TENSE AND ASPECT IN GUYANESE CREOLE:

A SYNTACTIC, SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

BY

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Dedicated to

My Parents

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gratitude in the four years I have been in York.   I thank them not only for their financial assistance which enabled me to spend a fourth year in York to complete this thesis, but for their love, faith and encouragement throughout my life.   I must also remember the love and encouragement of my sisters Joyce, Jean, Beverley and Debra.

Finally, I wish to thank my typist, Mrs. Muriel Pirozek, for having done such a competent job.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to find alternative tense
and aspect systems to those proposed by Bickerton (1975a)
for Guyanese Creole, and to review the notion of the creole
continuum.

Firstly, there is a discussion of the notions involved
in an analysis of the grammatical categories of tense and
aspect, paying attention to the role of nonlinguistic
factors. Secondly, there is a critique of Bickerton's
analysis of the Guyanese verb, revealing the weaknesses of
his tense and aspect systems, and his proposals regarding
grammatical change. Thirdly, I propose an alternative
grammar for tense and aspect, indicating that all variation
is not necessarily indicative of change, and that the
changes in Guyanese are more likely to be lexical rather
than grammatical. Finally, I propose an alternative view
of the creole continuum based on the analysis. I have
made use of extensive oral data collected and transcribed by
another native speaker of Guyanese, Professor Walter F.
Edwards, as well as my own intuitions as a native speaker.

INTRODUCTION

1. Aims

This thesis is primarily concerned with the tense and
aspect systems of Guyanese Creole. My analysis of the tense
and aspect categories is preceded by a critique of Derek
Bickerton's analysis of the Guyanese verb as exemplified in
Dynamics of a Creole System (1975a) - an analysis which I
have found wanting in many respects. I have also briefly
taken his Roots of Language (1981) into account, although
in that book he does not materially change his presentation
of tense and aspect in Guyanese, and indeed refers readers
to the 1975 treatment.

The Guyanese speech community is extremely complex as
the works of Allsopp (1958; 1962), Bickerton (1971; 1973a;
1975a), Edwards (1975), Devonish (1978) and Rickford (1979)
exemplify. There is a language variety which can be
identified as 'English', a variety acquired through educa-
tion. There is also a variety which can be identified as
an 'English-based' Creole and is the vernacular of the
community. But there seems to be a great deal of mixing
between the Creole and the English variety. Communities
which reveal this sort of phenomenon here have been labelled
by DeCamp (1971:349) as 'post-creole speech communities',
i.e. communities in which a creole is in the process of
merging with its lexically related standard variety. This
process has been described as 'decreolization'.

Rickford (1980:176 - 178), however, calls for a review

of this concept of a creole continuum, and states that we
must remember Haynes'(1973:1) indictment of the continuum
notion. She describes the notion as:

> '... an abstract construct which places people
> in the Caribbean on their hillsides, rolling
> the stones of phonological, syntactic and
> lexical mastery to a European summit, getting
> there, but never quite ...' .

Bickerton subscribes to the view that post-creole
communities reveal a process whereby the creole is merging
with the standard. Following Stewart (1965) he attempts
to deal with the Guyanese situation by dividing the speech
continuum into ranges which he assumes recapitulate
diachronic changes: the basilect is the most extreme and
archaic creole; the acrolect approximates to standard
English and represents nearly complete decreolization; the
mesolect includes all intermediate varieties. Thus the
Creole is moving towards English by a series of grammatical
changes. Bickerton illustrates the grammatical changes by
examining the tense and aspect systems of the community.

But not only do I find his tense and aspect systems
wanting, I also find his grammatical changes extremely
suspect. In my thesis I aim to establish alternative tense
and aspect categories, and address myself to the question of
whether the Creole reflects grammatical changes to the
standard with which it is in contact, or whether the changes
are only lexical. If the changes are only lexical, it
follows that there are primarily two languages in the
community, English and Creole, and not several languages or

'lects' as Bickerton refers to them.

There is a great deal of linguistic variation in the community. To account for the variation, Bickerton assumes that variation ' is indeed none other than the locomotive of linguistic change' (1973a:643) - a point of view disagreed with by Devonish (1978); Rickford (1979; 1980), Sankoff (1977; 1980), Washabaugh (1977) and myself (see my chapters II et al.). Although I must account for the variation, I will not address myself directly to variation or consider it a major problem; neither do I propose to deal explicitly with variable rules and implicational scales, nor find an alternative for them.

2.   Theoretical orientation

My analysis of the Guyanese speech community is a linguistic analysis - to be precise, it is a syntactic, semantic and pragmatic analysis. Fillmore (1974:1) provides a succinct characterization of the realms of syntax, semantics and pragmatics:

> 'Syntax ... characterizes the grammatical forms
> that occur in a language, while semantics pairs
> these forms with their potential communicative
> functions. Pragmatics is concerned with the
> three-termed relation which unites (i) linguistic
> form and (ii) the communicative functions which
> these forms are capable of serving, with (iii)
> the contexts or settings in which those
> linguistic forms can have those communicative
> functions.'

Such an analysis reflects my general theoretical

orientation which is in keeping with Wunderlich (1979).
He says (p. 90-91) that every grammar is a system of
procedures that the speaker of a language uses (or follows)
in various communicative situations. Particular utter-
ances (phonic or graphic patterns) carry meanings relative
to an existing situation, especially with regard to its
continuation. Wunderlich goes on:

> 'It is therefore important that the speaker be
> able to distinguish typical and atypical
> features of utterances and situations together;
> by typical I mean, among other things, expected
> and (under the given circumstances) capable of
> being carried out. The speaker and hearer
> understand concrete utterances as realizations
> of sentences (or sentence-like expressions,
> sentence-sequences, etc.) of a language, i.e.
> as arrangements of lexical units in particular
> constructions. The lexical units in each case
> have a particular phonological structure and a
> particular meaning (in the sense both of factual
> reference and relation to other meanings).
> Correspondingly, sentences also have phono-
> logical structures and meanings, which among other
> things derive from the lexical units and their
> formal arrangement and modification (e.g.
> inflexion). The meaning of typical utterances
> in a given typical situation arises inter alia
> from the meaning of the uttered sentences.'

He further explains that the notions 'understand as',
'have phonological structure and meaning', 'derive from'
are in each case to be understood in such a way that we are
dealing with particular socially valid conventions, which
we can reconstruct in the form of rules. We can, thus,
identify a linguistic system as a whole with a system of
rules which operate on certain units and allow the possible
manifestations (utterances) of the language in question to
be produced and understood. Wunderlich summarizes this in

a model of a linguistic system:

