzziness problem concerning the distinction between L1 varieties, L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles.

Table 17. Pacific varieties according to VR

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
New Zealand English	0.43	40
Fiji English	0.41	44
Hawai'i Creole	0.38	34
Solomon Islands Pijin	0.32	24
Bislama	0.25	19
Norfolk	0.24	21
Tok Pisin	0.20	15

## 5.6 Asia

Of the five varieties from South and Southeast Asia included in this Handbook, authors have provided information on ButlE, PakE, SgE, and MalE. Looking first, as has been standard practice in this synopsis, at **the least frequent morphosyntactic features** of this world region, we should remember that all of the Asian varieties of English are L2 varieties. This may be the crucial key to understanding the large number of features which are not attested or attested in only one of these four varieties and will be further explored in section 6. We should remember, too, that Asia is the world region with the by far lowest variety ratio (0.26, next to Africa and the Pacific with a variety ratio of 0.32; see Table 7 above).

**Not attested** in Asia are the following features: *me* instead of possessive *my* [2]; special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun [3]; non-standard use of *us* [11]; non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12]; non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13]; group plurals [15]; group genitives [16]; *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27]; completive/perfect *done* [28]; *would* in *if*-clauses [31]; *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning [32]; *after*-Perfect [33]; double modals [34]; epistemic *mustn't* [35]; *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms [41]; *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45]; *ain't* as the negated form of *have* [46]; *ain't* as generic negator before a main verb [47]; *was-weren't* split [51]; existential / presentational *there's*, *there is*, *there was* with plural subjects [55]; relative particle *what* [61]; relative particle *as* [63]; relative particle *at* [64]; use of analytic *that his/that's*, *what his/what's*, *at's*, *as'* instead of whose [65]; gapping or zero-relativization in subject position [66]; *say*-based complementizers [68]; and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70].

The following features are attested in no more than **one variety**: *them* instead of demonstrative *those* [1] (ButlE); object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives [5] (ButlE); lack of number distinction in reflexives [6] (SgE); *she/her* used for inanimate referents [7] (PakE); postnominal *for*-phrases to express possession [18] (PakE); habitual *be* [22] (ButlE); habitual *do* [23] (PakE); other non-stan-

dard habitual markers than *do* [24] (SgE); *be* as perfect auxiliary [26] (ButIE); past tense/anterior marker *been* [29] (ButIE); levelling of preterite/past participle verb forms: unmarked forms [37] (SgE); levelling of preterite/ past participle verb forms: participle replacing the past form [39] (PakE); adverbs having the same form as adjectives [42] (SgE); multiple negation / negative concord [44] (ButIE); *no* as preverbal negator [50] (ButIE); invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54] (ButIE); variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses [56] (SgE); *was/were* generalization [59] (ButIE); Northern Subject Rule [60] (ButIE); and relative particle *that* or *what* in non-restrictive contexts [62] (PakE). Especially ButIE turns out to have a unique mix of conservative L1-features and typical creole features like, for example, *no* as preverbal negator.

Table 18. Top Asia (i.e. features attested in at least 3 of 4 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Africa</i>
17	irregular use of articles	4	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
69	inverted word order in indirect questions	4			✓			✓	
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	4	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	4	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	4	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
19	double comparatives and superlatives	4		✓	✓			✓	
40	zero past tense forms of regular verbs	4			✓	✓	✓		
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	4			✓			✓	✓
21	wider range of uses of the Progressive	3			✓				✓
52	invariant non-concord tags	3							✓

Table 18. (continued) Top Asia (i.e. features attested in at least 3 of 4 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	worldwide	British Isles	America	Caribbean	Pacific	Australia	Africa
57	deletion of <i>be</i>	3				✓	✓		
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
71	<i>as what / than what</i> in comparative clauses	3		✓	✓				
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
30	loosening of sequence of tense rule	3							✓
48	invariant <i>don't</i> for all persons in the present tense	3			✓	✓		✓	
67	resumptive / shadow pronouns	3					✓		✓
9	<i>myself/meself</i> in a non-reflexive function	3	✓		✓				

None of the top features in Table 18 is uniquely top in the Asian varieties. Top in one other world region are invariant concord tags [52], the loosening of the sequence of tenses rule [30], and *myself/meself* in a non-reflexive function; top in two other world regions are the inverted word order in indirect questions [69], a wider range of uses of the Progressive [21], deletion of copula *be* [57], *as what/ than what* in comparative clauses [71], and resumptive/shadow pronouns in relative clauses [67]. Given that Africa is the only other world region with a large number of L2 varieties in this survey (five out of nine varieties), it is not totally unexpected that Africa figures more prominently among these eight Asian features, and the top Asian features in Table 18 in general, than in any of the corresponding tables for the other world regions.

Out of the top features, the following have received 'A'-classifications throughout or in three of the four varieties. Pervasive in all Asian varieties are the irregular use of articles [17], inverted word order in indirect questions [69], the lack of inversion in *wh*-questions [73] and *yes/no* questions [74]. Pervasive in three varieties are invariant non-concord tags [52] and the deletion of *be* [57]. On the other

hand, top feature *myself/meself* in non-reflexive function [9] has been rated 'B' in all three varieties in which it is attested (ButlE, SgE, PakE).

Table (19) once again shows the consistently low number of non-standard features and their low degree of entrenchment which the Asian varieties exhibit compared with all other world regions.

Table 19. Asian varieties according to VR

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
Butler English	0.30	32
Singaporean English	0.27	29
Pakistani English	0.23	23
Malaysian English	0.23	20

## 5.7 Africa

Only nine of the African varieties of English covered in the Handbook are part of this survey: five L2 varieties (GhE, CamE, EAfE, InSAfE, BISAfE), three Pidgins (GhP, CamP, NigP), and one L1 variety (WhSAfE).

