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SOME ASPECTS OF DECREOLIZATION IN CREOLE FRENCH

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years linguists have been attracted increasingly to creole languages. And like the pioneer creolist, Hugo Schuchardt, they have been drawn primarily by the opportunity creoles provide for the testing of hypotheses on language change. Schuchardt, Hall (1966:117) reminds us, undertook his study of creoles and pidgins to demonstrate that 'these as "mixed" languages, were related to more than one family, and that therefore the entire concept of necessary genetic relationship ... must perforce be untenable'. From an historical point of view one of the striking characteristics of creole languages is the relative short period of time during which they evolved from their source language[1] or languages through the intermediate pidgin stage (Hall 1962). Equally interesting is what Hall termed the 'life-cycle' of pidgins and the internal and external factors which determine how far a pidgin will progress in its potential life-cycle.

Hall posits that a creole develops from a pidgin through a process of lexical enrichment and grammatical stabilization when it becomes nativized, that is, when it becomes the sole means of linguistic communication for a given group. Only in this way do pidgins escape extinction when the contact situation which served as catalyst for their genesis disappears (Hall 1965:155). But Hall, since he considers that a nativized pidgin has attained the status of 'normal' language, does not examine the life-cycle of pidgin beyond the creolization phase. DeCamp (1971b) postulates four alternatives for post-creolization development in the life-cycle of a pidgin: (1) continuation of the creole indefinitely without substantial change — he mentions Haitian Creole as an example; (2) extinction, for example Negerhollands, a Dutch-based creole employed in the U.S. Virgin Islands; (3) evolution into a 'normal' language; (4) merger with the base language. DeCamp admits that (3) is an unattested theoretical possibility, and since a creole could be extinguished through total merger with its base language as well as through the extermination of its speakers, say, there is no

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justification for his distinction between (1) and (4). A more useful classification emerges if one makes use of binary distinctions: (1) extinction or continuation of a creole; (2) continuation of a creole in or out of contact with its base language; (3) continuation of a creole in contact with its base language with or without mutual interferences that may lead to merger. This classification is illustrated by the chart below:

Extinction	Continuation		
	No contact with base language	Contact with base language	
Negerhollands	Sranantongo	Separation	Interference
Gullah	Saint-Lucia Creole	Haitian Creole (?)	Jamaican Creole

Bloomfield (1933:474) discusses the resorption of creole languages that evolve in contact with their base language, and he postulates that whether they continue basically unchanged or are 'leveled-out' and 'improved' in the direction of their base language depends on two sets of factors: (1) whether their base language is the official language of the community and (2) whether there is 'social improvement' of the speakers of the creoles. DeCamp (1971b) delineates 'social improvement':

the formerly rigid social stratification must have *partially* (not completely) broken down. That is, there must be sufficient social mobility to motivate large numbers of creole speakers to modify their speech in the direction of the standard and there must be a sufficient program of education and other acculturative activities to exert effective pressures from the standard [base] language on the creole.

Bloomfield also points out (1933:474) that when leveling of a creole through the pressure from its base language is accelerated, there results a merger and that the creole becomes 'a caste-dialect whose speakers so far as linguistic factors are concerned, have no more difficulty than other sub-standard speakers in acquiring the standard language'. And he adds that in such a situation the 'de-creolized' dialect also influences the standard.

The best example of the situation Bloomfield describes is that of English in Jamaica (DeCamp 1971a, 1971b; Bailey 1971; Stewart 1962) where there is a continuum of variability between Standard Jamaican English and what is referred to depreciatively as Quashie or Bungo talk, but where speech samples from the two extremes of the continuum are mutually unintelligible (DeCamp 1971b). In areas where Creole French[2] (hereafter abbreviated to Creole) and Standard French (hereafter French)

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[2]   French Creole dialects are spoken in widely separated parts of the world: in the Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius and Reûnion and in the Seychelles Islands, in Haiti and the Lesser Antilles (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Saint-Lucia) and French Guyana. Creole is also spoken by a small and dwindling number of speakers in Southwestern Louisiana, in Saint-Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands, in Trinidad and the small islands between Tobago and Saint-Lucia.

coexist, it is claimed (DeCamp 1971a) that Creole and French are clearly demarcated from each other and that a merger is not likely to develop. It is also asserted that Creole dialects are mutually intelligible. In fact, the problem of decreolization — to use Bloomfield's term — in Creole has not received any detailed treatment, and it is the purpose of this article to fill this gap.

The main body of this article is divided into five sections: Section 2 discusses the problem of distinguishing between survivals of pre-creole stages and recent decreolization and uses the definite determiner, a feature of Creole morphosyntax that exhibits a wide range of variability at the deep and surface levels, as illustration. Section 3 deals with the problem of distinguishing between different strata of decreolization in the phonological system of Haitian Creole: decreolizations which took place when the pidgin from which Creole presumably derives came into contact with varieties of French in the overseas colonies in the 17th century as opposed to decreolizations which result from the pressure of French at a later date; the discussion centers on Haitian Creole where, because of the Haitian revolution in the early 19th century, the two historical stages and the two different types of contact between Creole and French are neatly set apart. Section 4 examines the sociolinguistic aspects of decreolization and attempts to determine the mechanism of decreolization and to identify agents of transmission of decreolizing features from the base language to the creole. Section 5 evaluates the claim that Creole and French are clearly demarcated in Haiti, and the final section examines in the light of the process of decreolization the relexification hypothesis put forward to account for striking similarities between Caribbean creoles of different language bases and pidgins and creoles found in the Far East and Africa.

2. DECREOLIZATION IN THE CREOLE DETERMINER SYSTEM

A comparison of the determiner system of the major Creole dialects will illustrate the difficulty of distinguishing between forms and constructions that have undergone decreolization and survivals from early stages in the formation of a creole. Among Creole dialects Haitian Creole (H) exhibits a determiner system which differs strikingly from that of French. In H, determiners, except the indefinite determiner, always follow the noun or noun phrase: *chat-la* 'the cat', *pitit-mouen* 'my child', *chat-la-a* 'that cat', *pitit-mouen-yo* 'my children'.[3] H has a definite determiner la_1, a deictic-emphatic determiner la_2, a demonstrative determiner *sa*, and makes use of the personal pronouns to form the possessive determiners. The definite and deictic determiners exhibit complex morphophonemic alternations, differing considerably from the

[3] The notation employed is an adaptation of the ONAAC (Office National d'Alphabétisation et d'Action Communautaire) spelling, which itself follows many of the conventions of French spelling so far as they provide a biunique representation of phonemic contrasts. The following equivalences need special mention: /ě/ →*en*, /ã/ →*an*, /õ/ →*on*, /in/ →*in*, /u/ →*ou*, /k/ →*k*, /g/ →*g*, /ʒ/ →*j*; *in* represents also a few instances of /ŋ/; *oun* represents usually /un/ but also /ũ/ in a few items; /w/ preceding a vowel is represented by *ou*; /j/ is represented by *i* between vowels but by *y* elsewhere; hyphens separate syntactically-bound elements such as determiners from their head word.

sandhi variation found in the French determiner system not only in that they involve progressive assimilation of nasalization and truncation determined by the preceding segment but in that the rules are relatively idiosyncratic and do not have the generality of French liaison and elision. The plural is expressed by the postclitic -yo, identical in form with the third person plural pronoun, which occurs as the last element in a noun phrase after the definite, demonstrative, deictic-emphatic, and possessive determiners. The plural marker is not used if plurality is otherwise expressed, by numerals, adverbials, etc., but in these cases it is used if the noun is modified by the definite determiner, e.g. *anpil chat* 'a lot of cats', *dé chat* 'two cats' and *youn chat* 'a cat', *chat* 'cat' vs. *chat-la* 'the cat', *chat* 'cats' versus *chat-yo* 'the cats', *chat-la* 'the cat' versus *chat-la-yo* 'the cats'. The structure of the H determiner system may be characterized by the P-rule:[4]

$$
\text{(Indef) N} \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} \text{Def} \\ \text{Poss} \\ \text{Demonstr} \end{bmatrix} \text{(Deictic)} \right\} \text{(Plural)}
\qquad
\begin{array}{l}
\text{chat; youn chat, anpil chat} \\
\text{chat-la; chat-la-a; chat-yo} \\
\text{chat-mouen; chat-mouen-an;} \\
\quad \text{chat-mouen-yo} \\
\text{chat-sa-a; chat-sa-yo} \\
\text{chat-la-yo}
\end{array}
$$