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            ┌─────────────────────────┐
            │  Situational meanings   │
            └─────────────────────────┘
                        ↕
┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Meanings as intensions and designations  │
└───────────────────────────────────────────┘
              ↑
              │        ┌──────────────┬──────────┐
              │        │  Meanings    │          │
              ←─────── │              │ Lexical  │
              │        ├──────────────┤  units   │
              │        │ Phonological │          │
              │        │ structure    │          │
              │        └──────────────┴──────────┘
              │              ↑
              │        ┌──────────────┐
              │        │ Phonological │
              │        │ units        │
              │        └──────────────┘
              ↕
┌──────────────────────┬──────────────────────┐
│ Sentences (sequences │  Phonological        │
│ of sentences)        │  structures          │
└──────────────────────┴──────────────────────┘
              ↕
      ┌──────────────┬──────────────────┐
      │ Utterance -  │  Phonetic        │
      │ tokens       │  structures      │
      └──────────────┴──────────────────┘
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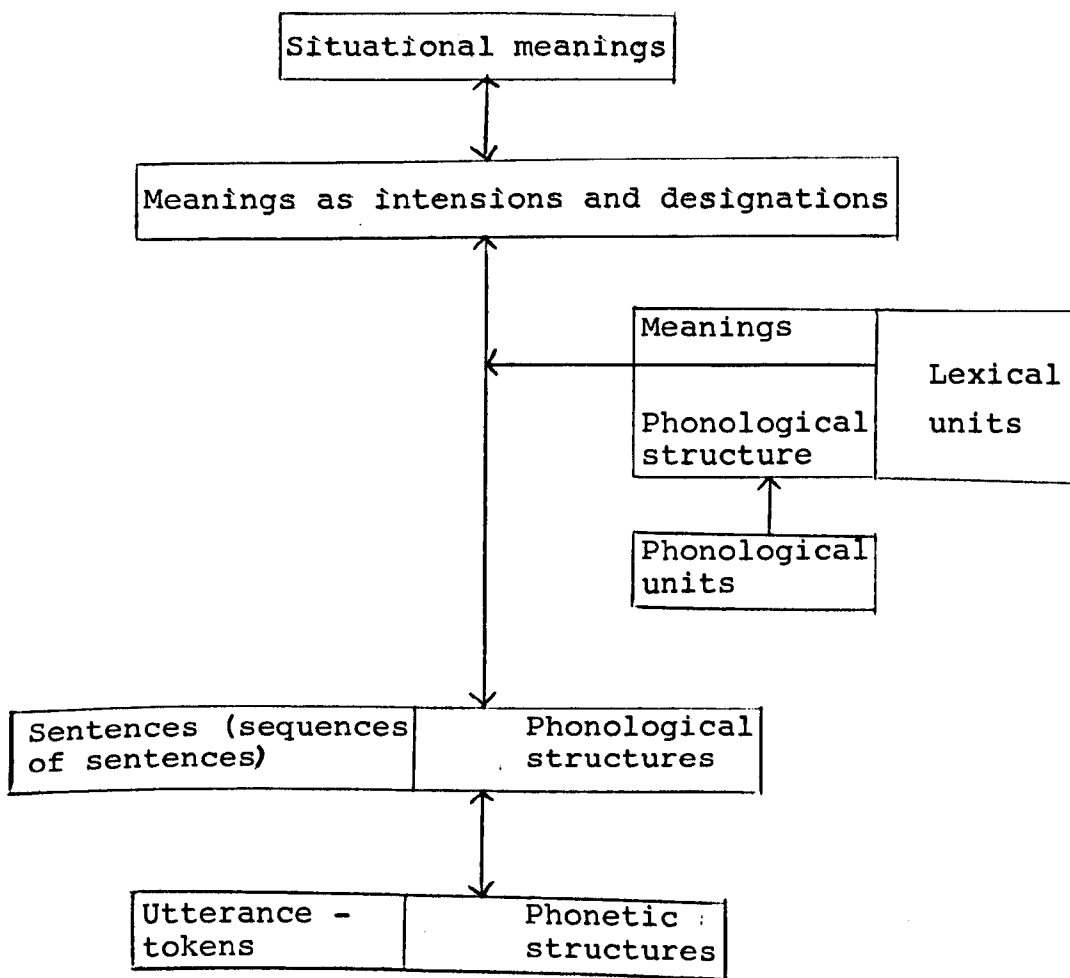
A certain part of a linguistic system can be called its
GRAMMATICAL SYSTEM, namely that structure which does not
contain the components 'Situational meanings' and 'Utterance -
tokens/Phonetic structures'.

This schema is in contrast with the Chomskyan
(transformational-generative) schema for the components of a
grammar. Wunderlich (p. 92) diagrams the transformational -
generative model.

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                    ┌─────────┐
                    │ Actions │      (PERFORMANCE)
                    └─────────┘
                         ↑
                         │
─────────────────────────↓─────────────────────────────

                    ┌───────────┐
                    │ Semantic  │
                    │ structures│
                    └───────────┘
                         ↑
                         ║
┌────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐  ┌────────────┬────────┐
│ Base structure │──→│ Deep structures │←─│ Meanings   │ Lexical│
└────────────────┘  └──────────────────┘  │ Phonological│ units  │
                         ↕                 │ structure  │        │
                    ┌───────────┐          └────────────┴────────┘
                    │ Surface   │                 ↑
                    │ structures│                 │
                    └───────────┘          ┌──────────────┐
                         ║                 │ Phonological │
                         ↓                 │ units        │
    ┌───────────┬────────────────┐         └──────────────┘
    │           │  Phonological  │←────────────┘
    │ Sentences │   structures   │       (COMPETENCE)
    └───────────┴────────────────┘
─────────────────────────↕─────────────────────────────
                    ┌────────────┐
                    │ Utterances │      (PERFORMANCE)
                    └────────────┘
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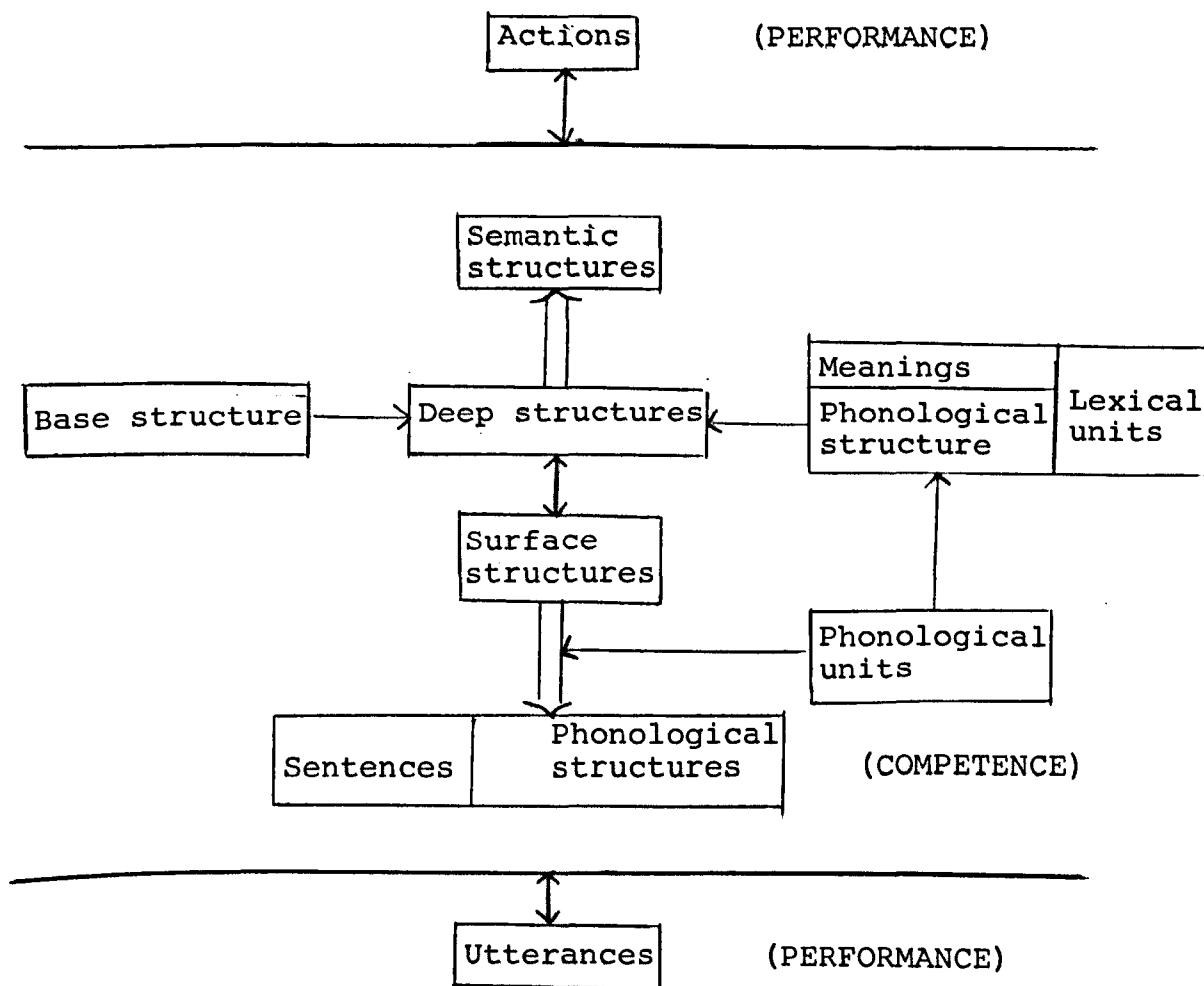
According to the Chomskyan (1965) approach, the
LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE of speakers and hearers resides in
the fact that they make use of a grammatical system. The
central part of this is a syntax - rules for generating base
structures, filling these with lexical units to produce deep
structures, transformational rules for converting deep
structures into surface structures; semantic and phono-
logical structures are obtained by interpretation of
syntactic structures. The utilization of competence
results in situations of action and utterance (performance).

Bickerton used a variety of transformational-
generative grammar in his analysis of the creole verb. To
quote him, his theoretical orientation is 'broadly

generative' (1975a:201).

One of Wunderlich's criticisms of the transformational -generative approach is that it remains unclear how and in what contexts the abstract linguistic competence is relevant for human communicative behaviour (p. 93). It is in this area that Sankoff (1977) strongly criticizes Bickerton (1975a). He frequently claims in his analysis of the creole verb that discourse factors, style shifting, co-occurrence possibilities etc. ('extralinguistic factors' in Sankoff's terminology) do not influence language in any meaningful way. But as Sankoff (p. 303) rightly notices, Bickerton contradicts himself by 'all the while smuggling such factors through the back door when the reader is not looking'.