In Africa, the following features are **not attested**: *them* instead of demonstrative *those* [1]; non-standard use of *us* [11]; non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12]; and relative particle *at* [64]. As for features attested in only **one variety**, note that in vast majority of cases it is CamE which is the only African variety where the relevant feature occurs. Indeed, it is CamE for which our informant has attested a most astonishing array of non-standard features, making CamE the by far most non-standard African and L2 variety of the entire set of varieties investigated here. Attested exclusively in CamE only are: *me* instead of possessive *my* [2], object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives [5], the *after-Perfect* [33] (!), *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms [41], *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45] and *have* [46] and as generic negator before a main verb [47], *was-weren't* split [51], invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54], variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses [56], deletion of auxiliary *have* [58], the Northern Subject Rule [60], relative particle *as* [63], the use of analytic *that his/that's*, *what his/what's*, *at's*, *as'* instead of *whose* [65], and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70]. Elsewhere only the following two features are uniquely attested in Africa: non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13] in GhP, and double modals [34] in NigP.

The following nine features are attested in no more than **two varieties**. For all nine CamE is one of the two varieties: *she/her* used for inanimate referents [7] (WhSAfE, CamE), *would* in *if*-clauses [31] (EAfE, CamE), *was sat/stood* with

progressive meaning [32] (NigP, CamE), levelling of preterite/past participle verb forms: past replacing the participle [38] (CamP, CamE), *was/were* generalization [59] (InSAfE, CamE), relative particle *that* or *what* in non-restrictive contexts [62] (WhSAfE, CamE), gapping or zero-relativization in subject position [66] (NigP, CamE), *like* as a focussing device [75] (NigP, CamE) and as a quotative particle [76] (WhSAfE, CamE).

**The most widespread features in Africa** are listed in Table 20.

Table 20. Top Africa (i.e. features attested in at least 7 of 9 relevant varieties)

	no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>	<i>Caribbean</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Asia</i>
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
21	wider range of uses of the Progressive	8		✓				✓
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
67	resumptive / shadow pronouns	8				✓		✓
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	7	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
17	irregular use of articles	7	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	7		✓			✓	✓
30	loosening of sequence of tense rule	7						✓
6	lack of number distinction in reflexives	7	✓	✓	✓		✓	
52	invariant non-concord tags	7						✓
36	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: regularization of irregular verb paradigms	7	✓	✓	✓		✓	



None of African top features is uniquely top in this world region. The most distinctive top features in Africa, i.e. those found in the top lists of **at most two other world regions**, are all shared with Asia: exclusively shared with Asia are the loosening of the sequence of tense rule [30] and the use of invariant non-concord tags [52], additionally shared with America is the wider use of the Progressive [21] and with the Pacific varieties the use of resumptive/shadow pronouns in relative clauses [67]. On the whole, Africa shares nine of its 12 top features with Asia, and eight top features both with America and the Pacific.

As for particularly **prominent features in Africa**: only [42], adverbs having the same form as adjectives, has been rated 'A' in all nine African varieties. Pervasive in eight varieties are a wider use of the Progressive [21] (only exception CamP) and *never* as a preverbal past tense negator [49] (only exception EAfE). 'A'-ratings in seven varieties have received *me* instead of *I* in coordinate subjects [10], resumptive/shadow pronouns [67], and lack of inversion in main clause *yes/no* questions [74].

Table 21, in conclusion, shows once again the exceptional status of CamE among the African varieties, which on a global scale otherwise largely exhibit medium-range to low variety ratios.

Table 21. African varieties according to VR

<i>variety</i>	<i>VR</i>	<i>no. of features attested</i>
Cameroon English	0.64	67
Nigerian Pidgin English	0.45	38
Indian South African English	0.36	28
Cameroon Pidgin English	0.33	25
Black South African English	0.32	27
Ghanaian Pidgin English	0.30	24
White South African English	0.19	18
East African English	0.19	15
Standard Ghanaian English	0.12	16

## 6. L1 varieties vs. L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles

As has repeatedly been pointed out above, an appropriate interpretation of the distributional patterns across and, especially, within the seven world regions is only possible when taking into consideration the proportion of L1 varieties, L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles in the individual regions. This will be one of the

major tasks of the current section. Again, however, we have to open a section with a cautionary remark: the very classification of a given variety as L1, L2 or P/C may be considered an arguable enterprise given that there are no sharp dividing lines between these three categories. It is even more difficult for individual of the varieties under discussion here since they do not represent prototypes of the three categories in question. As Mesthrie (this volume) makes clear both in this introductory chapter and his synopsis for Africa and Asia, the fuzziness of this trichotomy shows, for example, in L2 varieties currently on their way to L1 varieties (“language shift Englishes”, as he calls them), or in L2 and even L1 varieties which are being influenced by Pidgins/Creoles (e.g. Norfolk). Nevertheless, we have taken the risk of classifying the varieties investigated here in terms of these three categories. Of the 46 non-standard varieties for which feature classifications are available, 20 have been classified as L1 varieties, 11 as L2 varieties, and 15 as Pidgins or Creoles:

- L1 varieties: Orkney and Shetland, ScE, IrE, WeIE, East Anglia, North, Southwest and Southeast of England (British Isles); CollAmE, SEAmE, AppE, OzE, NfldE, Urban AAVE, Earlier AAVE (America); CollAusE, AusVE (Australia); Norfolk, regional NZE (Pacific); WhSAfE (Africa).
- L2 varieties: ChcE (America); FijE (Pacific); StGhE, CamE, EAfE, InSAfE, BlSAfE (Africa); ButIE, PakE, SgE, MalE (Asia).
- Pidgins and Creoles: Gullah (America); SurCs, BelC, Tob/TrnC, BahE, JamC (Caribbean); Bislama, SolP, TP, HawC (Pacific); AbE, AusCs (Australia); GhP, NigP, Camp (Africa).

This translates into the totals and percentages in Table 22:

*Table 22.* Basis for global synopsis: 46 non-standard varieties (= 100 %)

	L1	L2	P/C
	20	11	15
	(43.5 %)	(23.9 %)	(32.6 %)
British Isles	8	0	0
America	7	1	1
Caribbean	0	0	5
Australia	2	0	2
Pacific	2	1	4
Africa	1	5	3
Asia	0	4	0

For the classifications of the 76 features in the feature catalogue (and for the Handbook chapters at large), these figures clearly show that we have a major divide between world regions with exclusively or predominantly L1 varieties (British Isles, America) and exclusively or predominantly L2 varieties and/or Pidgins and Creoles (Caribbean, Pacific, Africa, Asia), with Australia exhibiting equal proportions of L1 varieties and Creoles. It will thus be the major task of this and the next section to see which (bundles) of the 76 features characterize these three types of varieties, and to what extent it is primarily the (region-independent) properties of these three types of varieties (and not, for example, specific regional developments possibly due to L1 or substrate influence on L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles) which have influenced the global distributions and patterns found for the individual world regions in section 5.