In addition to the combinations generated by the P-rule, Sylvain (1936) provides an instance of Deictic+Plural, *pen-an-yo ~ pen-lan-yo* 'those there breads'. There are in H restrictions and mutual exclusions among the postposed determiners which are best handled by T-rules: (1) Def and Plural are excluded so that corresponding to *chat-la* 'the cat' is *chat-yo* 'the cats', where *yo* must be interpreted as the simultaneous expression of Def and Plural; (2) Demonstr does not occur independently and must be accompanied by Deictic (or Def since the two are homophonous, although there is, as will be shown below, etymological evidence that favors the choice of Deictic), *chat-sa, chat-sa-a* 'this, that cat'; (3) Deictic cannot occur independently and must be preceded by Def, Poss, or Demonstr, but when Plural is present, Deictic is then deleted, *chat-la-a* vs. *chat-la-yo, chat-mouen-an* vs. *chat-mouen-yo, chat-sa-a* vs. *chat-sa-yo*.[5] In view of the restriction stated in (1) above, one might posit the T-rule

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[4] The forms of the determiners cited in this paper do not always pretend to provide actual realizations. For instance in H *chat-mouen-an* is [ʃatmwɛ̃jã]. Although *la₂* is noted with *l* in its lexicon list (underlying) form, the *l* never in fact appears since it is subject to truncation. For more detailed explanation of H morphophonemics see d'Ans 1968; Hall 1953; Valdman 1969a. Although in my adaptation of the ONAAC spelling the indefinite determiner and the numeral 1 are spelled alike they are to be read as [jũ] ~ [ũ] ~ [õ] and [jũn] respectively.

[5] Perhaps the constraint on the appearance of both Deictic and Def or Poss plus Plural is too severe, for Yves Dejean (personal communication) points out the existence of *chat-la-a-yo* and *chat-mouen-an-yo*. I am indebted to Yves Dejean for numerous suggestions and helpful criticisms based on a much longer and intimate contact with Haitian monolingual speakers of Creole than any analyst of H has so far brought to the description of the language.

$$\begin{Bmatrix} \text{Def} \\ \text{Deictic} \end{Bmatrix} + \text{Plural} \rightarrow \text{Plural}$$

which can be applied only once in a noun phrase.

Lesser Antilles (LA) dialects — Guadeloupe, Gu.; Dominica, D; Martinique, Mart. Saint-Lucia, SL; and Trinidad, Tr. — (Carrington 1967; Jourdain 1956; Thomas 1869; Valdman and Carrington 1969) differ from H in that the plural marker, expressed as *sé* is preposed, and in that there are no mutual exclusions between Plural and any of the postposed determiners; however, Demonstr does not occur independently and must be followed by Deictic:

$$\begin{Bmatrix} \text{Indef} \\ \text{Plural} \end{Bmatrix} N \begin{Bmatrix} \begin{Bmatrix} \text{Def} \\ \text{Poss} \end{Bmatrix} \quad \text{(Deictic)} \\ \text{Demonstr} + \text{Deictic} \end{Bmatrix}$$

chat; youn chat; anpil chat
chat-la; sé chat-la; sé chat-la-a
chat-mouen; sé chat-mouen;
  sé chat-mouen-la
chat-ta-la; sé chat-ta-la

The examples are from Martinique Creole. In some LA dialects a distinction is made for Demonstr between remoteness and nearness, and is expressed by the suffixes *-sa-* and *-si-* respectively, both of which are obligatorily followed by the Deictic *-la*. In Gu. (Faine 1937) and in Northern Haiti (Hyppolite 1950) possessive determiners are composed of personal pronouns preceded by *a*, e.g. *chat-a-i* 'his cat', *chat-a-mouen*.[6]

In Mauritian Creole (Maur.) there is no definite determiner (Baissac 1880; Alexander 1966). Nouns usually are preceded by forms obviously derived from French definite and partitive determiners but these constitute an integral part of the noun as is shown by the examples *èn latab* 'a table', *èn dizéf* 'an egg'. The possessive determiner is expressed by preposed personal pronouns, e.g. *mo lisien* 'my dog' (compare with H *chien–mouen*), while the demonstrative consists of preposed *sa* and postposed *la*, e.g. *sa-misié-la* 'this man, these men'; presumably, there is no overt plural marker in Maur.

$$\begin{Bmatrix} \text{Indef} \\ \text{Poss} \\ \text{Demons} \end{Bmatrix} N$$

Dem → *sa* + N + *la*

French Guyana Creole (Gy.) and Louisiana Creole (La.) have determiner systems intermediate between that of LA (Saint-Quentin 1872; Lane 1935; Morgan 1959). Poss is preposed but there is an overt plural marker and a Deictic category which co-occur with Def. As will be pointed out below, there are numerous alternations in La. between a distinctly Creole system and a decreolized system, and examples will be provided only for Gy.:

* The latter is realized as [ʃatãmwẽ] or [ʃatãm]. In Northern Haiti these forms are evidently survivals of an older construction, for they also appear in Bonaparte's proclamation to the people of Saint-Domingue written in 1801 in an etymological spelling, e.g. *frères à zote* 'your brothers' (H *frè-ou*), *pays à yo* 'their country' (H *péi-yo*).

$$\begin{Bmatrix} \text{Indef} \\ \text{Poss} \\ \text{Demonstr} \end{Bmatrix} \quad N \quad \begin{Bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \text{Plural} \\ \text{Def} \begin{bmatrix} \text{Deictic} \end{bmatrix} \end{bmatrix} \end{Bmatrix}$$

mo chat; un chat
chat-la; chat-la-la
chat-yé-la
sa chat-yé; sa chat-yé-la

Demonstr → Demonstr + N + Def (Plural)

In Gy. there is also a distinction Near/Remote with Demonstr within coordinated noun phrases in the same clause: *sa fam-isi-la é sa wom-la-yé-la* 'this woman and these men'.

The last Creole dialect to be examined is that spoken by Whites in Northside Saint-Thomas and Windward Saint-Barts.[7] While the French communities established in Saint-Thomas were founded by settlers from Saint-Barts, the Saint-Thomas variety of the Creole dialect is reputed to be more conservative since it has evolved in relative isolation from Standard French. Recorded texts totalling approximately one hour gathered from two informants yielded about a hundred instances of the definite determiner, a few possessive determiners, and only one instance of the demonstrative determiner. Thus statements about the latter types of determiners are necessarily tentative. In Saint-Thomas Creole the definite determiner is identical to that of French and shows the gender and number differentiation and the sandhi variation characteristic of that language:

	Pre-Vw			Pre-Cons	
			Sg		
Masc.	*l otèl*	'the hotel'		*le sab*	'the sand'
Fem.	*l égliz*	'the church'		*la vil*	'the town'
			Pl		
	Pre-Cons			Pre-Vw	
Masc.	*lé fransé*	'the French people'		*léz antouraj*	'the surrounding area'
Fem.	*lé bourik*	'the donkeys'		*léz afè*	'the matters'

That the forms preposed to these nouns are not to be considered an integral part of the noun, as is the case for Maur. Creole, is evident from the following contrasts: *a l otèl* 'at the hotel', *léz otèl* 'the hotels'; *un plan* 'a map', *le plan* 'the map'. In the corpus three instances diverged from the pattern and exhibited postposed *-la* for all types of nouns: *profèseù-la* 'the professor', *lotèl-la* 'the hotel', *buten-la* 'the thing'. It is not clear whether the postposed *-la* is to be considered the definite or the demonstrative determiner. Postposition also characterizes three of the four possessive determiners attested in the text: *chien-ou* 'your dog', *bofrè-mouen* 'my brother-in-law', *bitasion-mouen* 'my estate, my farm'; the remaining instance, *sa labitasion* 'his estate', follows

[7] In Saint-Barts (Saint Barthélemy) and Saint-Thomas there are two white communities, one of which uses Creole as a vernacular and the other a seemingly decreolized regional variety of French. In Saint-Barts the division between the two communities is windward (Au Vent) versus leeward (Sous-le-Vent) respectively; in Saint-Thomas Creole speakers reside in an area referred to as Northside and the other group in a section of the capital city Charlotte-Amalie called Frenchtown or Carenage. In Saint-Thomas older members of both communities speak the local vernacular variety of English and Standard French with varying fluency depending on their contact with Saint-Barts — where French is the official language — the French Antilles or Metropolitan France.

the pattern of the definite determiner, but note the incorporation of the etymological definite determiner *l* into the noun. The sole instance of the demonstrative, *se maten* 'this morning', patterns like the definite determiner.