3. Data

This study is based on data collected by Walter Edwards (see Edwards, 1975). The informants were forty-eight male Guyanese randomly selected from two communities, one rural and one urban. The sample population was stratified according to race (Indian/Black), socio-geographical situation (urban / rural) and age group (21 - 30/ 45+). These social stratifications do not play a signifi-cant role in the analysis since I aim to write a grammar for the Guyanese speech community.

The speech of the informants was recorded in conversa-tion with Walter Edwards, himself a Guyanese native speaker,

and transcribed by him. The utterance-tokens exemplified are identified by a tape number, then the line numbers from which the tokens were abstracted, and this is followed by the page number - thus, for example, 21B/25 - 26/3.

The tokens were selected first of all on a formal basis. Thus, I began with the past tense form bin, abstracted every possible manifestation of the form, noting semantic interpretations, and contextual factors which may influence a particular interpretation. Then the data was perused for possible variants, formal as well as semantic equivalent categories, again taking note of possible non-linguistic information. The form bin and the variants were then compared and contrasted with respect to other forms in the utterance-tokens, semantic interpretations and con-textual settings. The same process was repeated for the other tense and aspect forms. The data was supplemented by my native-speaker intuition. (My contributions are un-marked).

4.   Plan of thesis

The plan of this thesis is as follows:

Chapter I discusses the notions involved in an analysis of the grammatical categories of tense and aspect. It includes an examination of the universal tense theories of Jespersen (1924; 1933), Reichenbach (1947) and Bull (1960), and a discussion on aspect as exemplified by Comrie (1976). A major purpose of this chapter is to show the

role of non-linguistic factors in the interpretation and analysis of verb forms.

Chapter II is a critique of Bickerton's (1975a) analysis of the Guyanese verb. It reveals the inadequacy of Bickerton's tense and aspect categories and grammatical changes. It stresses the fact that all variation does not necessarily imply change.

Chapter III is a syntactic and semantic description of the Guyanese tense and aspect forms a, de, don, bin, gu and their variants. The forms also have several homonyms, and I found it necessary to describe the homonyms (and their variants) so as to distinguish them from the tense and aspect forms. The importance of this chapter is that it describes the combinatorial powers of the above forms (and their variants) thus illustrating the interdependence between form, structure and meaning in the language. Devonish (1978) illustrates some co-occurrence patterns. But the weakness in his description, I find, is that he leaves us with the impression of a great deal of formal variation quite unaccounted for. This chapter aims to find some sort of order for the forms and their variants. The chapter also provides a linguistic mechanism for describing the change process. Most of all, it illustrates that the changes are more likely to be lexical than grammatical. Chapter III, therefore, gives a general overview of the grammar of Guyanese.

Chapter IV describes the tense and aspect systems of Guyanese Creole, and proposes possible explanations for the

variation between categories. Furthermore it illustrates the interdependence of the tense and aspect systems.

Chapter V revisits the creole continuum notion, and proposes an alternative view based on the analysis exemplified in Chapters III and IV.

5.   <u>General aims</u>

In this analysis I hope to achieve some positive feedback between data and theory. According to Passmore (1962) a 'good' explanation has to meet the requirements of <u>intelligibility</u>, <u>adequacy</u> and <u>correctness</u>. An explanation is intelligible if and only if it refers to modes of connection which have come to be familiar to us. An explanation is unintelligible if we see no connection between explanation and explicandum. It is inadequate if the connection is not 'strong enough ' - the conditions given in the explanation must be truly sufficient in the concrete situations in which the explicandum arises. Finally, we must make sure the explanation is correct - that there are no errors or deceptions.

CHAPTER I

THE NOTIONS INVOLVED IN AN ANALYSIS OF

THE GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES OF TENSE AND ASPECT

1.1   Introduction

The category of tense has to do with time - relations
in so far as these are expressed by systematic grammatical
contrasts.   Lyons (1968a:305) explains:

> 'The essential characteristic of the category
> of tense is that it relates the time of the
> action, event or state referred to in the
> sentence to the time of utterance (the time
> of utterance being "now"). Tense is there-
> fore a _deictic_ category, which is simultan-
> eously a property of the sentence and the
> utterance.'

Tense, therefore, fits among the deictic categories of

language to which also belong the personal pronouns,

demonstrative pronouns, and words such as _here_, _there_,

present, _past_, _now_, _then_.

Aspect, on the other hand, differs from tense as a

grammatical category in that it is non-deictic, having to

do with such distinctions as 'extensions' in time versus

'instantaneity', 'completion' versus 'non-completion' and

'iteration' versus 'non-iteration' (Lyons 1977:687).

Comrie (1976:3) generalizes the notion: 'aspects are

different ways of viewing the internal temporal

constituency of a situation'.

1.2 Role of Pragmatics

Before making a closer examination of the relationship
between time and the verb, I will examine the role of
contextual detail in solving problems of verb analysis.
McCoard (1978:4) points out that in answering deeper
questions about how verbs realize meanings, it is necessary
to direct close attention to the contexts in which
individual acts of communication are performed, and to
grant that there are many elements of belief and knowledge
in the speaker/listener which have a potent but indirect
bearing on the selection of forms and interpretation of
messages. Context, he points out, has an influence which
cannot easily be mapped onto the customary sorts of grammar-
based semantic analyses of sentences.

Let me exemplify this argument by reference to Lawler
(1972; 1973), Binnick (1971; 1972) and Scheffer (1975).

It is often claimed that the present tense form in
English can be used generically. Lawler (1972:247 ff)
comes to the conclusion, however, that no single description
suffices of the phenomenon of generic use of verbs in
English. He points out that there are several types of
generic meaning and that they interact in different ways
with other poorly understood phenomena such as mood. They
also make critical use of non-linguistic material. For
example, the meanings of the following three sentences can
be termed 'habitual'.

    (1)   Delmer walks to school

    (2)   Nephi's dog chases cars

    (3)   Garth drinks coffee

But, according to Lawler, when we ask 'how often?' for no easily discernible reason the answer varies. (1) means that Delmer walks to school regularly. (2), on the other hand, means that Nephi's dog has been known on occasion to chase cars, and does not mean that every car that comes within chasing distance is molested. (1) is false if Delmer walks to school one day out of five, but (2) is certainly not false if Nephi's dog chases one out of every five cars. Then, too, (1) has a universal reading, while (2) has an existential one, and the problem is further compounded by the observation that (3) is ambiguous between a universal reading: Garth drinks nothing but coffee – and an existential one: Garth is not averse to drinking coffee. On the basis of this sort of phenomenon Lawler (1973:8 – 9) concludes that an analysis of the generic,

> 'must take into account pragmatic matters ...
> the belief and knowledge about the world on
> the part of the speaker, the cultural and
> customary assumptions that the speech
> community holds in common ... pre-suppositions
> and entailments, as well as other logical and
> quasi-logical relationships are inextricably
> mixed up with the phenomenon of the English
> generic use ...' .

Binnick (1971; 1972) contrasts will and be going to on the basis of an elliptical condition presupposed in discourse. He claims that the contrast

> 'is not based on a difference in meaning.
> There is none, the modal uses of the two
> expressions apart. Rather there is a
> difference in presupposition, and the
> apparent differences in meaning which students
> of the English future have catalogued are only
> superficial reflexes of this deeper
> phenomenon: [students have catalogued] that
> be going to expresses certainty or

inevitability, whereas <u>will</u> is uncertain; that
<u>be going to</u> is non-contingent, <u>will</u> contingent;
that <u>be going to</u> refers to a near future, but
<u>will</u> to a distant one; and that <u>be going to</u> is
"definite" whereas <u>will</u> is "indefinite" - - all
these superficial differences are a function of
the presuppositional difference between the two
future expressions.' (1972:8)

Scheffer (1975) claims that the basic function of the

English progressive is not 'duration' or 'habituality' or

'heightened temporary relevance' as is usually claimed, but

its use is derived from the basic meaning of 'emphasizing

contextually-defined temporal relevance (p.40)'. By arriv-

ing at this conclusion Scheffer avoids attaching what is

basically contextual information to the verb form itself.

Recognition of contextual influences on meaning

implies a programme of pragmatic analysis. According to

Morgan (1978) this term was formerly applied to the analysis

of expressions like indexicals whose meanings can be fully

specified only relative to context. Recently, however,

the term has been extended to cover matters like Grice's

'conversational implicatures', aspects that are not part of

the literal meaning of a sentence.