### 6.1 L1 varieties

In the **L1 varieties**, all the features included in the feature catalogue occur at least once. The following features occur **exactly once**: *no* as preverbal negator [50] in Norfolk, and *say*-based complementizers [68] in Urban AAVE.

Each of the following features is attested in only **two L1 varieties**: *ain't* as generic negator before a main verb [47] in Urban and Earlier AAVE; other non-standard habitual markers than *be* and *do* [24] in IrE and WelE; and the *after*-Perfect [33] in IrE and NfldE.

These two features are attested in **three L1 varieties** (the North of England, the Southwest of England, and in NfldE): non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12]; and non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13].

Seven features occur in **four L1 varieties**: past tense/anterior marker *been* [29]; generic *he/his* for all genders [8]; habitual *be* [22]; relative particle *at* [64]; serial verbs [72]; *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27]; and deletion of auxiliary *have* [58].

Finally, the following six features occur in exactly **five L1 varieties**: relative particle *as* [63]; postnominal *for*-phrases to express possession [18]; *would* in *if*-clauses [31]; habitual *do* [23]; deletion of *be* [57]; and Northern Subject Rule [60].

**The top L1 features** are listed in Table 23:

Table 23. Top 21 L1 (i.e. features attested in at least 15 of 20 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>L2 varieties</i>	<i>P&amp;C varieties</i>	<i>British Isles</i>	<i>America</i>
55	existential / presentational <i>there's, there is, there was</i> with plural subjects	19				✓	✓
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	19	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	19	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	19	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1	<i>them</i> instead of demonstrative <i>those</i>	18				✓	✓
44	multiple negation / negative concord	17	✓		✓	✓	✓
38	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: past replacing the part.	17				✓	✓
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	17	✓	✓		✓	✓
71	<i>as what / than what</i> in comparative clauses	17				✓	✓
37	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: unmarked forms	17				✓	✓
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	17	✓		✓	✓	✓
19	double comparatives and superlatives	17		✓		✓	✓
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	17		✓			✓
9	<i>myself/meself</i> in a non-reflexive function	16	✓	✓			✓
69	inverted word order in indirect questions	16		✓			✓
36	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: reg. of irregular verb paradigms	16	✓	✓		✓	✓
4	regularized reflexives-paradigm	16				✓	✓
20	regularized comparison strategies	16				✓	✓
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	15			✓		✓
74	lack of inversion in main clause <i>yes/no</i> questions	15	✓	✓	✓		✓
21	wider range of uses of the Progressive	15		✓			✓

Only a third of these features is also among the Worldwide Top 15 features. Four of these are top in L1 varieties, L2 varieties, and Pidgins/Creoles alike and thus, of course, the four most widely attested morphosyntactic features in non-standard varieties of English around the world (cf. Tables 3 and 5 above): [10, 42, 49, 74].

From a regional point of view (consider the two rightmost columns in Table 23), it emerges that all (!) of these Top 21 L1 features are also among the top features of America, and 15 out of these 21 are among the top British Isles features. This correlation was to be expected.

More importantly, Table 23 reveals the most distinctive L1 features since they are neither among the top features of L2 varieties nor of Pidgins and Creoles. These are (in the order of their pervasiveness across all L1 varieties, i.e. from top to bottom in Table 23): [55, 1, 38, 71, 37, 4, 20].

None of the Top 21 L1 features has been rated 'A' in every single one of the 20 L1 varieties. However, the following three have been judged as **pervasive features** in at least 15 varieties: [1, 10, 55]. On the other hand, the lack of number distinction in reflexives [6] has received exclusively 'B'-ratings in those ten L1 varieties where it is attested.

## 6.2 L2 varieties

The following three features are **not attested** in L2 varieties: non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12]; double modals [34]; and the relative particle *at* [64].

The following features occur in no more than **one L2 variety**. In all of the following cases the relevant variety is CamE, which is, as mentioned earlier, the odd one out among the L2 and African varieties investigated (possibly due to an over-enthusiastic informant): *me* instead of possessive *my* [2], *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27], completive/perfect *done* [28], *after-Perfect* [33], *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms [41], *was-weren't* split [51], relative particle *as* [63], and the use of analytic *that his/that's, what his/what's, at's, as'* instead of *whose* [65]. Exclusively in FijE the following two features are attested: the non-standard use of *us* [11] and non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13].

Attested in **two L2 varieties** are the following features: *them* instead of demonstrative *those* [1] in ChcE and ButIE; habitual *do* [23] in CamE and PakE; *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning [32] in ChcE and CamE; *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45] in ChcE and CamE; *ain't* as the negated form of *have* [46] in ChcE and CamE; *ain't* as generic negator before a main verb [47] in ChcE and CamE; *no* as preverbal negator [50] in FijE and ButIE; variant forms of dummy subjects in existential clauses [56] in CamE and SgE; Northern Subject Rule [60] in CamE and ButIE; *say*-based complementizers [68] in ChcE and BISAfE; and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70] in ChcE and CamE.

In **three L2 varieties** we find each of the following features: object pronoun forms serving as base for reflexives [5] in ChcE, CamE, and ButLE; group genitives [16] in ChcE, CamE, and FijE; habitual *be* [22] in CamE, ButLE, and InSAfE; *be* as perfect auxiliary [26] in CamE, ButLE, and BISAfE; past tense/anterior marker *been* [29] in CamE, ButLE, and FijE; epistemic *mustn't* [35] in ChcE, CamE, and FijE; invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54] in ChcE, CamE, and ButLE; deletion of auxiliary *have* [58] in CamE, SgE and MalE; relative particle *what* [61] in CamE, InSAfE and BISAfE; and gapping or zero-relativization in subject position [66] in ChcE, CamE, and FijE.