For Louisiana Creole Morgan (1959) reports alternation between a system similar to that of Saint-Thomas Creole and another making use of postposed DEFINITIVAL SUFFIXES *-la* and *yè*; the latter represents both Def and Plural: *dan l boua* 'in the wood' vs. *vach-la* 'the cow'; *sè prosè* 'that law case' vs. *sè grango-la* 'that dragon'. Carrington (1967 119–20, fn. 42) recorded instances of alternation between pre- and postposed Def within the same text from one informant: *lé kat lizin* ~ *kat lizin-nan* 'the four factories', *lé labourè* ~ *sé labourè-a* 'the plantation workers'.[8] When other informants heard these forms, they commented *i ka palé kon prèt-la*, from the fact that in Saint-Lucia most priests are speakers of some variety of French. Carrington considers the anomalous variants as antiquated or traditional expressions which, however, are understood by all speakers.

In the absence of early recorded evidence of the varieties of Creole spoken in the Antilles and the Indian Ocean and of the pidgin used by French sailors, slave traders, etc., and Africans for transient communication on the coast of West Africa, it is difficult to reconstruct the development of the determiner system from that of the original pidgin to that of the various present-day Creole dialects. But it is clear that the Saint-Thomas system is closer to that of French and, because of its simplicity, it would appear that the Mauritian system is the most conservative with respect to the Pidgin French pattern from which all systems may be supposed to be derived. In the formation of the pidgin there must have been a stage when nouns derived from French were used interchangeably with or without the determiner they occurred with most frequently. This accounts for the fusion of *la, le,* and *li* for count nouns, e.g. Maur. *latab* 'the table', *lekè* 'the heart', *lili* 'the bed' (as opposed to *tété* 'breast', *boyo* 'gut', *matla* 'mattress') and of *di* for mass nouns, e.g. *dilo* 'water', *diri* 'rice' (as opposed to *sik* 'sugar'). Nouns with an initial vowel were adopted in their plural form and the realized liaison consonant /z/ incorporated, e.g. *zozo* 'bird', *zariko* 'beans', *zié* 'eye', *zorèy* 'ear'. The category of definiteness was unmarked so that nouns occurred usually without any determiner and only Poss and Deictic-Emphatic were marked overtly. For the expression of the latter category the emphatic form of the demonstrative determiner containing the postclitic *-la* was preferred to the simple form, i.e. *cette femme-là* instead of *cette femme, ce boug-là* instead of *ce boug, ces lampes-là* instead of *ces lampes*. One must bear in mind that in colloquial French the masculine and feminine forms of the demonstrative determiner have fallen together in both pre-consonantal and pre-vocalic position by the substitution of /stə/ for both *ce* and *cette*. But rather than the singular forms /stə/ and /set/, the plural form *ces* /se/ and the demonstrative and indefinite pronoun *ça* were adopted. In addition, the emphatic

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[8] The morphophonemics of the definite determiner in LA are grosso modo similar to that of H: truncation of *l* after nouns ending in a vowel and nasalization preceding a nasal segment, e.g. *chat-la* but *labourè-a, chen-an, lizin-nan.*

demonstrative pattern with elements flanking the noun was used to refer to a noun previously identified as well as to express deictic reference. This is probably the semantic value of *sa ... la* in present-day Maur. This early system, which will be labeled Pre-Creole (PC), is identical to that posited to account for Maur. forms.

In the Antilles the category Plural was added to the PC system by adopting the third person plural pronoun and Def became differentiated to Def proper, used to refer to a previously mentioned noun, Demonstr, and Deictic-Emphatic. These modifications resulted no doubt from the contact with other Caribbean Creole languages as well as from direct influence from some West African languages. In addition to these changes in the deep structure there took place permutations in the order of determiners relative to the noun: Def, Deictic, and Plural were postposed while Indef, Poss, and Demonstr remained preposed. Except for Demonstr which could combine with Plural, pre- and postnominal determiners were mutually exclusive. This system, which we find attested in Gy. and La., may be characterized by the same set of rules posited for Gy.: the P-rule

$$\begin{Bmatrix} \text{Indef} \\ \text{Poss} \\ \text{Demonstr} \end{Bmatrix} \quad N \quad \begin{Bmatrix} \text{Def} \begin{Bmatrix} \text{Deictic} \\ \text{Plural} \end{Bmatrix} \end{Bmatrix}$$

and the T-rule Demonstr + N → Demonstr + N + Def (Plural) which generate *un chat, so chat*; *chat-la, chat-la-la*, and *sa chat-la*. Gy. *chat-yé-la* requires in addition the T-rule Def + Plural → Plural + Def and La. *chat-la* 'the cat' but *chat-yè* 'the cats' requires the T-rule (also necessary for H) Def. + Plural → *yè*.

Insular Creole dialects (LA and H) differ from Gy. and La. principally by the postposition of all determiners except Indef and by more complex combinatory behavior among the postposed determiners. It is difficult to posit a set of rules which will account for the various combinations found in present-day dialects since explicit statements of the determiner structure for these dialects have not yet been put forward. Nonetheless the P-rule

$$(\text{Indef}) \quad N \quad \begin{Bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \text{Def} \\ & (\text{Deictic}) \\ \text{Poss} \\ \text{Demonstr} + \text{Deictic} \end{bmatrix} (\text{Plural}) \end{Bmatrix}$$

and T-rules for individual dialects that constrain possible combinations and relative order of Def and Poss with Deictic and Plural account for attested forms.

The overt manifestation of Plural in LA, *sé*, appears to be derived from the French plural demonstrative *ces*, and seems to be a direct reflex of the PC Demonstr clefted by the noun, *sa chat-la*. Since no contrast *sa* + N + *la* = Sg. vs. *sé* + N + *la* = Plural is attested, the introduction of *sé* as preposed plural marker could also be considered a relatively late decreolization induced by the pressure from French *ces* + N + *là*.

There is no doubt that the Saint-Thomas Creole system of preposed definite

determiners indicating Def together with gender and number is the result of late decreolization. All Saint-Thomas and Saint-Barts Creole speakers possess some fluency in French and may have clung to a frenchified variety of Creole that distinguished them from the negro Creole speakers in neighboring islands. It would be interesting to see whether such a heavily decreolized determiner system is also found among the other white Creole speaking communities in Guadeloupe (Blancs Massignon), Les Saintes and Désirade, and whether it is emerging in the speech of Creole speakers in the overseas French departments all of whom are more subject to interference from French than those of the other Creole-speaking territories. One might wonder why of the four instances of the possessive determiners occurring in the corpus only one shows decreolization (*sa labitasion* vs. *chien-ou, bofrè-mouen, bitasion-mouen*) as opposed to more than 95% for the definite determiner constructions. It was pointed out that many Creole nouns derived from French have incorporated the definite determiner. These nouns fall into classes marked by their initial segments, a *la* class (*lamori* 'cod') and a *li, lé*, or *lè* class (*lili* Maur. 'bed', *lèroua* La. 'king', *lésièl* H 'sky'). Upon subsequent contact with French these nouns were more vulnerable to reanalysis as sequences definite determiner+base. Another link to a decreolized determiner system might be the plural marker *sé* in LA dialects which could be reinterpreted as the plural demonstrative determiner and would attract the marked masculine and feminine singular forms *ce* and *cette*.

Objection might be made to our claim that the preposed personal pronouns functioning as possessive determiners constitute a PC rather than a decreolized feature. Indeed, compared to the postposition of possessive determiners attested in Antillean dialects and the integration of the possessive determiner with the definite and deictic determiners in these dialects, the Maur., Gy. and La. systems are very similar to that of French. Our claim rests on two sets of facts. First, the PC system is much simpler than that of other dialects AND French. Not only has it lost gender and number differentiation and sandhi alternation, but it lacks the three-fold distinction Def, Deictic-Emphatic and Demonstr. It is generally held that pidgins have a reduced although stable grammatical structure and that the evolution of a pidgin toward the creole stage is accompanied by lexical enrichment and the development of more complex grammatical categories and morpho-syntactic apparatus. This progression is reflected by the development of the PC determiner system to the Caribbean systems that have added the categories of Plural, Def, Deictic and Demonstr and where there are various constraints in the ordering of the determiners relative to each other as well as complex morphophonemic alternations that we have only briefly discussed in fn. 4. If we reserve the term decreolization for a restructuring of specific features of a creole in the direction of its base language resulting from direct contact between the two languages, it is clear that only in Saint-Thomas Creole has the determiner system been decreolized. It must be emphasized that decreolization does not necessarily result in increased complexity. Theoretically, it is possible for a decreolized system to be simpler than that of the creole, and if decreolization generally results in greater

complexity it is simply due to the fact that in their evolution through the cycle base language + reactor language (Nida and Fehderau 1970) → pidgin → creole, creole languages have a grammatical structure which is still maximalized with respect to their base language.