Grice (1975) claims that what an utterance conveys

in context falls into two parts. What is <u>SAID</u> is the

logical content, the minimum necessary to specify truth

conditions of the sentence. For the remainder, Grice has

coined the term <u>IMPLICATURE</u> which he divides into

'conventional' and 'nonconventional'.

The dichotomy, Sadock (1978) points out, concerns the

grammarian in a fundamental way. He claims it is the

grammar of the language that is the repository of the

conventional aspects of language. The non-conventional, while of interest to the linguist, does not need to be mentioned in the description of the language which is the conventional sign system. Sadock (1978:284) goes on:

> 'Rather, the account of conversational implicature is best understood as a partial description of the USERS of the language and hence truly deserves the name 'pragmatics'. Therefore, given the fact that the utterance of a particular linguistic form on a particular occasion conveys some particular submessage, the grammarian must be able to decide whether that submessage is conveyed conventionally or non-conventionally.'

Grice (1975) provides six characteristics of 'conversational implicature':

(a)   Conversational implicata are capable of being 'worked out' on the basis, inter alia, of the Cooperative Principle. That is, they are CALCULABLE.

(b)   Conversational implicata are CANCELLABLE.

(c)   Conversational implicata are NONDETACHABLE.

(d)   Conversational implicata are not part of the meaning of the uttered forms. They are NONCONVENTIONAL.

(e)   Conversational implicata are not carried by what is said, but by the saying of it.

(f)   Conversational implicata may be indeterminate.

But, Sadock claims, the last three principles cannot be substantiated empirically.

The inability to substantiate some of the characteristics of 'conversational implicature' does not detract from the fact that the theory is useful if one wants to account

for more than just literal meaning.   Crystal (1966), for

example, emphasizes the importance of adverbs and stress

in explaining temporal reference.   But McCoard (1978:47)

illustrates that adverbs and stress are not fully adequate

for constructing a theory on the use of verb forms.   He

believes, and I agree with him, that Grice's notion of 'co-

operative principle' tends to show that the speaker's

choice of verb form and the hearer's inferences as to the

significance of that choice are based on a principle

different from and more fundamental than the distribution of

stress or specific adverbs.

The 'cooperative principle' is expressed in four

maxims (Grice 1975:45 ff):

(a)   Quantity – be as informative as required but not more.

(b)   Quality – be truthful and do not overstep your

evidence.

(c)   Relation – be relevant, recognize the immediate needs

of the interlocutor.

(d)   Manner – avoid obscurity of expression and ambiguity,

be brief and orderly.

As long as the hearer assumes the speaker is communicating

in good faith, the hearer will generate whatever ideas he

deems necessary to fill in unstated details or make unstated

connections so as to make the speaker's utterances accord

with the conversational maxims.   The speaker, meanwhile, is

mindful of what conclusions are likely to be drawn by the

hearer in the particular context of interaction, so the

speaker contrains his messages to invoke only the intended inferences as far as possible. If someone says <u>I'm meeting a woman this evening for dinner</u>, he would normally be understood to be referring to someone other than his wife - assuming he has a wife. To say <u>a woman</u> where someone could say <u>my wife</u> is, ordinarily, to give less information than is conversationally expected, and if the hearer assumes the speaker is adhering to the maxims, the hearer will take it that the wife is not the intended dinner partner. If the hearer knows that the speaker is talking about his wife, then the hearer concludes that the speaker is deliberately flouting the maxims for some or other reason. But, if a speaker says <u>I broke a finger yesterday</u>, we take it that the finger is one of the speaker's own, not somebody else's. <u>A finger</u> in this context is usually regarded as <u>my finger</u> in the absence of added information. But the statement <u>I have been sitting in a car all morning</u> leaves us wondering whether <u>a car</u> is the speaker's or not.

Morgan (1978), like McCoard (1978), sees a natural connection between conversational implicature and the interpretation of indexicals and thinks they should be placed together. Morgan (1978:264) says:

> '... the problem of indexicals is naturally
> subsumed under the problem of the interpre-
> tation of intentions behind the use of
> linguistic expressions. If we mean that a
> pragmatic treatment of demonstrative pronouns
> and of deictic terms like "here" and "now"
> should include a recapitulation of the
> principles we use in determining referents
> for these terms, then it is clear that it is
> the same sort of problem, depending on such
> matters of context as our interpretation of
> the speaker's goals in the conversation,

his intentions, interests and so on.'

Some linguists see pragmatics as a dumping ground for unsolved problems. But if we fail to recognize the importance of contextual detail, our grammatical theories will be beset by interminable examples which 'don't fit' due to variability in the real world. Since variability is a natural phenomenon, a grammatical theory which pays scant attention or no attention to contextual information is open to refutation. Thus one should come to terms with contextual matters before moving on to linguistic structure - especially so in the analysis of verb forms.

1.3   Time and the Verb

Traugott (1975) takes as fundamental to the analysis of tense and aspect, the distinction made by Bull (1960) between three types of time. They are 'physical', 'chronological', and 'linguistic' time.

Physical time is the time we experience and which we conceive as flowing in an irreversible direction. Chronological time designates fixed calendrical periods of time, such as seconds, weeks or years, and specifies how they are ordered. Inasfar as chronological time is calendrical it is atemporal since calendrical units do not participate in the nature of time and are devoid of temporality. But since chronological time orders these units it is relatable to the irreversible notion of physical and psychic time. Linguistic time, being not time itself but the expression of our

experience of time, is an independent system only partially related to time as studied by physicists and philosophers. The most important subsystems of linguistic time are <u>tense</u>, <u>sequencing</u> and <u>aspect</u>.

Tense, Comrie (1976:2) explains, can be subdivided into absolute and relative time. The English sentences <u>John is singing</u>; <u>John sang</u>, <u>John was singing</u>; <u>John will sing</u>, <u>John will be singing</u>, have absolute time reference in that they relate the time of the situation described to the present moment of speaking. With relative time reference, however, the time of a situation is located relative to the time of some other situation, rather than to the present moment. Non-finite participial constructions in English, Comrie (p. 2) claims, involve relative rather than absolute tense.

> 'In the sentences (a) <u>when walking down the road, I often meet Harry</u> and (b) <u>when walking down the road, I often met Harry</u>, the present participle <u>walking</u> in both cases indicates a situation located simultaneous with the time of the main verb, irrespective of the tense of the main verb. In the (a) sentence, the situation described by <u>walking</u> holds at the present, given the present tense <u>meet</u>, while in the (b) sentence it held in the past, given the past tense <u>met</u>; the relevant factor in the choice of the present participle is thus relative time reference, not absolute time reference.'

Sequencing, on the other hand, involves the relation of two events A and B as overlapping, preceeding or following. Sequencing is closely related to tense since the 'past' of tense can be interpreted as <u>earlier than now/ before now</u>, the 'future' as <u>later than now/after now</u>.

Nevertheless, sequencing and tense should not be confused since tense involves speaker deixis while sequencing involves the anchoring of events with respect to each other, but not to the speaker. For example, as Traugott (1975: 208) illustrates, terms such as today, yesterday, tomorrow constantly shift reference with respect to the moment of utterance. So that if on February 15th X said I am going back to work tomorrow, on February 16th it can be reported X said she was going back to work today. The notions earlier/before and later/after do not normally shift with respect to the moment of utterance. So that if X said I am going to take a two week vacation before going back to work, after two weeks it can be reported X said that she would take a two-week vacation before going back to work and that is exactly what she has done.

Aspect designates whether the relationship of what is talked about on the imaginary time line is one of duration or not, whether it is bounded by some point on the time-line or not, whether it recurs or not. For example, Traugott (1975:208) points out, in She has planted the flowers the action is seen as bounded at the end of the axis of 'now' or some point before it, whereas in She is planting the flowers no time boundary is referred to. In The mouse ran in and out of the hole for three hours we have iterated acts lasting over a specified period. In contrast, Wherever the mouse runs he leaves a trail specifies no limit to the repeated action of leaving a trail. Thus the meaning BOUNDED or UN-BOUNDED in time lead to inferences of 'completion', 'non-

completion' or 'iteration' in particular contexts.   (See

also Kirsner and Thompson, 1976).

I will now examine three universal models which

attempt to correlate tense with time: Jespersen (1924 and

1933), Reichenbach (1947), and Bull (1960); and I will take

a brief look at the semantic definition of aspect given by

Comrie (1976).   The discussion will highlight objective and

subjective factors which may govern verb choice.

1.4   Jespersen's Model

Jespersen (1933:230) claims it is important to keep

the concepts of time and tense apart since the former is in-

dependent of language while the latter is the linguistic

expression of time relations insofar as these are indicated

in verb forms.   He points out that temporal relationships

are conceptually one dimensional:

> 'Time is universally conceived as something
> having one dimension only, thus capable of
> being represented by one straight line.'