Table 24 includes all **top L2 features**:

Table 24. Top 19 L2 (i.e. features attested in at least 8 of 11 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	<i>worldwide</i>	<i>L1 varieties</i>	<i>P&amp;C varieties</i>	<i>Asia</i>	<i>Africa</i>
74	lack of inversion in main clause yes/no questions	11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	irregular use of articles	11	✓			✓	✓
25	levelling of difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past	11		✓		✓	✓
21	wider range of uses of the Progressive	10		✓		✓	✓
69	inverted word order in indirect questions	10		✓		✓	
67	resumptive / shadow pronouns	10				✓	✓
30	loosening of sequence of tense rule	10				✓	✓
40	zero past tense forms of regular verbs	10			✓	✓	
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
52	invariant non-concord tags, e.g. <i>innit/in't it/ isn't</i> in <i>They had them in their hair, innit?</i>	9				✓	✓
19	double comparatives and superlatives	9		✓		✓	
36	levelling of preterite/ppt verb forms: reg. of irregular verb parad.	9	✓	✓			✓

Table 24. (continued) Top 19 L2 (i.e. features attested in at least 8 of 11 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	worldwide	L1 varieties	P&C varieties	Asia	Africa
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	8	✓		✓	✓	
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	8	✓	✓	✓		✓
43	degree modifier adverbs lack <i>-ly</i>	8	✓	✓			
48	invariant <i>don't</i> for all persons in the present tense	8				✓	
6	lack of number distinction in reflexives	8	✓		✓		✓
9	<i>myself/meself</i> in a non-reflexive function	8	✓	✓		✓	

Ten of these features are also among the Worldwide Top 15 features, which shows that the Top Worldwide list in Table 5 above does not (or not too heavily, at least) suffer from an L1 bias.

From a regional point of view, we see the high degree of correlation between these Top L2 features and the top lists for Asia (15 out of 19 top features shared) and Africa (12 out of 19 top features shared).

Table 24 also shows the most distinctive L2 features: neither are they among the top features of L1 varieties nor among those of Pidgins/Creoles. In the order of their pervasiveness across all L2 varieties, i.e. from top to bottom in Table 24, these are: [67, 40, 52, 48].

As for the **most pervasive L2 features** in Table 24, i.e. those having received exclusively or overwhelmingly 'A'-ratings by the informants: feature [74] is pervasive in ten out of the eleven L2 varieties, feature [17] in nine L2 varieties, and features [21, 49, 69, 73] in eight L2 varieties. The following are exclusively or overwhelmingly 'B' features in those L2 varieties in which they are attested. Prominent among them are levelling processes of the preterite/past participle distinction: the regularization of irregular verb paradigms [36] has been rated 'B' in eight out of the nine L2 varieties in which it is attested; the past participle replacing the past form [38] and the past form replacing the past participle [39] have exclusively received 'B'-ratings in all five L2 varieties in which each (or both) of them are documented.

## 6.3. Pidgins and Creoles

The following five features are **not attested** in Pidgin and Creole varieties at all: *after-Perfect* [33]; *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms [41]; relative particle *as* [63]; relative particle *at* [64]; and unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70].

Each of the following three features is attested **only once**: *was sat/stood* with progressive meaning [32] in NigP; *was-weren't* split [51] in AbE; and the so-called Northern Subject Rule [60] in BahE.

The features that are attested in **two Pidgins and Creoles** each are: non-coordinated subject pronoun forms in object function [12] in BelC and Tob/TrnC; epistemic *mustn't* [35] in Gullah and NigP; use of analytic *that his/that's, what his/what's, at's, as'* instead of *whose* [65] in BelC and BahE; *be* as perfect auxiliary [26] in CamP and BahE; invariant present tense forms due to generalization of 3rd person *-s* to all persons [54] in BahE and SolP; and *would* in *if*-clauses [31] in BelC and HawC.

Features occurring in **three of these varieties** include: *ain't* as the negated form of *be* [45] in Gullah, BahE, Tob/TrnC; *ain't* as the negated form of *have* [46] in Gullah, BahE, Tob/TrnC; non-standard use of *us* [11] in BelC, HawC, and AbE; group genitives [16] in BahE, JamC, NigP; wider range of uses of the Progressive [21] in BahE, GhP, NigP; *ain't* as generic negator before a main verb [47] in Gullah, BahE, Tob/TrnC; *she/her* used for inanimate referents [7] in BahE, HawC, SolP; inverted word order in indirect questions [69] in Gullah, BelC, AbE; and *as what / than what* in comparative clauses [71] in Gullah, JamC, and HawC.

Finally, the following are features attested in **four Pidgins and Creoles**: existential/presentational *there's, there is, there was* with plural subjects [55]; *do* as a tense and aspect marker [27]; deletion of auxiliary *have* [58]; non-coordinated object pronoun forms in subject function [13]; group plurals [15]; relative particle *that* or *what* in non-restrictive contexts [62]; and double modals [34].

Consider Table 25 for **the top Pidgin and Creole features** in our sample:



Table 25. Top 15 P&amp;C (i.e. features attested in at least 11 of 15 relevant varieties)

		no. of varieties where feature is attested	worldwide	L1 varieties	L2 varieties	Caribbean	Africa	Pacific
73	lack of inversion / lack of auxiliaries in <i>wh</i> -questions	15	✓		✓	✓		✓
74	lack of inversion in main clause yes/no questions	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun	14		✓		✓		✓
57	deletion of <i>be</i>	14				✓		✓
53	invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular	14				✓		✓
29	past tense/anterior marker <i>been</i>	14				✓		✓
14	absence of plural marking after measure nouns	13	✓	✓		✓		✓
40	zero past tense forms of regular verbs	13			✓	✓		✓
72	serial verbs	13				✓		✓
50	<i>no</i> as preverbal negator	13				✓		✓
10	<i>me</i> instead of <i>I</i> in coordinate subjects	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
42	adverbs same form as adjectives	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	lack of number distinction in reflexives	12	✓		✓	✓	✓	
49	<i>never</i> as preverbal past tense negator	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
44	multiple negation / negative concord	11	✓	✓		✓		

Eight out of these 15 features are also among the Worldwide Top 15 features. An equal number of top features, namely seven, do the Pidgins and Creoles in our 46-varieties sample share with L1 varieties, on the one hand, and L2 varieties, on the other hand. From a regional point of view, Table 25 is not particularly revealing. It reflects no more than the decreasing proportion of Pidgins and Creoles in the Caribbean (exclusively Creoles), the Pacific (four Pidgins and Creoles out of seven non-standard varieties) and Africa (three Pidgins out of nine non-standard varieties). When focussing only on the Pidgins and Creoles in these three world

regions, no regional differences (especially not between the African Pidgins and the Pidgins and Creoles in the Caribbean and the Pacific) can be identified with regard to the top features in Table 25.