3. THE ORIGIN OF FRONT ROUNDED VOWELS

Another part of the structure of Creole that is alleged to have undergone decreolization is the vowel system. Compared to the maximum system of Standard French, Creole dialects that have evolved in relative isolation from the base language lack the front rounded series of vowels (see Table 1).

TABLE 1

Vowel inventories of French and Haitian Creole

Haitian French			Haitian Creole	
		Oral Vowels		
i	y	u	i	u
e	ø	o	e	o
ε	œ	ɔ	ε	ɔ
	a ꞏ ɑ		a	
		Nasal Vowels		
ẽ		ã	(ĩ)	(ũ)
œ̃		õ	ẽ	õ
				ã

Speakers of Creole bilingual or diglossic in Creole and French (Stewart 1963; Valdman 1968) exhibit consistently the more complex French system, although they may, if appropriate sociolinguistic conditions so require it, shift to the simpler Creole system. It has been claimed by Hall (1966) and d'Ans (1968) that these substitutions constitute recent decreolization resulting from direct contact with speakers of Standard French, i.e. diglossic Haitians; and both analysts eliminate the front rounded vowels from the vowel inventory of H. Hall in fact posits two stages in the adoption by Creole of words with front rounded vowels in the base language depending on the phonological restructuring they have undergone (1966:28–9). He claims that words that show a back rounded vowel (*brûler → boulé, gardeur → gadò, gueule → djòl, adieu → adjo*) were borrowed at an early stage (17th-18th century) while those that show a front unrounded vowel (*mur → mi, les yeux → jé, l'heure → lè*) were borrowed at a later date.

There is evidence that suggests that in H front rounded vowels, for many speakers at least, are not recent innovations due to direct contact with French or with diglossic speakers who have adopted the French vowel system. Hyppolite in his transcription of folktales collected in the Cape Haitian region (1951) notes the vowels [y], [ø] and [œ] in the speech of monolingual speakers. In an earlier work he takes strong objection to the McConnell-Laubach orthography which does not provide for the distinction between front unrounded and front rounded vowels. Describing the notation he employs he states (1950:17):

Certaines voyelles y ont été ajoutées pour répondre aux doléances des populations du Nord, du Nord-Est, du Plateau Central, etc., qui déclarent avec insistance que depuis 1945 on veut leur imposer une prononciation qu'elles n'ont pas.

Alleyne (1967:281) refers to some 18th century documents written in Creole, including a Creole-French glossary, which contain such features unknown to present day H as a distinction between a subject and an oblique case for personal pronouns (mo vs. mouè, respectively). He considers these texts to exemplify a frenchified Creole used by Blacks and mulattoes in close contact with French rather than a survival from PC and links it with frenchified varieties of Creole still existing today and referred to as 'créole de salon' or 'créole francisé'. Alleyne's evidence is not particularly convincing since Maur., which, on the basis of the simplicity of its determiner system at least, appears to be close to the PC stage, has precisely this contrast-subject versus oblique. Nonetheless, the documents he alludes to may very well indicate that from the early days of French colonization in Saint-Domingue there has existed a decreolized variety of H, and that pending the study of regional varieties of H it is premature to claim that all French-like phonological features found in present-day H are due to recent contact and decreolization.

Analysts of H who recognize only three front vowels rely only on the criterion of contrastive distribution. They fail to take into consideration the total range of phonetic variation of phonological units. Whereas the H word corresponding to French père 'priest' is [pɛ], the word corresponding to peur 'fear' is [pɛ] ~ [pœ], and just as in French lion 'lion' and lions 'we tie' must be assigned different phonological representations since the latter but not the former is realized as [ljɔ̃] ~ [liɔ̃], the two H words must be differently represented at the underlying level. Even speakers who do not distinguish the two words are aware of the fact that they differ at some deep level, no doubt because they are aware that other speakers realize them with different sets of phonetic ranges. Pradel Pompilus (personal communication) tells of a Port-au-Prince maid attending evening literacy classes who decided to quit when the monitor represented the word for 'egg' as zé. Although she herself usually pronounced it [zé], she knew that her bilingual employers pronounced it [zø], and she explained her action by stating that the monitor was teaching the class to read and write 'bad' Creole. In conclusion, it should be underscored that in diachronic comparison it is not sufficient to deal only with overt speech but one should take into consideration

native speakers' intuitions about the phonological representation of words whenever such data is available. It should also be noted that, with regard to words that must be assigned a front rounded vowel in their underlying representation, H underlying forms will not always correspond to those of French. For example, it is reported (Stewart, personal communication) that some speakers of H differentiate 'pen' from 'feather', both of which are derived from French *plume*: the first is realized as [plim] and [plym] whereas the second is pronounced [plim] only.

Hall was correct in establishing several layers of borrowing for words whose French cognates contain a front rounded vowel. There are words which have replaced the front rounded vowel with a back rounded vowel, e.g. *boulé* (*brûler*), and also words which have replaced the front rounded vowel by a corresponding front unrounded vowel and which are seldom if ever realized with lip rounding. These are words constituting the core vocabulary of H such as *dé* (*deux*) 'two' or *sè* (*sœur*) 'sister'. They were adopted by H from the base language at an early stage, and when they are realized with a front rounded vowel, this should be viewed as reflecting decreolization at an early state. On the other hand, more technical and peripheral words such as *moniteù* (*moniteur*) or *enbu* (*imbu*), which I have observed pronounced with the front rounded vowel even by monolingual speakers with little contact with French speakers, may be produced with the front rounded vowel, and when they are, reflect recent decreolization.[9]

4. THE TRANSMISSION OF DECREOLIZATION

Haiti provides the most suitable context for the study of ongoing decreolization. The role of the schools or formal agencies in the spread of linguistic structures from French is minimal. Only 30 per cent of the school-age population of the country is enrolled in schools; in urban centers like Port-au-Prince the proportion rises to 90 per cent (Dejean 1963). Since the literacy programs reach very few of the adult illiterates, a very small proportion of the monolingual rural masses are exposed directly to French. It is generally held that in Haiti the agents for decreolization are educated diglossic speakers or Creole speakers with some proficiency in French who maintain close contact with the diglossic elite. But like members of the elite and militant intellectuals in other Creole-speaking territories, some educated Haitians have adopted an academic, puristic attitude toward the vernacular. They glorify rural varieties of Creole which they esteem to be relatively free of gallicisms and attempt to cultivate it as a sort of literary language. In Guadeloupe a literary society, l'Académie Créole Antillaise (A.C.R.A.), has been established to protect Creole and promote it as a vehicle for literary expression. A.C.R.A. organizes yearly a literary festival, Jeux

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[9]   The same trend is observable in other Creole-speaking areas where the vernacular is in contact with French. Koenig (1969:53) refers to decreolization in Mauritius as 'refrancisation' and views the phenomenon from a puristic point of view: 'Il [Creole] a tendance à retrouver la prononciation correcte.'

Floraux, reminiscent of those organized by the Félibriges groups in Southern France to preserve a literary form of Provençal (Racine 1968). Some Haitian intellectuals decry the use of French features — or those considered such — in Creole, and members of a group very active in the promotion of Creole in the late 1940s used a variety relatively free of French features in its literary efforts. Characteristic of the literary Creole employed by this group is the following excerpt from *Antigone en créole* (1953), an adaptation of the Classical play by the writer F. Morisseau-Leroy (the author used an etymological spelling which I have replaced by my adaptation of the ONAAC notation):

non, m pa gen chagren ankò. m santi m ap antré
No, I not have sorrow anymore. I feel I (progressive) enter

oun koté ki pa gen chagren, ki pa gen lapenn
a place that not have sorrow, that not have trouble

ki pa gen krié rélé. M fin pr al antré lan oun kay
that not have crying and shouting. I finish (progr) enter go in a house

ki pa gen moun lèd, ki pa gen rad sal, ki pa gen chalè
that not have people ugly, that not have clothing dirty, that not have heat,

ki pa gen frèdi, ki pa gen maladi, ki pa gen moun gran gou,
that not have cold, that not have sickness, that not have people hungry,

ki pa gen moun ki pè lot ... oun peyi koté sa k
that not have people who fear others ... a country where that which

nan keù oun nòm, sa k nan keù oun fam gen plus valè pasé
in heart a man, that which in heart a woman has more value than

paròl roua.
word king.