The main divisions may be in the following manner:

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─────────────────────────────────────✕──────────────────────────────────────────────────>

        A : PAST            B : PRESENT            C : FUTURE
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Or, according to Jespersen, we may say that time is divided

into two parts, the past and the future, the point of division

being the present moment 'which, like a mathematical point,

has no dimension, but is continually fleeting (moving to the

right in our figure (p.230).)'.

Jespersen further assumes that the present is contemporaneous with the theoretical zero-point (the 'now' of the time of utterance), the past as 'before now' and the future as 'after now'. He then subdivides the 'past' and 'future' by secondary notions so we have the following construct (p. 231):
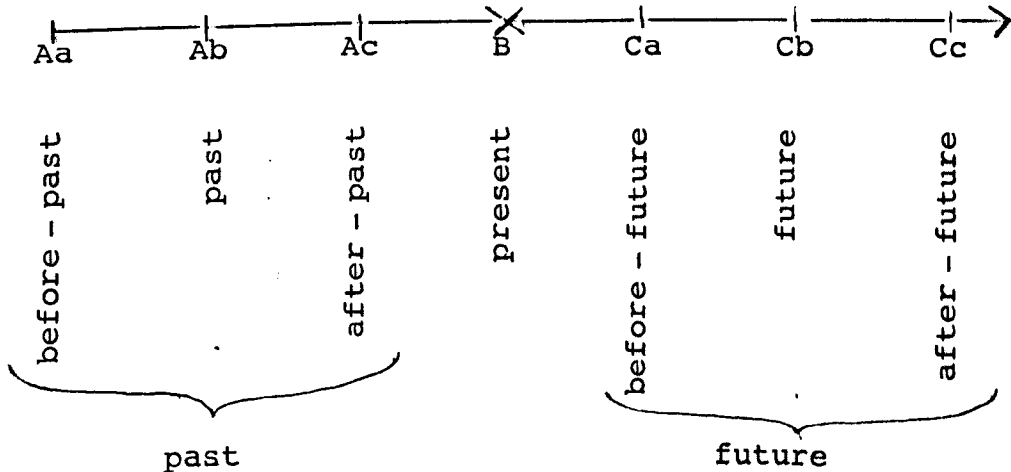
Lyons (1968a: 305 - 306) points out, however, that although the directionality of time is given in nature, this may or may not be relevant to the analysis of time in a particular language. Lyons goes on:

> 'Various categorizations are possible. The
> 'theoretical zero point' (the 'now' of utterance)
> might be included with either 'past' or 'future'
> to yield, on the one hand, a dichotomy between
> 'future' and 'non-future', or, on the other, a
> dichotomy (based on the distinction of 'now' and
> 'not-now' without reference to the directionality
> of time) could be 'present' v. 'non-present'.
> Other possible categorizations might depend upon
> the notion of 'proximity' (with or without
> reference to directionality): e.g. a dichotomy
> of 'proximate' v. 'non-proximate' (with respect
> to time of utterance), a trichotomy of 'now' v.
> 'proximate' v. 'remote'. And these distinctions
> might be combined in various ways, and not merely
> as suggested in Jespersen's scheme.'

Jespersen, according to Traugott (1975:214), makes the error of placing temporal relations on the time line, which in itself has no direction.   Traugott further explains that even the temporal relations have no directionality in themselves. Direction is interpretable from sequencing, deictic tense orientation and aspectual orientation to boundaries.

Another problem with Jespersen's model concerns his definition of 'present' - 'which, like a mathematical point, has no dimension, but is continually fleeting' moving into the 'future'. (Jespersen 1933:230).   The problem is highlighted by his definition of the distinction between the preterit and perfect tenses in English:

> 'The Preterit refers to some time in the past
> without telling anything about the connection
> with the present moment, while the Perfect is
> a retrospective present, which connects a past
> occurrence with the present time, either as
> continued up to the present moment (inclusive
> time, ...) or as having results or consequences
> bearing on the present moment.' (p.243)

He gives the following examples (p.245):

<u>In 1941 I lived at Chelsea</u>

<u>I lived there about ten years</u>

also
'<u>I have lived about ten years at Chelsea</u>' (and I still live there).

In these examples the preterit is indeed used when there is separation from the present time, and the perfect is used when there is no such separation.   But other examples may be constructed as Diver (1963:143) illustrates:

'I lived in Chelsea until 1914, but since then I

have lived in London'.

'I have lived in Chelsea, but since 1914 I have

lived in London'.[1]

According to Diver the difference is not separation or lack

of separation from the present, since either the preterit

or perfect can be used when the action is separated from the

present.

Diver's criticism is indeed valid, but he does not state

the causes for the invalidity of Jespersen's rule.

Jespersen's rule can be broken as it is, first of all,

based on contextual information.   Secondly, and more

important, it is falsifiable because of his interpretation of

'present' - the 'now' moment of utterance.   In defining

'now', Sedey (1969:75 - 6) tells us that the term

> 'is not used to ascribe a characteristic to any
> object in the way the use of a nonrelational
> term such as 'red' might be said to do so.
> 'Now' is used by a speaker to state a relation
> he has to an object.   Due to this fact, 'now'
> can be classified as subjective since it, un-
> like the other terms already introduced
> (simultaneity and sequence) stands for a relation
> between a subject (the speaker) and an object
> rather than a relation between two objects.   That
> is, simultaneity is a relation that holds between
> any two mental or physical events occurring at
> the same time.   But obviously, standing in a
> relation of simultaneity does not provide a
> sufficient condition for saying of any event that
> it is occurring now.   What makes the difference,

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(1)   Although Diver is apparently unaware that 'Chelsea' is
London, his argument is still valid.   The validity can
be shown if we replace 'London' with, for example, 'York'.

Russell points out, is the introduction of a
subject, not in the trivial sense that there
must be a subject (a language user) in order to
say that events are occurring now, but in the
essential sense that the semantics of 'now' are
such that the word is used correctly only if an
event instituted by the subject is one of the
terms in the simultaneity relations connoted by
'now'.

Thus the notion 'present' can represent not only the moment

from which relations are inferred, it can also represent the

time interval between the recalled event A and the antici-

pated event A .   Bull (1960:12) refers to the latter concept

as the 'extended present' and the former as 'point present'.

The English perfect, McCoard (1978:123) claims, is the

marker of prior events which are nevertheless included within

the overall period of the present - the extended 'now' - while

the preterit marks events assigned to a past which is con-

cluded and separate from the extended present.

1.5   Reichenbach's Model

Reichenbach (1947) learnt from Jespersen that in seeing

how tenses work we have to consider three elements: a speech

act, an event, and a 'reference point'.   He considers how

they work by reference to the English past perfect:

'Let us call the time point of the token the
point of speech.   Then the three indications,
'before the point of speech', 'simultaneous
with the point of speech', and 'after the point
of speech', furnish only three tenses; since
the number of verb tenses is obviously greater,
we need a more complex interpretation.   From
a sentence like 'Peter had gone' we see that

the time order expressed in the tense does not
concern an event, but two events, whose
positions are determined with respect to the
point of speech. We shall call these time
points the <u>point of the event</u> and the <u>point of
reference</u>. In the example the point of the
event is the time when Peter went; the point of
reference is a time between this point and the
point of speech. In an individual sentence
like the one given it is not clear which time
point is used as the point of reference. This
determination is rather given by the context
of speech.' (p.288).

He goes on to explain that in some tenses two of the three

points are simultaneous:
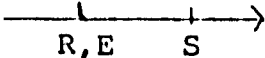
'Thus, in the simple past, the point of the event
and the point of reference are simultaneous, and
both are before the point of speech; ...   This
distinguishes the simple past from the present
perfect. In the statement 'I have seen Charles'
the event is also before the point of speech, but
it is referred to a point simultaneous with the
point of speech; i.e., the points of speech and
reference coincide ....   The difficulties which
grammar books have in explaining meanings of the
different tenses originate from the fact that
they do not recognize the three-place structure
of the time determination given in the tenses.'
(p.289 - 290).

In Reichenbach's representation

E = point of event

R = point of reference

S = point of speech.