The **most distinctive P/C top features** according to Table 25 are the following four: [50, 53, 57, 72]. These are neither among the top list for L1 varieties nor for L2 varieties. The first two features in Table 25, i.e. [73] and [74], are indeed pervasive, i.e. ‘A’ features, in all 15 Pidgins and Creoles included in the present survey. Of the other top features in Table 25, [3] and [57] are pervasive in 14 Pidgins and Creoles, [72, 14, 40] in 13 P/C varieties, and [10, 29, 50, 53] in 12 P/C varieties.

#### 6.4 Universals of New Englishes

In light of the findings presented in sections 6.2 and 6.3, it is now possible to give more substance to the notion of *angloversals*, by which Mair (2003:84) understands joint tendencies observable in the course of the standardization of postcolonial varieties of English which cannot be explained historically or genetically. Mair explicitly states that some of these angloversals may be the result of learning strategies of non-native speakers, in other words properties typical of L2 varieties. On the basis of Tables 24 and 25, the top candidates for such universals of New Englishes can be identified. Consider especially the features in the first three of altogether seven groups. In Figure 1, these groups are represented with the help of three intersecting sets of all top features in L1 varieties, L2 varieties and Pidgin and Creoles. Groups I to III are shaded dark grey since they include the top candidates for universals of New Englishes. (Group VII in Figure 1 includes those features which are top exclusively among L1 varieties and will be thus of no further concern in this section.)

In Group I, the core group, we find all those top features in Tables 24 and 25 which are exclusively shared by L2 varieties, Pidgins and Creoles: the lack of inversion/auxiliaries in *wh*-questions [73], zero past tense forms of regular verbs [40], and the lack of number distinction in reflexives [6].

Included in the next two groups are all those features which are top either exclusively in L2 varieties (Group II) or in Pidgins and Creoles (Group III). Top exclusively in L2 varieties are the use of resumptive pronouns in relative clauses [67], the loosening of the sequence of tenses rule [30], invariant non-concord tags [52], and invariant *don't* for all persons in the present tense [48]. Exclusively top among Pidgins and Creoles are the following: the deletion of *be* [57], invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular [53], serial verbs [72], and *no* as a preverbal negator [50].

Groups IV to VI are all much less distinctive of non-L1 varieties since all the features in these groups are also top features among L1 varieties.

Group IV includes those four features which are top worldwide, i.e. across all L1, L2, Pidgin and Creole varieties: the lack of inversion in main clause *yes/no*-

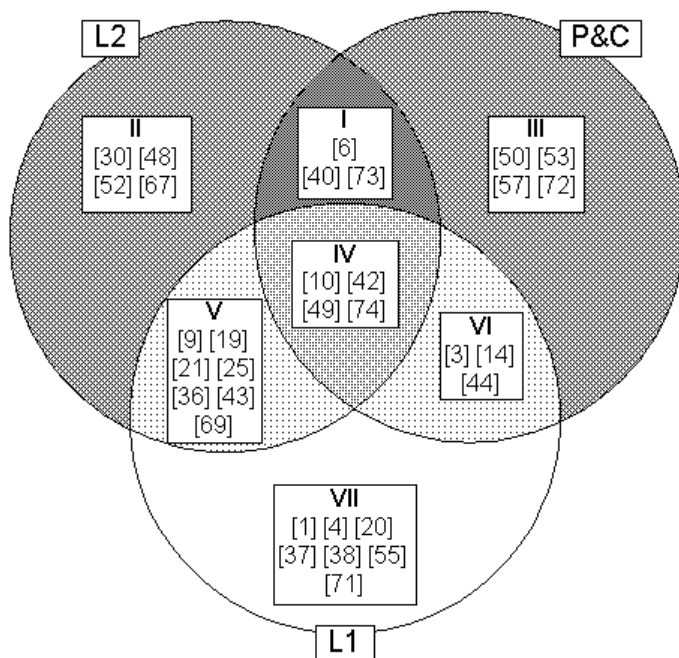


Figure 1. Top features in L1, L2, Pidgins and Creoles

questions [74], *me* instead of *I* in coordinate subjects [10], adverbs having the same form as adjectives [42] and *never* as a preverbal past tense negator [49]. These four features are the true vernacular universals among the non-standard varieties of English.

Group V consists of those top features which L2 varieties share exclusively with L1 varieties: levelling of the difference between Present Perfect and the Simple Past [25], wider range of uses of the Progressive [21], inverted word order in indirect questions [69], double comparatives and superlatives [19], levelling of preterite/past participle verb forms by regularizing irregular verb paradigms [36], degree modifier adverbs lacking *-ly* [43], *myself/meself* in a non-reflexive function [9]. Group VI, finally, includes only those top features which Pidgins and Creoles share exclusively with L1 varieties: special forms or phrases for the second person plural pronoun [3], the absence of plural marking after measure nouns [14], and multiple negation [44].

These six groups, especially Groups I to III, can be no more than a starting point for further explorations of universals of New Englishes. As pointed out in section 1 of this global synopsis, the feature catalogue investigated here does not include all features which are pervasively or frequently found in Pidgins and Creoles. A comparative analysis solely of Pidgins and Creoles would require a different catalogue, and the same is certainly true for a corresponding comprehensive comparative analysis of L2 varieties.

## 7. Individual areas of morphosyntax

The two previous sections were variety-centred. By way of rounding off this global synopsis, it is in this section that we shall take a brief look at the eleven groups of morphosyntactic features constituting the 76-features catalogue. We shall focus on some major patterns across and within the individual feature groups. For details concerning the distribution and ('A'/'B') ratings of individual features across the 46 non-standard varieties investigated, the reader is referred to the master table and the interactive maps on the CD-ROM.