Note in the cited text that of the six words with French cognates containing front rounded vowels only two, *keù* (*cœur*) and *plus* (*plus*), show adoption of these vowels. Also *lapenn* is shown with nasalization before the final *n*; in frenchified varieties of Creole that word would be *lapèn*. More importantly the author has striven to refrain from dipping in the lexical or syntactic resources of French to express his characters' thoughts.

Compare the text above with excerpts from a comedy of morals, *Anna*, written by the popular playwright and actor Théodore Beaubrun (1962) (Languichatte) for diglossic audiences, but with the humbler purpose of amusing them rather than demonstrating that Creole can become a means of literary expression. The action is located in a rural setting in close proximity to Port-au-Prince, and the local characters speak what the author considers a somewhat evolved form of Creole which he opposes to a variety spoken in more remote rural areas and which, in the text, he qualifies as 'accent paysan'. There are several characters from Port-au-Prince and they speak French among themselves and French or Creole to local people depending, presumably, on the degree to which the latter are able to understand the official

language. The first excerpt is a French-Creole conversation of which only the Creole is cited:[10]

— *mouen kontan ouè-ou* msieu *Josaphat. men mèt Languichatte pa la non,*
I happy see you Mister J. But master Languichatte not here (emph)

mouen kouè li douè kay chèf sèksion-an.
I believe he must house chief section-the.

— Je ne sais pas *non, mèt pa* jamè *di moun afè-li.*
master not never tell people.business-his.

— *ki* sa fam-*sa?* (In response to Sa femme est là?)
What his wife that?

— *o o msieu Josaphat ! ou ouè ou pa konn sa k ap pasé. met kité avèk*
Oh, Oh, Master J. You see you not know that which (progr) happen. Master left with

madam-ni oui.
wife-his (emph.)

— *fok ou ta ouè sa mèt Languichatte fè fi-a pasé.* Soit dit entre nous.
It is necessary you see what master L. make girl-the endure.

mèt pa té vlé travay, li t ap chaché viv sou ti koutu ke maleureùz
Master not want work he (past) try live on little sewing unfortunate one

l ap touché ... e pui lajan pa-li sé fè zami bouè tafia ...
she (progr) receive ... and then money part-his be make friend drink rum ...

ekskuzé-m oui msieu *Josaphat. sé troua zan* de soufrans ke *fi-a*
Excuse me (emph) mister J. Be three years of suffering that girl-the

t ap anduré
(past) (progr) endure.

The second excerpt is a conversation between Maryse, a girl from a remote rural area — about whose speech and manners the local characters make depreciative remarks, and the Port-au-Prince dweller Languichatte. The author introduces Maryse by stating that she speaks with a rural accent.

M. — *bonjou, msié.*
     Hello, sir.

L. — *avansé non. ou pa besouen* peù ...
     Come forward (emph). You need not fear ...

L. — *ki bò ou moun?*
     What place you person? (i.e. Where are you from?)

M. — *mouen sé moun La Vallée ...*
     I be person La Vallée ...

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[10]   In the text below note the representation of the front rounded vowels: $/y/ \rightarrow u$, $/ø/ \rightarrow eu$, $/œ/ \rightarrow eù$; *e* is used to represent /ø/ which is derived from French mute *e*. In the original text Creole dialogue is represented with an etymological notation, for example the first two lines of the text are written as *Bonjour moin content ouèr'ou m'sieu Josaphat. Min maître Languichatte pas là non, moin couè li doué caille chef section han.* For that reason it is difficult to determine whether when Languichatte uses the graphs *u* or *eu* he is noting a vowel which he actually perceives as distinct from /i/ or /e/ in the speech of monolinguals or whether he is representing /i/ or /e/ derived from French front rounded vowels with an etymological spelling.

M. — **msié** *Languichatte, a la* de *gro paròl ou sòt di-m la.*
    Mister L. ah there some big word you finish tell me there.
    sékrè m ap di ou la sé pa bagay pou m di pèsòn
    Secret I (progr) tell you there be not thing for I tell nobody
    sof fanmi-m, é m pa gen fanmi!
    except family-my and I not have family!

L.   — *a sé dènié mo ou di la ki fè m pi kontan.*
    Ah be last word you tell me there that make me most happy.
    ou pa gen **famiy!** *e bien, Maryse, jodi-a ou mèt konnen* **ke** *ou*
    You not have family! Well, Maryse, today you may know that you
    dékouvri youn fanmi!
    discover a family!

M. — *Ki lès?*
    What?

L. — *mouen! Maryse mouen pròpozé pou un vi-ou avèk mouen* **dans le**
    Me. Maryse, I propose for a life-your with me in
    bonheur ou dans le malheur ...
    happiness or in misfortune ...

Note that all characters use phrases containing French grammatical features: *sa femme* (*madam-li*), *je ne sais pas* (*m pa konn*), but that except for the phrase *de soufrans*, Maryse does not seem to have front rounded vowels and avoids the use of *ke* as conjunction. Compare particularly her *msié* and the *msieu* of the other monlingual Creole speaker, her *fanmi* and Languichatte's *famiy* (though he alternates with *fanmi*),[11] her *a la de gro paròl* ( ) *ou sòt di-m la* and the other characters' *li ta chaché viv sou ti koutu* **ke** *maleureùz l ap touché, ou mèt konnen* **ke** *ou dékouvri youn fanmi.* Since the author also uses an etymological notation for Creole, it is difficult to determine whether the graphs *e, eu, u* represent front rounded vowels or their front unrounded corresponding vowels; but no doubt he provides the contrasting notations *msié* versus *msieu* to indicate differences in the speaker's ability to handle frenchified features or, perhaps, differences in their Creole.

    In Haiti social prestige and economic advantages accrue to one in direct proportion to his control of the official language, and it is this that suggests that it is the semi-literate Creole speakers who serve as agents for decreolization of the vernacular. The use of French pronunciation and grammatical features and heavy borrowing of French vocabulary is the surest way of impressing one's fellows, even though one risks a few malapropisms or the inability of handling French features on all levels, as happens to one of Beaubrun's characters in *Anna* who attempts to show off her knowledge of French to Maryse, the country yokel, but is unable to round her lips

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[11]   Y. Dejean informs me that in the La Vallée region this word is ordinarily pronounced *fanmiy* or *famiy*. It appears, then, that Beaubrun's sense for geographically and socially determined variations in Creole is not unerring, and the cited text might perhaps best be interpreted as reflecting a Haitian bilingual's stereotyped notions of the speech of the rural masses. The fact that *famiy* is the usual form for monolinguals underscores the point made in section 3 that such features as front rounded vowels and denasalization of vowels before nasal consonants may be survivals of older stages of H and do not necessarily indicate recent decreolization.

on the last vowel: *l'apparence est trompèse*. In addition, Creole speakers who live in
an urban setting are forced to dip freely and often in the lexicon of the official language
to handle topics of discourse beyond home, hearth, and field. This is not to say that
these new topics of discourse could not be handled with the core Creole lexicon, but
that the average speaker cannot readily expand his lexicon by means of deliberate
creation and by exclusive recourse to internal resources, nor can he move with
ease into new topics of discourse unless the way is prepared for him by language
planners. Clearly the task of forging Creole into an instrument suitable for use in
formal circumstances hitherto reserved for French is the responsibility of the diglossic
elite. So far, in Haiti, language planning and instrumentalization has been limited to
the elaboration of a suitable orthography for Creole and insufficient attention has
been devoted to the codification of a standard norm and the preparation of such
linguistic tools as normative grammars and dictionaries that the diffusion of a
standard norm entails (Valdman 1968), although these problems have been encoun-
tered and dealt with on a relatively ad hoc basis by individuals or groups engaged in
the translation of religious material. Of particular significance in the instrumentaliza-
tion of Creole is the continuous expansion of the domains of use of Creole among the
diglossic elite (Zéphir 1965). Stewart (1963) describes the distribution of French and
Creole among the diglossic Haitians in terms of two intersecting variables: (1) public
(impersonal or representative) versus private (personal or nonrepresentative) behavior
and (2) formal (formally prescribed) versus informal (not formally prescribed)
behavior, and he reports the following domains of use for the two languages:

	Formal	Informal
Public	French	French or Creole
Private	French or Creole	Creole (French)

Recent reports on the sociolinguistic distribution of French and Creole assert that the
latter is displacing the base language in all domains, including the Public-Formal, and
predominates in both Informal domains and the Private-Formal domain. Thus more
and more diglossic Haitians are called upon to use Creole in Public-Formal circum-
stances and can then provide suitable models for imitation to monolingual speakers.
The latter, it would seem (Yves Dejean, personal communication), have a keen sense
of effective use of Creole and avoidance of heavy borrowing from French on the part
of public speakers. Such public figures as Vincent and Fignolé have near legendary
reputations for the use of the apt word, figure of speech, and proverb derived from the
core resources of the vernacular in their public appearances before monolingual
speakers, and the best compliment that these can pay a public speaker is *Sa sé kréòl-la
menm*; *paròl-la maché nan san-n* 'That is the real Creole; this speech is in his very
blood'. Given limited communication between the elite and the monolingual masses
in Haiti, it is not the Creole spoken by diglossic Haitians which will prove of greatest

interest for the study of decreolization but that of the segment of Haitian society that in Public-Formal circumstances can only resort to the vernacular. In the absence of any established tradition and readily available models might they not have to resort to borrowing from French and thus serve as agents for decreolization? The members of that class, characterized by Pressoir (1947:66) as 'les prolétaires mêlés à la masse de créolisants', have some hopes of upward social mobility and realize that proficiency in the official language is the best means for the achievement of their objective.