Time is ordered from left to right from past to present

(across spaces), while commas represent simultaneity:

      (Present)   (Simple Past)

     I see John   I saw John

       ——⊥——>   ——⊥———⊥——>
        S,R,E   R,E   S

(Present Perfect

I have seen John

```
———┴————┴——→
  E    S,R
```
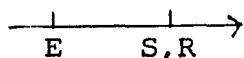
(Past Perfect)

I had seen John

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——┴———┴———┴——→
  E    R    S
```
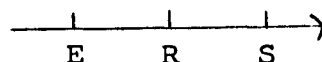
(Simple Future)

I shall see John

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——┴————————┴——→
 S,R         E
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(Future Perfect)

I shall have seen John

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—┴————┴————┴——→
 S     E    R
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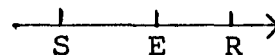
Prior (1967) sees this model as superior to Jespersen's as it helps to deal with the future perfect. Whereas with the present perfect the pastness expressed by 'have' represents the event's preceding a point of reference which coincides with the point of speech, with the future perfect the pastness expressed by 'have' represents the event's preceding a different point of reference even if it does not represent it preceding a different utterance. But, Prior (1967:13) goes on, Reichenbach's schema is at once too simple and too complicated. It is too simple because we can easily construct more complicated tenses than the future perfect, for example, 'I shall have been going to see John'. Here there are two points of reference:

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——┴————┴————┴————┴——→
 S    R₂    E    R₁
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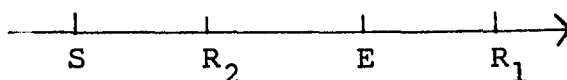
He tells us:

> 'once this possibility is seen, it becomes un-
> necessary and misleading to make such a sharp
> distinction between the point or points of
> reference and the point of speech, the point

of speech is just the _first_ point of reference.'

This knowledge therefore makes Reichenbach's formula for distinguishing the simple past and the present perfect suspect. McCoard (1978:92) asks:

> 'In what sense could we speak of 'simultaneity'
> of the point of speech with some other
> reference point except as an artifact of
> description?'

Pastness and futurity, he goes on, are '_always_ relative to a point of reference'. Reichenbach's analysis falls short on this generalization.

McCoard (1978:90) also points out that since Reichenbach works with three independent components - S, R, and E - it is possible to construct a number of formulae for which we could not expect any specific grammatical realization as, for example, where S, E - - R - speech and event points are the same, but the reference point is in the future. This contrasts with S - - E - - R when the event will take place before some future reference, but subsequent to speaking, and with E - - S - - R when the event is in the speaker's past, but the reference point lies in the future. McCoard explains that all of these meanings are realized by the future perfect with adverbial supplements, and it is no accident as Reichenbach's schema makes it appear to be that English does not have a set of grammatical forms to express these distinctions. The set of point-orderings implies a systematic richness which outstrips the actual resources of natural languages.

Reichenbach, like Jespersen, falls into the trap of

placing temporal relations on the time line, which in
itself has no direction.

1.6   Bull's Model

In contrast to Jespersen and Reichenbach, Bull (1960)
makes a distinction between the imaginary time line and
actual linguistic temporal relations.   He attempts to build
a system of tense analysis which will reflect the actual
range of ordering relationships which are found in human
languages.   Bull sets up an axis on a non-directed time
line, and temporal relations which are, at the minimum
'vectors' - that is 'fixed directions of observations.' (p.14)
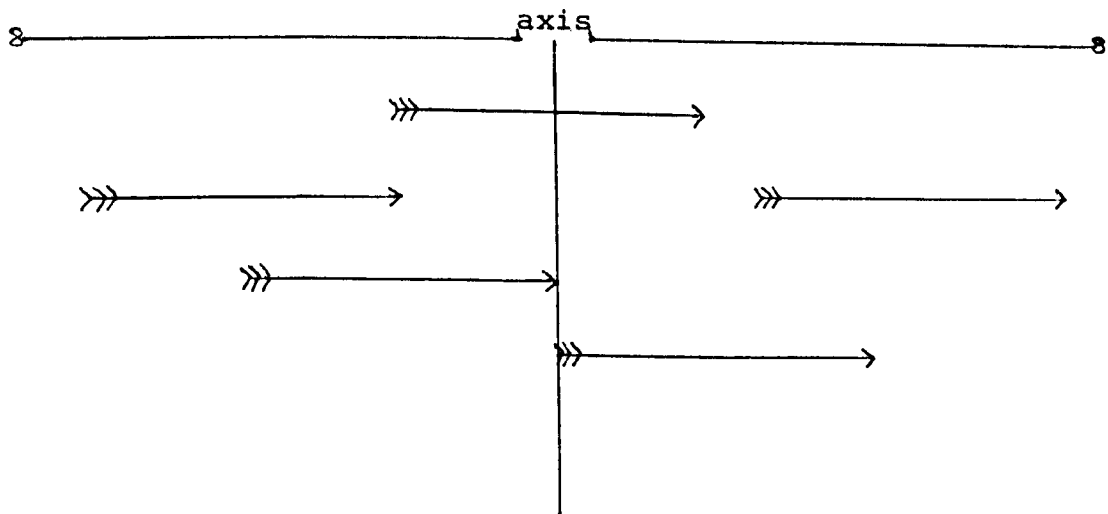
According to Bull (p. 18) this model demonstrates that there
are only two possible conceptualizations of points, time
intervals and aspects - that is, they may or may not be axis
bound.   Thus,

> 'a <u>day</u>, a <u>point</u>, a <u>terminated</u> (perfected) <u>event</u>,
> or an <u>imperfective event</u> is not bound to any

axis of orientation. On the other hand,
<u>today</u>, <u>this point</u>, <u>an event already terminated</u>,
<u>an event going on now</u>, <u>an event yet to begin</u>,
is axis-bound.'

To the familiar past, present and future reference-
points which Bull terms 'axes' he adds a separate axis for
events which were anticipated at a past time, that is, were
future at a past time.

      'If RP (Retrospective Point) can be recalled at
      PP (Prime Point) and if AP (Anticipated Point)
      can be anticipated from PP, then total recall
      would be impossible unless one could remember
      at PP that he once anticipated an axis from RP.
      This retrospective anticipated axis, which will
      be symbolized as RAP is the fourth axis needed
      to complete the hypothetical tense system.' (p.23)

Given these four axes, an event can be located by means of
a 'vector' from one of the axes. Thus anterior, simultan-
eous, or posterior are represented as -V, OV and +V respect-
ively. With E standing for event the tenses for English
are laid out as follows:

E(PP-V)　　　　　E(PPOV)　　　　　　E(PP+V)

has sung　　　　　sings　　　　　　will sing

E(AP-V)　　E(PPOV)　　E(AP+V)

will have sung　　　　　　zero

E(RP-V)　　E(RPOV)　　　　　　E(AP+V)

had sung　　sang　　　　　would sing

E(RAP-V)　　　E(RAPOV)　　　E(RAP+V)

would have sung　　　zero　　　zero
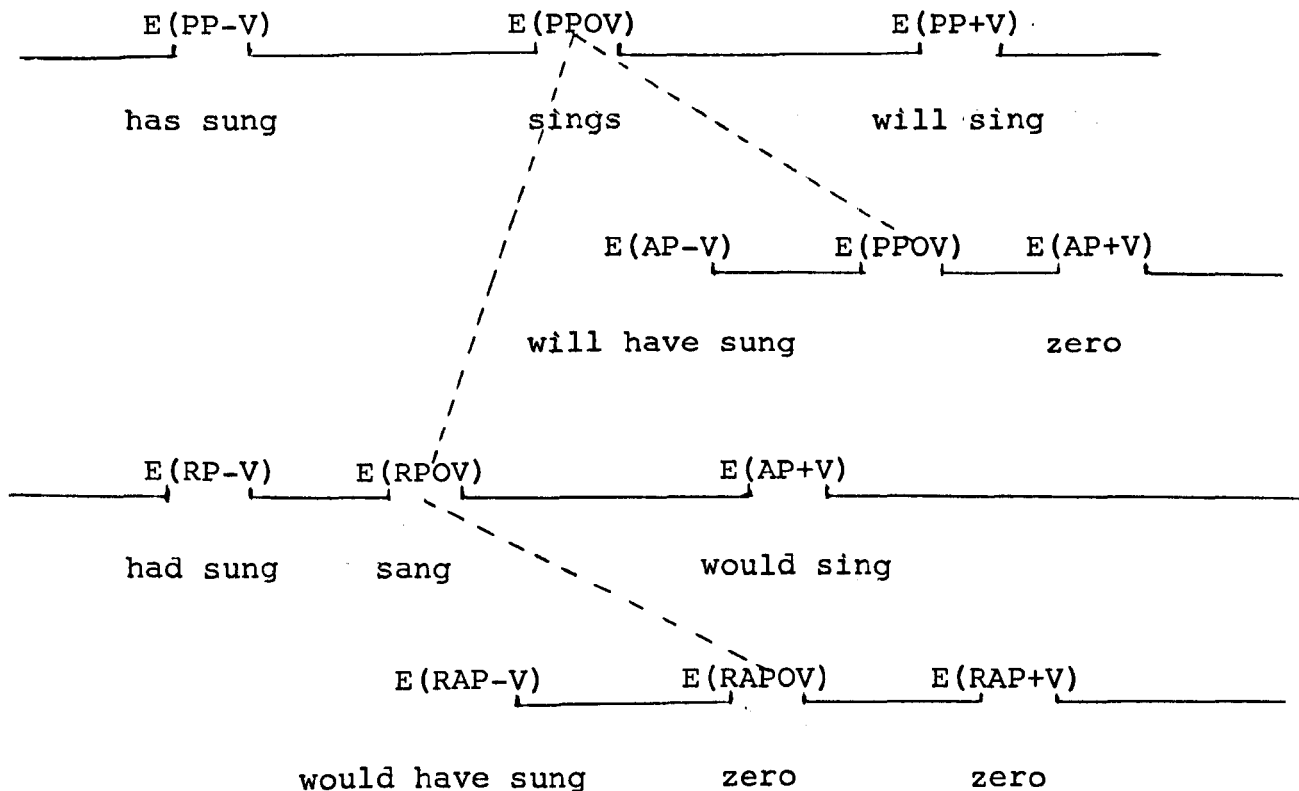
Stem: s-ng, sing

Minus vector: sung

Zero vector: will, would

PP: has, will, sings

RP: had, would, sang.

A problem with Bull's model becomes evident when he claims:

> 'once the speaker has moved from PP to RP in recollection, PP ceases to be a relevant entity.' (p.22)

But surely the forms the speaker uses in moving from PP to RP do mark the movement. The forms would indicate that the retrospective reference point is retrospective with respect to PP. And even when we retrospect we can create another PP within that abstraction, as the notion of relative tense

exemplifies:

> 'when <u>walking</u> down the road, I often <u>met</u> Harry.'
> (Comrie 1976 : 2)

or in non-standard English:

> 'I <u>saw</u> Tom last week and he says to me ...'.

We would therefore have a structure E(RP PP OV) - the axis being a prime point within a retrospective past.   This creates an overlapping of axes, and in Bull's schema each axis is separate from the other.

McCoard (1978:95) notices problems concerning Bull's choice of a structural slot for a particular form.   The form <u>will sing</u> is put only in the E(PP+V) slot, but it could also be justifiably put in the E(APOV) slot which stands empty.   Similarly, <u>would sing</u> can go in both E(RP+V) and E(RAPOV).   This, McCoard says, would reduce the oddity of having two axes (AP and RAP) where there is never any verb form to fill two of the three slots, including the 'prime' slots APOV and RAPOV.   Thus, he concludes, Bull's schema has the same defect as that of Reichenbach in that it has excessive symbolism.

The difficulty in correlating tense and time has driven Weinrich (1970:34 ff) to reject altogether the idea that tenses express time.   He claims that

> 'all these difficulties and all the apparent
> paradoxes disappear ... when one no longer
> interprets tense as an expression of time.' (p.34)

He suggests that a basic dichotomy is set up between

'narrative' and 'discursive' communication with the preterit
as the 'zero' form of narrative and the present as the 'zero'
form of commentary.   The use of other forms within the
narrative and discursive tense groups indicate 'prospection'
and 'retrospection'.   So the use of the perfect in the dis-
cursive group and the pluperfect in the narrative group