Table 26 displays the average ratios per feature group and world region:

Table 26. Feature group ratios according to **world region** (for all 46 varieties)

<i>feature group</i>	<i>British Isles (8 varieties)</i>	<i>America (9 varieties)</i>	<i>Caribbean (5 varieties)</i>	<i>Pacific (7 varieties)</i>	<i>Australia (4 varieties)</i>	<i>Africa (9 varieties)</i>	<i>Asia (4 varieties)</i>	<i>average feature group ratio</i>
<b>pronouns</b>	0.43	0.55	0.54	0.35	0.55	0.27	0.17	<b>0.41</b>
<b>noun phrase</b>	0.46	0.59	0.54	0.36	0.46	0.43	0.39	<b>0.46</b>
<b>verb phrase</b>	0.24	0.32	0.35	0.20	0.19	0.37	0.20	<b>0.27</b>
<b>modal verbs</b>	0.31	0.53	0.10	0.14	0.13	0.17	0.00	<b>0.20</b>
<b>verb morphology</b>	0.48	0.68	0.48	0.27	0.46	0.31	0.27	<b>0.42</b>
<b>adverbs</b>	0.78	0.92	0.70	0.68	0.63	0.69	0.19	<b>0.65</b>
<b>negation</b>	0.33	0.56	0.51	0.29	0.40	0.34	0.26	<b>0.38</b>
<b>agreement</b>	0.33	0.62	0.45	0.36	0.33	0.21	0.28	<b>0.37</b>
<b>relativization</b>	0.34	0.35	0.39	0.28	0.23	0.25	0.09	<b>0.27</b>
<b>complementation</b>	0.33	0.53	0.34	0.29	0.38	0.30	0.40	<b>0.37</b>
<b>discourse organization</b>	0.48	0.75	0.68	0.63	0.72	0.42	0.69	<b>0.62</b>

Among other things, Table 26 shows that the two feature groups “adverbs” (i.e. adverbs and degree modifiers having the same form as adjectives; [42, 43]) and “discourse organization/word order” exhibit the by far highest group ratios. For the latter group, this is largely due to the lack of inversion/auxiliaries in *wh*-questions [73] and the lack of inversion in main clause *yes/no* questions [74]. Both are

characteristic of spontaneous spoken English in most parts of the world, similar to [42] and [43].

From a regional perspective, Table 26 reflects the **differences between the world regions** as regards their relative degrees of non-standardness, as displayed in Table 7 in section 5. The American varieties have the highest feature group ratios throughout, closely followed by the Caribbean Creoles. The feature group ratios of the British Isles and Australia more or less correspond to the averages in the rightmost column, whereas the feature group ratios of the Pacific and African varieties are rather average or below average, and those of the Asian varieties below, partly far below, the average ratios for most feature groups. The only two feature groups for which the four Asian (remember: exclusively L2) varieties have higher-than-average feature ratios are “complementation” and “discourse organization/word order”. For the former group, this is due to *as what/than what* in comparative clauses [71] and, above all, to the inverted word order in indirect questions [69], which is categorical in ButlE, PakE, SgE and MalE. For the latter group, this is due to features [73] and [74], which are likewise pervasive in all four Asian varieties.

In Tables 27–29 the relevant feature group ratios are given for the L1 varieties, L2 varieties, and Pidgins and Creoles in the 46-varieties sample, in general, and in each of those world regions in which the relevant variety type is attested. The feature group ratios of the L1 varieties (Table 27) correspond to the average ratios across all 46 varieties in Table 26. Only the two modals features (double modals [34] and epistemic *mustn't* [35]) exhibit clearly above-average ratios. These two features are largely restricted to L1 varieties. A brief comparison of the three tables will be given after Table 29.

Table 27. Feature group ratios according to world region for **L1 varieties only** (total: 20 varieties)

<i>feature group</i>	<i>British Isles</i> (8 varieties)	<i>America</i> (7 varieties)	<i>Pacific</i> (2 varieties)	<i>Australia</i> (2 varieties)	<i>Africa</i> (1 variety)	<i>average feature</i> <i>group ratio</i>
<b>pronouns</b>	0.43	0.55	0.33	0.54	0.23	<b>0.42</b>
<b>noun phrase</b>	0.46	0.62	0.36	0.46	0.36	<b>0.45</b>
<b>verb phrase</b>	0.24	0.32	0.19	0.15	0.23	<b>0.23</b>
<b>modal verbs</b>	0.31	0.54	0.25	0.25	0.25	<b>0.32</b>
<b>verb morphology</b>	0.48	0.73	0.38	0.38	0.00	<b>0.39</b>

Table 27. (continued) Feature group ratios according to world region for **L1 varieties only** (total: 20 varieties)

<i>feature group</i>	<i>British Isles (8 varieties)</i>	<i>America (7 varieties)</i>	<i>Pacific (2 varieties)</i>	<i>Australia (2 varieties)</i>	<i>Africa (1 variety)</i>	<i>average feature group ratio</i>
<b>adverbs</b>	0.78	0.89	1.00	0.25	0.25	<b>0.63</b>
<b>negation</b>	0.33	0.55	0.36	0.33	0.11	<b>0.34</b>
<b>agreement</b>	0.33	0.66	0.28	0.13	0.13	<b>0.30</b>
<b>relativization</b>	0.34	0.36	0.36	0.29	0.14	<b>0.30</b>
<b>complementation</b>	0.33	0.51	0.25	0.45	0.30	<b>0.37</b>
<b>discourse organization</b>	0.48	0.75	0.63	0.81	0.13	<b>0.56</b>

Table 28. Feature group ratios according to world region for **L2 varieties only** (total: 11 varieties)

<i>feature group</i>	<i>America (1 variety)</i>	<i>Pacific (1 variety)</i>	<i>Africa (5 varieties)</i>	<i>Asia (4 varieties)</i>	<i>average feature group ratio</i>
<b>pronouns</b>	0.42	0.46	0.25	0.17	<b>0.33</b>
<b>noun phrase</b>	0.57	0.64	0.46	0.39	<b>0.52</b>
<b>verb phrase</b>	0.27	0.27	0.37	0.20	<b>0.28</b>
<b>modal verbs</b>	0.25	0.25	0.10	0.00	<b>0.15</b>
<b>verb morphology</b>	0.42	0.33	0.28	0.27	<b>0.33</b>
<b>adverbs</b>	1.00	0.75	0.80	0.19	<b>0.68</b>
<b>negation</b>	0.44	0.39	0.37	0.26	<b>0.37</b>
<b>agreement</b>	0.44	0.31	0.19	0.28	<b>0.30</b>
<b>relativization</b>	0.21	0.36	0.29	0.09	<b>0.24</b>
<b>complementation</b>	0.60	0.20	0.32	0.40	<b>0.38</b>
<b>discourse organization</b>	1.00	1.00	0.40	0.69	<b>0.77</b>