It is precisely that small proportion of Creole monolinguals that is attracted by adult literacy programs implemented by the ONAAC or religious groups. In 1966 I collected speech samples in literacy classes in circumstances characteristic of the Public-Formal domain. These were statements about the importance of learning to read and education in general made in my presence before a class of adults by the participants themselves and by monitors or supervisors of the various literacy programs. These speech samples are particularly appropriate for the purpose at hand since they illustrate the use of Creole in a Public-Formal context by both diglossic and monolingual speakers. Below are two samples showing varying degrees of decreolization. The first is from a sort of pep-talk made by the visiting coordinator, a diglossic educated Haitian with many years experience in literacy, missionary work, and Bible translation, and who has had close contact with rural masses. The second sample is from an inspirational story given by a literacy monitor, a monolingual speaker with minimal spoken proficiency in French.

(1) '*lò ou pa konnen* lir *ou genyen* katre ven di pour san
     When you not know read you have 90 per cent
     de chans *ou né dan mizèr, ou viv nan mizèr, ou mouri dan mizèr,*
     chances you born in poverty, you live in poverty, you die in poverty,
     pui*ske ou pa espéré* joui oken privilèj *nan* lavi térès-la
     since you not hope enjoy none privileges in life earthy-the'.

(2) *gèp li menm ki rivé ki* un pti peu orgeuyeu, *dépi l rivé*
     The wasp him self who arrive who a little bit conceited, since he arrive
     li prèt pu chanté katamoua. é alòr yo tou lè deu *ap aprann.*
     he ready to sing victory. And then all the two (progr) learn.
     mèzalòr *mièl toujou pozé san li pou li* bienadapté a *sa profeseù-a*
     But then the bee always put blood his for he well adapt to that teacher-the
     ap montré l. gèp ki ouè li mèm aprè kèk seumèn *li fè youn bèl gato*
     (progr) show him. The wasp who see him self after a few week he make a nice cake
     pou kont-li. sa li fè li konnen l fin konnen, li mété deùyò ...
     for account-his. What he do he know he finish learn, he put (himself) out ...
     gen anpil élèv-yo tou, lè yo vini lékòl kèk seumèn *yo vini*
     There are a lot of pupil (plural) too, when they come school a few weeks they come
     trè régulièr *é dépi ou tandé yo konmansé kapab li* preumyé *paj*
     very regular and from the moment you hear they begin able read first page
     deuzièm *paj, yo pa* tounen.
     second page, they not return.

Both speakers introduce French features primarily at the lexical and phonological level. Note the introduction of the French cliché expressions *90 pour cent de chances, jouir d'aucuns privilèges, la vie terrestre, un petit peu orgueilleux, bien adapté,* and *tout les deux,* with or without syntactic or phonological adaptations to Creole. At the phonological level both speakers introduce post-vocalic *r* (*mizèr, alòr, regulyèr*), the sequence *ui* instead of *i* and front rounded vowels (*de, peu, orgeuyeu, deu, profèseù, deùyò, preumié, deuzièm*). In addition, the second speaker uses [ɛ] instead of [e] in *tou lè deu* and the nasal vowel [œ̃] in *un pti peu*. In the recorded texts as a whole I observed on the part of all speakers introduction of individual lexical items from French and retention of some of the phonological features marginal in Creole such as front rounded vowels or non-nasalized vowels[12] before nasal consonants and, particularly for diglossic speakers, massive use of phrases and clichés with or without accommodation to Creole: *avèk douseùr, avèk senpati, avèk souplès; plu enbu de konésans pa-l; kòm un leson de moral; pozè-nou dé késion trè zanbarasant.* In many instances, borrowing from French does not appear to be need-filling, e.g. *kèlkechòz* for *kichoy* 'something', *trè zanbarasant* for *ki jennen nou anpil.* The grammatical structure is not significantly affected since the morphosyntactic features transferred from French such as the pre-position of the definite determiner (*tou lè deu*) are fused elements of the borrowed cliché expressions.

None of the texts I have presented to illustrate decreolization in Haitian Creole reflect directly the daily informal speech of the rural monolingual masses that constitute nearly 90 per cent of the population of Haiti and nearly 80 per cent of the speakers of Creole in the world. Unfortunately none of the descriptions of H are based on an extensive corpus of the speech of rural monolinguals subjected to the scrutiny of a trained linguist who is himself a native speaker of Creole and who has conducted fieldwork among these speakers. The same lack of carefully collected material must be reported for urban monolinguals as well. Reports about the Creole used by all types of monolinguals in the Public-Informal, Private-Formal, and Private-Informal domains are generally anecdotal in nature, and a definite assessment of the degree of decreolization features present in H and a better understanding of the mechanism and agents of transmission of decreolization and of its social motivation will need to await more accurate and detailed descriptions that take into consideration the complex sociolinguistic context in which H evolves.

5. THE DEMARCATION OF DECREOLIZED CREOLE FROM FRENCH

Creolists who have dealt with the spectrum of varieties of English in the Caribbean hold that, unlike creolized varieties of English, Creole dialects are clearly demarcated

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[12] In H oral vowels are subject to variable nasalization in the context of nasal consonants (Hall 1953) except for vowels which often correspond to French sequences vowel + *r*, e.g. *sémèn* [sɛ̃mɛ̃n] ~ [semen] 'week' but *kòn* [kɔn] 'horn'.

from French on the basis of structural criteria (Bailey 1971; DeCamp 1971a–b; Stewart 1962). Indeed except for Sranantongo[18] versus English it is difficult to determine whether any sample of vernacular English speech is 'standard with incursions from Creole, or Creole with incursions from the standard' (Bailey). We have seen that even in Haiti where the contact between French and Creole is not as intimate as it is in the overseas French departments of Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Reunion or in Mauritius, there is considerable decreolization in the variety of Creole that enjoys actual prestige in the eyes of the majority of monolingual speakers, the speech of Port-au-Prince semi-literates. With increasing social mobility — and one of the effects of recent social and political developments in Haiti has been precisely to increase the social mobility of some segments of the black masses — decreolization will increase. Another important sociolinguistic development in Haiti is the extension of the domains of use of Creole among the diglossic elite (Pompilus 1961; Stewart 1963; Valdman 1968; Zéphir 1965). This has resulted in 'creolization' of French, and thus there are present all the conditions required for the emergence of a continuous gradient between Creole and the base language. In the French overseas departments, if anything, mutual interferences between French and Creole are more widespread as attest statements by French officials illustrated by the following statement attributed to a lycée principal by the French writer Jean Raspail in his none too charitable nor perceptive treatment of social and linguistic problems of the French Antilles, *Secouons le cocotier* (1966:123):

En dehors des heures de classe, tous mes élèves parlent le créole. Certains de mes professeurs y ont recours trop souvent. Pour un peu, ils se glorifieraient d'être bilingues! Et le créole et ses créolismes passent aussitôt dans la langue française, défigurant sa grammaire! La prononciation en devient effrayante.

Yet, although English creolists underestimate the degree of decreolization that all Creole dialects in contact with French undergo, they are correct in their assertions that there exists a structural gap between the two languages and that any sample of speech can be assigned to one or the other language. In an attempt to assign samples of Jamaica speech to a point in the Jamaica Creole (JC) — Standard Jamaica English (SJE) continuum, Bailey (1971) has evolved a linguistic procedure which results in a classification that satisfies native speaker intuition. She proposed 'translation rules' which convert any speech sample to JC or SJE and worked out a calculus assigning each type of rule a value on a five to one scale. The highest valued rules are syntactic and the lowest valued lexical and phonological. The weighting is as follows: *5* for rules that effect changes in sentence types, *4* for rules that deal with embedding, *3* for rules that change phrase structure, *2* for morphophonemic rules, and *1* for lexical and phonological rules. The assignment of relative weight proposed by Bailey seems right,

[18]   Sranantongo, the vernacular of Surinam, is an English-based creole showing an older stratum of lexical elements borrowed from Portuguese or a Portuguese based pidgin or creole and a recent stratum of lexical elements borrowed from Dutch, the official language of the country.

and it suggests that a gradient situation between a creole and its base language results when decreolization affects morphosyntactic structures massively. Bailey's procedure will be applied to Creole and the relative decreolization undergone by two Creole dialects, H and Saint-Thomas, will be compared. It will be recalled that the latter shows greatest decreolization in the determiner system (see section 2).