indicate 'retrospection', and by the same process the future
in the discursive group, and the conditional in the narrative
group indicate 'prospection'.   Tense usage which is un-
predictable and surprising in some cases, Weinrich refers to
as 'tense-metaphors'.

   But, as I have already illustrated, it is possible to
correlate tense with time even if it is only in a very
abstract sense.   That is, to assume tense is a deictic
structure, and that tense can be subdivided into absolute and
relative notions.

1.7   Comrie On Aspect

   According to Comrie (1976:3 f) the difference between
French _il lisait_ and _il lut_, or in English between _he was
reading_ and _he read_ is not one of tense, since in both cases
we have absolute past tense.   The difference is an aspectual
opposition between perfective and imperfective meanings.

   Defining aspects as different ways of viewing the
internal temporal constituency of a situation, Comrie gives
the examples below to illustrate the notion.

English: _John was reading when I entered_

Russian: _Ivan čital, kogda ja vošel_

French: _Jean lisait quand j'entrai_

Spanish: _Juan leía cuando entré_

Italian: _Gianni leggeſa quando entrai_

He explains that in each of these sentences, the first verb presents the background to some event, while that event itself is introduced by the second verb.   The second verb presents the totality of the situation referred to - 'my entry' - without reference to its internal temporal constituency:

> '... the whole of the situation is presented as
> a single unanalysable whole, with beginning,
> middle, and end, rolled into one; no attempt
> is made to divide this situation up into the
> various individual phases that make up the
> action of entry.' (p.3).

Verbal forms with this meaning, are said to have perfective meaning.   The other forms, those referring to the situation of John's reading, do not present the situation in this way, but rather make explicit reference to the internal temporal constituency of the situation - reference is made to an internal portion of John's reading, while there is no explicit reference to the beginning or to the end of his reading.   This is why the sentences are interpreted as meaning that my entry is an event that occurred during the period that John was reading.

Comrie (1976:4) claims that in discussing aspect,

> '... it is important to grasp that the difference
> between perfectivity and imperfectivity is not
> necessarily an objective difference between

> situations, nor is it necessarily a difference
> that is presented by the speaker as being
> objective.   It is quite possible for the same
> speaker to refer to the same situation once
> with a perfective form, then with an im-
> perfective, without in any way being self-
> contradictory.'

Thus: <u>John read that book yesterday; while he was reading</u>

<u>it, the postman came</u>.

The different forms of the verb 'to read' all refer to the

same situation of reading.   But, in the first clause,

John's reading is presented as a complete event, without

further subdivision into successive temporal phases.   In

the second clause, this event is opened up, so that the

speaker is now in the middle of the situation of John's read-

ing, and says that it was in the middle of this situation

(which he had previously referred to using the form with

perfective meaning) that the event of the postman's arrival

took place[2].

Bickerton (1981:90 - 91) claims that Comrie's approach

to aspect is idealized.   But Bickerton presents no

arguments to counter Comrie's theoretical stance – and as

will be evident in the following three chapters, Comrie's

approach to aspect is far superior to Bickerton's approach.

1.8   <u>Summary</u>

It can be concluded that although tense and aspect

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2. Other semantic aspectual notions such as 'durativity',
'progressivity', 'habituality' etc., will be defined as the
need arises.

cannot be reconciled with a time base, they are correlatable with time since tense and aspect are the expressions of our experience of time. But it has become obvious that the temporal facts by themselves are insufficient to explain tense and aspect usage. The speaker's conceptualization of events and their relationships intervenes constantly in the choice of forms in particular speech acts. It would seem, therefore, that before the linguist can embark on an analysis of tense and aspect usage, the linguist has to first identify the relevant conceptual systems and the manner of their intervention between real-world phenomena and linguistic expression. Le Page (1980:332) points out:

> '... although a grammatical theory is one
> logical objective for linguistic studies, it
> must be seen as representing one of the
> targets in a process by which abstract
> systems develop out of individual and social
> behaviour.'

Like Bickerton (1975a), I also will be attempting to find context-free logical systems. But since I observe that his systems do not stand the test of context-bound data or my native-speaker intuition, I will therefore return to speech-act data and try to arrive at logical systems, all the while attempting to achieve a positive feedback between data and theory. I intend to establish theories which will not rely on such wastepaper basket notions as 'performance errors', or 'deviant' or 'confused' speakers.

CHAPTER II

A CRITIQUE OF DEREK BICKERTON'S

ANALYSIS OF THE GUYANESE TENSE AND ASPECT

SYSTEMS AS EXEMPLIFIED IN

DYNAMICS OF A CREOLE SYSTEM (1975a)[1]

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will show that Bickerton's analysis of the creole verb is based on a series of ad hoc and contradictory arguments to get around various difficulties[2]. Some of the difficulties are caused by a misunderstanding of the data. Most of the difficulties are caused, however, by his view of the relationship between variation and change, and his view of decreolization.

That linguistic change in progress is manifested as synchronic variation few of us would doubt, but Bickerton takes the position that all variation implies change. He

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1. Bickerton's basic analysis of the creole verb is exemplified in Dynamics of a creole system. He uses this analysis to support his universal claims for the tense and aspect systems of creoles as stated in Bickerton 1975b, 1979 and 1981. In this critique I will make references to the latter works when necessary.

2. In criticizing the work of Bollée (1977), Bickerton (1981:83) claims that Bollée conforms to 'the First Law of Creole Studies'. This Law states that 'Every creolist's analysis can be directly contradicted by that creolist's own texts and citations.' As this critique will illustrate, Bickerton himself does not seem to have learned from his own law - he himself exemplifies it.

claims (1975a:16)

> '... linguistic variation is the synchronic aspect
> of linguistic change, and linguistic change is
> the diachronic aspect of linguistic variation.'

He does not cater for variation that may indicate style

shifting.   But, as Sankoff (1977:304), (following Fasold

(1973) and Berdan (1975)), points out, 'change implies

variability, the reverse implication does not necessarily

hold'.

The second major source of a problem concerning the

analysis is his view of decreolization in communities where

the creole is in contact with its superstrate.   He claims

that change in these communities is externally motivated and

at first the lexical changes are not accompanied by a shift

in the grammar.   But then there is a radical shift in the

grammar and the creole acquires the categories of the super-

strate variety.   (See Bickerton 1975a; 1980.)   I agree that

there are externally motivated lexical changes, but I

seriously doubt whether these changes are accompanied by a

shift in the grammar.

I have examined Bickerton's analysis of the creole verb

and found it wanting in many respects.   First, his tense