Table 29. Feature group ratios according to world region for **Pidgins and Creoles only** (total: 15 varieties)

<i>feature group</i>	<i>America (1 variety)</i>	<i>Caribbean (5 varieties)</i>	<i>Pacific (4 varieties)</i>	<i>Australia (2 varieties)</i>	<i>Africa (3 varieties)</i>	<i>average feature group ratio</i>
<b>pronouns</b>	0.69	0.54	0.34	0.56	0.32	<b>0.49</b>
<b>noun phrase</b>	0.36	0.54	0.29	0.46	0.40	<b>0.41</b>
<b>verb phrase</b>	0.38	0.35	0.18	0.23	0.41	<b>0.31</b>
<b>modal verbs</b>	0.75	0.10	0.06	0.00	0.25	<b>0.23</b>
<b>verb morphology</b>	0.58	0.48	0.21	0.54	0.44	<b>0.45</b>
<b>adverbs</b>	1.00	0.70	0.50	1.00	0.67	<b>0.77</b>
<b>negation</b>	0.72	0.51	0.22	0.47	0.37	<b>0.46</b>
<b>agreement</b>	0.50	0.45	0.41	0.53	0.27	<b>0.43</b>
<b>relativization</b>	0.43	0.39	0.21	0.18	0.21	<b>0.28</b>
<b>complementation</b>	0.60	0.34	0.33	0.30	0.27	<b>0.37</b>
<b>discourse organization</b>	0.50	0.68	0.53	0.63	0.54	<b>0.57</b>

Comparing the feature group ratios for L1 varieties in Table 27 with the corresponding ratios for L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles in Tables 28 and 29, the following emerges. **L1 varieties** clearly score much lower than the other two types of varieties for the tense and aspect group [21–33]. For the **L2 varieties**, the noun phrase features (notably due to double comparatives or superlatives [19] and, above all, the pervasively irregular use of articles [17]) and the feature group “discourse organization/word order”, for reasons spelt out above in connection with the Asian varieties [73, 74], are more prominent than in the other two variety groups. At the same time, the modals group and the relativization group score much lower. For example, not a single L2 variety has double modals; in only three of them is epistemic *mustn't* attested (ChcE, CamE, FijE). The most prominent feature groups for **Pidgins and Creoles** are “pronouns” (notably due to features [1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10]), “verb morphology” (especially due to zero past tense forms of regular verbs [40]), “negation” (due to *never* and *no* as preverbal negators, in particular), and “agreement” (notably due to variant forms of dummy subjects [56], *was/were* generalization [59], and above all due to the categorical deletion of *be* [57] and use of invariant present tense forms due to zero marking of 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular [54]).

Independently of the different sets of varieties, the following observations can be made for individual of the 11 feature groups, with a focus on worldwide prominence and group-internal correlations among features, in some cases even implicational hierarchies. For **pronouns** [1–13], the three by far most widely found features are *them* instead of demonstrative *those* [1], *me* instead of *I* in coordinate subjects [10] and, most astonishingly, special forms or phrases of 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural pronouns [3]. Two features stand out as being considerably more frequently found in L1 varieties than in L2 varieties or Pidgins and Creoles, namely *she/her* for inanimate referents [7] and the non-standard use of *us* [11]. The lack of number distinction in reflexives [6] and generic *he/his* for all genders [8] are most salient in Pidgins and Creoles. Among non-pronominal features relating in the widest sense to the **noun phrase** [14–20], the following three are most widely and pervasively attested: the absence of plural marking after measure nouns [14], which is near-categorical in the Pidgins and Creoles, the irregular use of articles [17], and double comparatives and superlatives [19]. Group plurals [15] and group genitives [16] are clearly more prominent in L1 than in non-L1 varieties.

The most prominent **tense and aspect** features [21–33] are, expectedly, the levelling of the difference between Present Perfect and Simple Past [25], a wider range of uses of the Progressive [21] and, some way behind, the loosening of the sequence of tenses rule [30]. More than half of the varieties (including all Pidgins and Creoles except for NigP and the SurCs) have at least one habitual marker [22–24]. As for the markers of past/perfect/completive or anterior, *be* as a perfect marker [26] is alive especially in L1 varieties, and completive *done* is a pervasive feature of America and the Caribbean. As mentioned earlier, the two **modals** features in our catalogue are pretty rare: double modals [34] are restricted to the British Isles and America; something similar is true for epistemic *mustn't* [35], which however is found in three varieties outside these two world regions, namely JamC, NigP. and (marginally) Haw C. With the exception of the conservative feature *a*-prefixing on *ing*-forms, the **verb morphology** features [36–41] are found equally often across the world's non-standard varieties of English, all hovering around a feature ratio level of 0.5. In more than half of the 46 varieties in our sample, we find attested a levelling of the distinction between preterite and past participle forms in one or more ways: the strategy of regularizing irregular verb paradigms [36] or using unmarked forms [37] are attested slightly more frequently than the strategies of past tense forms or past participles replacing each other [38, 39]. Indeed, [36] is the sole levelling strategy in seven varieties and one of several strategies in 26 out of the 30 varieties which make use of any of these four levelling strategies.

The two **adverbs** features [42–43] are among the Worldwide Top 11. The first of these two, adverbs having the same form as adjectives, is attested in all L1 varieties and in the vast majority of the non-L1 varieties. Indeed, in 34 varieties both normal adverbs and degree modifier adverbs are identical in form to adjec-



tives. The only noteworthy exception is AusVE, especially since it is an L1 variety, where neither feature is attested.