Rather than work out a calculus as does Bailey, I shall classify features transferred from French according to their relative decreolizing effect. Although I grant that transfer of syntactic features from French will have a more determining effect on overall decreolization, I would extend Bailey's differential weighting to the lexical and phonological levels. The adoption of postvocalic *r* has a greater decreolizing effect than that of the front rounded vowels or the denasalization of vowels before nasal consonants. This differential effect would appear to be due to the fact that a contrast between a front rounded and a front unrounded vowel is part of the receptive inventory of all Creole monolinguals and that denasalization of vowels before nasal consonants occurs often for many open vowels. At the lexical level a distinction need be made between need-filling borrowings such as *orgeuyeu* or *adapté*, borrowings that create doublets such as *kichoy/kèlkechòz* 'something', and the adoption of clichés and phrases such as *soit dit entre nous* or *posé dé kèsion*. Since the latter serve as vehicles for the transfer of grammatical features, they are more likely than the other two types of lexical borrowings to reduce markedly the structural distance between Creole and the base language. Borrowings that create doublets introduce phonological features which are marginal in Creole and they reflect a conscious attempt on the part of the speaker to approximate the pronunciation the borrowed element has in the base language. With regard to morphosyntactic structures Bailey's hierarchy can not be applied very well to Creole. Differences in sentence type become striking only if one compares Creole to Standard French, but they pale if one chooses instead Colloquial French (français populaire) as the basis of comparison. For instance, to derive H *Sé youn volè li yé* from St. Fr. *C'est un voleur !* one needs to apply exposition and embedding rules (Hall 1953; Valdman 1970), but only the absence of a conjunction separates the H sentences from Fr. Pop. *C'est un voleur qu'il est!* Yet H and Fr. Pop. are more distant than are the two varieties of French. For Creole the use of an overt conjunction in the embedding of complements, e.g. H *li di ke li malad* 'He says he is sick' (compare *Il dit qu'il est malade* and *li di li malad*) contributes as much to the decreolization of Creole utterances as do changes of sentence types and embedding to that of JC. Bailey assigns lowest weight to changes in phrase structure, but that is surely too broad a category, for differences in the order of Det and Noun, say, will have a lesser effect on the reduction of structural distance between Creole and French than subcategorization of nouns. In fact I would assign pre-position of Det the smallest weight among morphosyntactic features and give intermediate status to such changes as the subcategorization of nouns (masculine versus feminine) and the selection of distinct forms of determiners and adjectives that it entails, the obligatory marking of plural, differentiation of the third person singular, and the use of preposition to indicate structural relationships in noun phrases.

Compare now the following Saint-Thomas Creole text with the H texts presented in Section 4 above:

labitasion (l abitasion) d Saint-Peter té ka patièn a un vieùy
The estate of Saint-Peter (past) (progr) belong to an old

fam. bofrè-mouen sété l ékonòm de la labitasion.
lady. Brother-in-law mine be (past) the manager of the estate.

yo di ke labitasion ipotéké. alò bofrè-mouen di on peu pa
They say that estate mortgaged. Then brother-in-law mine say one can not

édé ou men bofrè-mouen li sé on katolik konm ou
help you but brother-in-law mine he be a Catholic like you

é i kònèt zafèr d la loua e dé téren. é le seùl manyè ke èl
and he know business of the law and of the lots. And the only manner that she

té peu vann de téren pour atrapé d larjan i fodrè avoua
(past) can sell of the lots to catch some money it will be necessary have

d larjan pou péyé lé dèt é pou eklèrsi labitasion. labitasion té ké
some money to pay the debts and to clear the estate. Estate (past) (future)

san ipotèk alò èl té peu vann ...
without mortgage then she (past) can sell ...

si sé le vieu teni peutèt kat zanfan e téni
If be the old father have maybe four (plural) child and have

san karé sou lé san karé katz anfan chakun té ké
hundred acre then of the hundred acre four (plural) child each (past) (future)

trapé vent senk karé.
catch twenty five acre.

Casual inspection of the texts reveals that the Saint-Thomas sample is much closer to French that the H texts, although the line of demarcation between the two languages remains quite sharp. The data in Table 2 — a tabulation of phonological, lexical and morphosyntactic transfers from French to the two respective Creole dialects classified within each of the three categories according to their relative decreolizing effect, support Bailey's contention that differences in grammatical features play a determining role in maintaining a structural gap between a creole and its base language.

As compared to H, Saint-Thomas Creole shows the acquisition of the following French grammatical features: (1) the form *fodrè* is inflected for tense and modality and contrasts with the usual marking of these categories by particles preceding a single verb base (*té ka patièn, té ké vann*); (2) a consistent distinction is made between masculine and feminine for nouns manifesting itself by (i) the choice of singular determiner before a vowel (*le/la, on/un*), (ii) differentiation of the form of adjectives (*un vieùy fam/le vieu pè*), and (iii) differentiation in the third person singular pronoun (*i ~ il/èl*); (3) an overt marking of plural by differentiation in the form of the determiner (*le vieu pè/lé dèt*) and a prefixed /z/ (*kat zanfan* as opposed to *l anfan* 'the child' or *on anfan* 'a child'); (4) in the third person singular, in addition to gender differentia-

TABLE 2

Tabulation of features transferred from French to Haitian Creole
and Saint-Thomas Creole

Phonology

		Haitian Creole	Saint-Thomas Creole
1. /-r/		6	2
2. denasalization		3	1
3. front rounded vowels		35	11
	TOTAL	51	15

Lexicon

1. clichés and phrases		9	
2. doublets		3	3
3. need-filling borrowings		7	6
	TOTAL	19	9

Grammar

1. conjunction *ke*		3	2
verb forms			1
feminine/masculine		4	6
plural markers			3
2. pronoun reference			1
linking prepositions		4	6
3. position of determiner		2	7
position of negative *pa*			1
	TOTAL	13	27

tion, a distinction is made between determinate (*i ~ il/èl*) and indeterminate (*on*); (5) instead of simple juxtaposition of head noun — modifier N to form NPs, the prepositions *de* and *a* are employed (*l ékonòm de labitasion, trapé d larjan, ... patièn a un vieùy fam*); (6) the Def Det is preposed (*l ékonòm, le vieu pè* compared to H *fi-a, chef sèksion-an*) and undergoes a different type of sandhi variation; (7) the negative *pa* is postposed (*on peu pa* as opposed to H *moun pa kapab*).

The two French communities in Saint-Thomas (and their parent communities in Saint-Barts) constitute an excellent context for the study of decreolization in Creole, for it appears that the non-Creole speaking community of Carenage (Frenchtown) uses a vernacular where some creolized regional Northern French dialect (cf. fn. 7) is in a gradient situation with the standard. One of the striking features of the Carenage vernacular is the use of verb phrases corresponding to French inflected verb forms and Creole combinations particle + base; these verb phrases, however, still show residual inflection:

Carenage	French	Northside Creole
j sui ki va	je vais	mouen ka alé
t é ki va	tu vas	ou ka alé
il é ki va	il va	i ka alé
èl é ki va	elle va	èl ka alé
on é ki va	nous allons	nou ka alé
	(on va)	
zòt é ki va	vous allez	zòt ka alé
eu zòt son ki va	ils, elles vont	yo ka alé

It should be pointed out that Carenage speakers will shift between the verb pattern illustrated above and that of French depending on their degree of proficiency in the standard, their interlocutor, etc. In conclusion, Saint-Thomas Creole will remain distinct from Carenage speech and French to the extent that it maintains the typically Creole verb system. Alternations between the Creole and French verb systems in the speech of these two communities merit more detailed study and it is hoped that creolists will be attracted to these two relatively neglected linguistic communities to study the complex linguistic interactions that take place between the two vernaculars before these are submerged by French and English.

6. DECREOLIZATION AND RELEXIFICATION

The study of decreolization in present-day creoles provides some insights on the processes by which pidgins and creoles developed from their base language; in particular, it bears on the evaluation of the latest proposal put forward for the genesis of all European-based pidgins and Creoles, the relexification hypothesis.

Two hypotheses have been proposed for the genesis of the pidgins which serve as the basis for present-day European-based creoles. It was first proposed that these pidgins were the result of the inaccurate rendition of the West European language to which particular groups of Africans and Asians were exposed (Sylvain 1936; Jourdain 1956). The first proponents of this hypothesis implied that the faulty imitation of the West European language stemmed from a mental deficiency on the part of the socially inferior Africans and Asians or the primitive nature of the structure of the languages which they spoke, but more recent reformulations of the hypothesis (Alleyne 1967) interpret the formation of pidgins as simply a special case of the acquisition of a second language under natural conditions. One important element in the formation of pidgins is limited social interaction between the members of the dominant and inferior groups, or to use the more suitable terms proposed by Nida and Fehderau (1970), the 'aggressor' and 'reactor' groups. Evidently, the language interference hypothesis shares many common features with the substratum theory adduced by historical linguists to account for the development of the major West European languages themselves.

The second hypothesis, which I shall label the 'simplication hypothesis', involves the assumption that the members of the aggressor group simplified their language — deliberately for some proponents of the hypothesis, unconsciously for others — to facilitate its use by members of the reactor group. Bloomfield posited as the first step in the formation of a pidgin the imitation on the part of speakers of the aggressor language of the rendition of that language by speakers of the reactor language: 'a jargon or lingua franca [= pidgin] is nobody's native language but only a compromise between a foreign speaker's version of a language and a native speaker's version of the foreign speaker's version, and so on' (1933:472-3). Nida and Fehderau (1970) provide a detailed account of the restructuring of two aggressor languages spoken in widely separated parts of the world (Kituba in the Congo basin and Motu in Melanesia) into pidgins by a process of mutual interaction involving simplication by the speakers of the aggressor language and linguistic interference from the reactor language; Ferguson (1971) suggests that the simplification effected by the speakers of the aggressor language has as its source simplified registers — baby-talk and a variety of language used to communicate with foreigners — available to all speakers of a language, and in this way he makes explicit the suggestions made by Bloomfield and Hjelmslev (e.g. 1939a, b), among others, that simplification of the aggressor language is based on grammatical relations existing in the aggressor language more than on the structure of the reactor language.

But Caribbean creoles, no matter what their base language, show striking similarities of morphosyntactic features (Taylor 1958); (1) elimination of gender distinction in nouns; (2) elimination of case distinctions for personal pronouns; (3) elimination of verb inflectional affixes and morphophonemics and their replacement by a single form and a set of particles; (4) the use of iteration for emphasis; (5) the use of compound prepositions, e.g. Sranantongo *na mindri*, Philippine Spanish Contact Vernacular *na medio de* 'in the middle'; (6) the semantic shift 'too much' → 'a lot, much'. Whinnom (1956) showed that several Spanish-based contact vernaculars used in the Philippines (Caviteño, Ermitaño, and Zamboangueño) developed from a Portuguese pidgin spoken in the Moluccas and similar to that used in Indian and Chinese Portuguese trading posts. Thompson (1961) traced parallels between the Portuguese pidgin used in the Far East off the West Coast of Africa (São Tomé, Cape Verde Islands) and Caribbean creoles, particularly Sranantongo and Papiamentu. Stewart then proposed that the observed widespread similarities in structure between European-based pidgins and creoles arose from the relexification of an Afro-Portuguese contact vernacular that developed on the West Coast of Africa in the 15th century. Relexification involved the wholesale replacement of Portuguese vocabulary items by those of English, French, etc. Whinnom (1965) argued that, in the absence of any evidence for a Portuguese contact vernacular in Africa until the 16th century, the source pidgin that underwent relexification was either a primitive Portuguese pidgin based on the Lingua Franca (Sabir) of the Mediterranean or Lingua Franca itself.

It should be pointed out that the relexification hypothesis is mutually compatible

with any of the two traditional explanations for the genesis of pidgins, for to adopt it simply means pushing back the period during which the source pidgin was formed two or three centuries. Whatever pidgin is designated as the source pidgin, Proto-European Pidgin (PEP), its development from the contact of a particular set of aggressor and reactor language(s) will need to be accounted for in some way. Three principal arguments are marshalled in support of relexification. First, it has been well established that European pidgins arose in a short period of time, and, if one rejects Hall's contention (1966) that 'a pidgin can grow up in a few days of trading or in a few hours of contact', wholesale lexical shift within a stable grammatical base accounts neatly for the rapidity of the development of the various European pidgins (Whinnom 1965). Second, the lexicon of a language is more subject to widescale restructuring than its grammar, and it seems more reasonable to assume that the lexicon of a single source pidgin was restructured on several occasions in contact with three or four other different languages than to assume that four or five European languages all underwent similar restructuring of their grammatical system when they came into contact with the same set of reactor languages in the same sociolinguistic setting (DeCamp 1971a). Third, as compared to other pidgins and creoles, for instance various contact vernaculars used in the hinterland of Africa, they exhibit a unique simplicity, which, it is argued could only be an Indoeuropean or Romance simplicity (Whinnom 1965).

Hall (1966) dismisses the relexification hypothesis as 'a somewhat more sophisticated version of the old notion that a pidgin or creole is simply a native language spoken with European vocabulary'. This is hardly a fair criticism, for in fact Whinnom (1965) underscores the fact that in his view all European pidgins and creoles are underlied by a Romance grammatical structure and he attributes only a small number of features to African substrate languages. However, historical accounts describing a socio-linguistic situation in which a Portuguese-based pidgin was taken over by Dutch, English, or French traders are inexistent and there are no documents which show partially relexified samples of PEP. Decreolization, like relexification, is characterized by lexical restructuring. If one would observe in present-day creoles wholesale lexical shift without accompanying restructuring of the grammatical system, then this would constitute strong evidence for the relexification hypothesis. But it was shown in Section 5 above that in Haitian and Saint-Thomas Creoles the introduction of French vocabulary was invariably accompanied by some modification of the grammatical structure. In H, where the proportion of integrated borrowings is relatively small, and where many of the borrowings take the form of cliché phrases whose grammatical features become frozen, a small number of grammatical features are nonetheless transferred with the borrowed lexical items. The Saint-Thomas Creole lexicon is more cognate with that of French than is that of H and may be supposed to have undergone greater decreolization, for instance compare Fr. *une vieille femme* with St. T. *un vieùy fam* and H *youn gran moun* or *quatre enfants* with *kat zanfan* and *kat ti moun*. St. T. Creole also contains many more grammatical features transferred

from French. Bailey also has pointed out that in Jamaica Creole texts which contain lexical, items borrowed from English also show the transfer of grammatical features which tend to shift these texts toward the standard Jamaican English pole of the language continuum. It should be noted that the restructuring of the Creole lexicon resulting from the heavy decreolization the language is undergoing in St. T. is not massive and has affected less than 50 per cent of the lexicon. It would appear, then, that the near-total lexical restructuring assumed in the process of relexification would have been accompanied by at least some grammatical changes. That is, French traders who used PEP introduced, together with French words, French syntactic features such as preposed determiners; English traders introduced English syntactic patterns, etc. In the absence of more solid historical documentation, the case for relexification is not very convincing, and the observed striking structural similarities that have led to the elaboration of the hypothesis could be accommodated by assuming that in the formation of pidgins two processes are fundamental: (1) universal principles of language restructuring specific to all contact situation and (2) stimulus diffusion. The role of the latter in the formation of pidgins is explained by DeCamp (1971a): 'If a person with even a casual familiarity with any form of pidgin participates in the spontaneous creation of a new pidgin, the resulting language will not be a random mixture of the two languages but will inevitably be influenced by the pattern of the pidgin already known.'

As concerns universals of language restructuring, Nida and Fehderau (1970) point out the following morphosyntactic modifications undergone by Manianga Kikongo and Motu as they evolved from trade languages (koinés) to contact vernaculars: (1) replacement of affixes, particularly tense-aspect and person reference affixes, by free forms; (2) elimination of morphophonemic alternants in favor of a phonologically fuller single form; (3) the use of phrasal constructions for inflected verb forms; (4) reduction of grammatical classes. It is proposed that these processes account for many of the observed similarities among European pidgins and creoles. The simplicity of grammatical structure that cannot fail but impress the student of these languages is not only then a simplicity characteristic of Indoeuropean, Romance, or West African languages but a simplicity resulting from the restructuring of any human language so that it can be more quickly and efficiently used for certain communicative needs in the special context of language contact.

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