The **negation** group [44–52] includes several of the top features worldwide, with multiple negation [44], however, only as runner-up of *never* as preverbal past tense negator [49]. Of the three uses to which *ain't* is put in non-standard varieties of English, *ain't* as a generic negator before a main verb [47] is clearly least frequent; typically, *ain't* is used as the negated form of *be* and/or *have* [46]. Indeed, based on 18 out of the relevant 19 varieties it is possible to formulate the implicational hierarchy  $45 < 46 < 47$ . This reads: a variety that has the rightmost uses of *ain't* (i.e. those lower on the hierarchy) will also have the uses to the left of it (i.e. higher on the hierarchy), but not vice versa. In fact, we can even extend this hierarchy by including multiple negation, since all varieties which exhibit any use of *ain't* also make use of multiple negation, thus yielding the hierarchy:  $44 < 45 < 46 < 47$ . Another fairly widespread negation feature, invariant *don't* for all persons in the present tense [48], is found in L1 and L2 varieties much more than in Pidgins and Creoles.

Among the **agreement** features [53–60], the four most widely attested ones are existential/presentational *there's* etc. [55], invariant present tense forms due to 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular zero marking [53] (frequent in all world regions apart from the British Isles), *be*-deletion [57] and *was/were* generalization [59]. [55] is categorical in all L1 varieties (except for Norfolk); [59] is also a typical L1 feature (attested in 14 out of the 20 L1 varieties in the sample) and only rarely found in L2 varieties. *Be*-deletion [57], on the other hand, is categorical in Pidgins and Creoles, found in six of the eleven L2 varieties, but only in five L1 varieties. Interestingly, the so-called Northern Subject Rule is attested in eight varieties (six L1, two L2) from five world regions: IrE, North of England; SEAmE, AppE, Earlier AAVE, BahE, CamE, and ButLE.

The use of resumptive pronouns [67] and zero-relativization in subject position [66] are the two most prominent features in the **relativization** group [61–67], followed by the relative particle *what* [61] and the use of *what* or *that* in non-restrictive contexts [62]. The use of resumptive pronouns in relative clauses is by far most prominent in L2 varieties (only PakE does not seem to make use of them); it is also that relativization feature with the highest feature ratio in Pidgins and Creoles. Zero-relativization, on the other hand, is very rare among L2 varieties, more frequent in Pidgins and Creoles and most frequently attested for L1 varieties.

Of the five **complementation** features [68–72] the two top features are the inverted word order in indirect questions [69] followed by *as what/than what* in comparative clauses [71]. Both features are widely attested in L1 and L2 varieties, but only exceptionally for Pidgins and Creoles (Gullah, for example, is the only creole in the sample with both of these features). A typical L1 feature is unsplit *for to* in infinitival purpose clauses [70] (attested in only two L2 varieties and not in a

single Pidgin or Creole), whereas *say*-based complementizers [68] and, especially, serial verbs [72] are characteristic of Pidgins and Creoles.

The last feature group in our catalogue, **discourse organization and word order** [73–76], includes two of the Worldwide Top 11, namely the lack of inversion/auxiliaries in *wh*-questions [73] and the lack of inversion in main clause *yes/no* questions [74]. These two are categorical in Pidgins and Creoles (i.e. ‘A’-ratings for every single Pidgin or Creole variety in the sample); similarly [74] is categorical and [73] near-categorical in L2 varieties. Least widely attested are these two features in L1 varieties. To some extent, we find the reverse situation for *like* as a focussing device [75] and as a quotative particle [76]: these two features are only rarely found in Pidgins and Creoles, in half of the L2 varieties and in 75 % of the L1 varieties ([75] most pervasively in the British Isles, [76] most pervasively in America). Out of the 24 varieties in which these two features are attested, 18 varieties make use of *like* in both these functions.

## 8. Conclusion

In this synopsis we have tried to throw into relief the morphosyntactic features of non-standard varieties of English from a global, regional and variety-specific perspective (L1, L2, Pidgins and Creoles). The approach adopted here has allowed us to identify, among other things, the top candidates for vernacular universals (section 4.2) and universals of New Englishes (section 6.4). Some of the vernacular universals on a global scale as well some of those morphosyntactic features which are among the top lists in only one or two world regions stand a good chance of becoming part of Spoken Standard English around the globe, or at least of the spoken standard of the relevant world region (cf. also Kortmann, to appear). In general, the authors hope that this synopsis and the more detailed information given in the master table and the interactive world maps on the CD-ROM provide a useful tool and standard of comparison against which the (naturally, far more detailed) findings for individual features, feature groups and (sets of) varieties can be judged, giving the relevant findings by specialists their appropriate place in the general picture. A similar approach would seem worthwhile adopting for mapping the range and extent of morphosyntactic variation in other languages (e.g. Spanish, French, German).

Finally then, as befits a *Handbook of Varieties of English*, Table 30 will conclude this synopsis, showing where on a scale of morphosyntactic non-standardness the 46 varieties included in the present survey rank:

Table 30. Variety ratios (VRs) for L1 varieties, L2 varieties and Pidgins/Creoles

	<b>L 1</b>	<b>L2</b>	<b>Pidgins and Creoles</b>
VR	∅ 0.42	∅ 0.32	∅ 0.40
<b>TOP</b>	≥ 0.6	NfldE, SEAmE, Urban AAVECamE	—
	≥ 0.5	IrE, North England, OzE	— JamC, BelC, Gullah, Tob/TrnC
<b>MIDDLE</b>	≥ 0.4	CollAmE, AppE, NZE, Earlier AAVE	ChcE, FijE AbE, NigP, BahE
	≥ 0.3	AusVE, East Anglia, WeIE, ScE, CollAusE, Southwest England	InSAfE, BISAfE, ButIE AusCs, HawC, CampP, SolP, GhP
<b>BOTTOM</b>	≥ 0.2	Southeast England, Norfolk, Orkney & Shetland	SgE, MalE, PakE Bislama, SurCs, TP
	≥ 0.1	WhSAfE	StGhE, EAfE —

### Note

Bernd Kortmann is responsible for the design of the feature catalogue and the present survey in general, and has authored the present chapter. Benedikt Szmrecsanyi processed all the input from the informants, prepared the tables forming the basis for all statistical evaluations, and checked the classifications against the available information in the relevant handbook chapters. Both authors would like to thank all informants again for their smooth cooperation, and to repeat the invitation issued to the readers at the end of section 1: please, do join in and send us your comments and information on varieties not yet covered in the present survey!

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