system for the basilect, $\left[\pm \text{ anterior} \right]$, covers only the realis

on the grounds that the irrealis forms (sa ~ gu ~ gon)

simultaneously function as modals and future tense markers.

The irrealis is thus a 'performance feature' and therefore

not a part of the grammar.   On the other hand, the only

function of the realis tense marker <u>bin</u> is to mark

anteriority. But I have discovered that <u>bin</u> also functions

as a locative, directional and noun copula. By Bickerton's

criteria, then, <u>bin</u> is also a 'performance feature'. We

must therefore have doubts not only about the tense system

since it excludes the future, but also about the grammatical

changes which lead to future acquisition.

Second, with respect to the aspectual system of the

basilect, he claims that grammatically there is only one <u>a</u>,

the <u>a</u> which occurs before non-stative verbs. The instances

of <u>a</u> before stative verbs are dismissed as 'performance

errors'. But it is a fact that <u>a</u> can occur before stative

verbs, and grammatically there are two aspectual <u>a</u>'s and not

just one. The fact that grammatically there are two <u>a</u>'s

also upsets his position that in the mesolect there is a

division in the basilectal $[-\text{punctual}]$ category into

$[\pm\text{continuative}]$. I have also discovered that unmarked non-

stative verbs can have habitual meaning. We must then have

doubts about his aspectual system for the basilect,

$[\pm\text{punctual}]$, where $[-\text{punctual}]$ refers to an extended or

repeated action and $[+\text{punctual}]$ refers to a single action.

Third, his grammatical changes are also dubious.

Features which he claims are basilectal to mesolectal or

mesolectal to acrolectal acquisitions are in fact features of

the basilect but for which he found different explanations in

the basilect. He found explanations such as 'performance

features', 'performance errors', or that stativity is a

semantic and not a lexical notion.

2.2   Summary of Bickerton's Systems

Bickerton divides the Guyanese speech continuum into three ranges which he assumes recapitulate diachronic stages. The basilect is the most extreme and archaic creole; the acrolect approximates Standard English and represents nearly complete decreolization; the mesolect is the intermediate variety.   Between these 'major' varieties is a series of 'lects' in which each stage represents a minimal adaptation of its predecessor, thus indicating the gradual transition between the levels.

The basilectal tense and aspect systems depend on the division of predicates into stative and non-stative.   The stative class is roughly equivalent to Standard English statives plus modals, passives and other contexts of stativization which include temporal and conditional subordinate clauses.   Two features are needed to describe the tense and aspect categories of the 'realis' system (see below p. 45): Anterior and Punctual.   The stem form of a stative verb usually corresponds to Standard English non-past, the stem form of non-statives corresponds to a simple past.   Marked tense and aspect categories are indicated by the forms a and bin .   a before non-statives, [- Punctual] , marks continuative and iterative aspect.   bin is the [+ Anterior] marker and it indicates simple past before statives, and past-before-past with non-statives.   bina, a combination of bin and a, is [+ Anterior] , [- Punctual] .

The mesolectal 'realis' system involves a series of restructurings.   Morphemes are reanalysed and Anterior is

replaced by Past, $\left[\pm \text{Punctual}\right]$ becomes $\left[\pm \text{Continuative}\right]$.
Past tense inflection and number concord are acquired, and
this paves the way for the acquisition of the acrolectal
system, which, like Standard English, requires the features
Past, Continuous and Perfective (Perfect).   There are
changes in negation, but these are only formal.   The
changes are important, however, since their acquisition in-
troduces and aids the spread of the English tense and aspect
categories.

The basilectal parameters are (1975a:47):

Stative		Non-stative	
		+ Pt	∅
∅	− A		
		− Pt	a
		+ Pt	bin
bin	+ A		
		− Pt	bina

The mesolectal parameters are (1975a:162 − 163):

(1)   + past − punct + cont → (waz) − ing

(2)   − past + punct + cont → (iz) − ing

(3)   + past − punct − cont → ∅

(4)   − past − punct − cont → (doz)

(5)   + past + punct → (-ed)

(6)   + ant + punct − cont → did[3]

(7)   + ant − punct + cont → did/been − ing

---

3.   In the text rule (6) reads: '+ ant punct − cont→ did'.
     The absence of the '+' mark is probably a printing error.

The acrolectal parameters are (1975a:163):

(13)   + perf → have (- en)

(14)   + past + punct - temp → (- ed)

(15)   + past + punct → (- ed)

(16)   + past - cont → (- ed)

(17)   - past - cont → ∅ (- s)

To describe the tense system of Guyanese creole, Bickerton, following Voorhoeve (1957), makes the distinction 'realis' versus 'irrealis' (factual versus non-factual). Bickerton's tense system, [± Anterior], covers only the realis category on the grounds that the irrealis is less structured.   There are two basilectal irrealis variants, _sa_ ~ _gu_, and they function as future tense markers as well as conditional modals.   The fact that the forms simultaneously indicate futurity _and_ modality is held to render the irrealis a performance feature - it is in the flux of change and therefore cannot fit into the grammar.   The Anterior marker _bin_ is much more stable since its only function is to mark anteriority.   But as I illustrate in Chapter 3, the form _bin_ not only marks anteriority, it is also a _locative copula_ with past meaning, a _directional copula_ with past meaning, and a _noun copula_ with past meaning.   Therefore, the linguistic explanation for deleting the irrealis from the tense system does not hold since _bin_, like _sa_ ~ _gu_, is also a 'performance feature'.   We must then not only have doubts about Bickerton's [± Anterior] tense system which does not accommodate the future, but also about the subsequent disappearance of the [± Anterior] category in the movement from basilect to acrolect.

The postulation of a tense system which only covers the realis category creates problems even for Bickerton as he is forced to exclude the irrealis category from his rule changes showing the movement from basilect to acrolect. He deletes the irrealis (as well as the aspect marker <u>don</u>) so as 'To avoid irrelevant complications ...' (1975a:112). In Chapter 4 I postulate a tense system which includes the past as well as the future.

2.3   Stem Form in the Basilect

Bickerton begins the analysis of the creole verb by looking at the 'stem form' in the basilect - a form which exceeds 'marked forms' in frequency because it has 'several quite distinct functions' and 'often result from marker deletion' (1975a:28). He explains that the stem form of the Guyanese verb is identical with the English stem form, but there are three exceptions. In these exceptions the stem forms are derived from English strong past forms: <u>lef</u> 'to leave', <u>los</u> 'to lose' and <u>brok</u> 'to break'. He further explains that the English verb 'to get' is the source of two Guyanese verbs, <u>get</u> 'to obtain' and <u>gat</u> 'to have, possess'. For a more 'distinct distinction' we must refer to Bickerton 1971. (See section 3.10 for my critique of Bickerton's analysis of <u>get</u> and <u>gat</u>, and my reanalysis. It was a vital reanalysis as it gave me a clear insight into the aspectual categories of Guyanese Creole.) He continues by

explaining that English 'to do' yields 'four distinct

Guyanese forms': a main verb du of similar meaning; a main

verb don 'to finish'; a completive aspect marker don; an

iterative aspect marker doz.   English 'to go' yields 'three

distinct forms': a main verb go of similar meaning; an

irrealis aspect marker go ; and 'a specialised completive

aspect form, unique to this verb, gaan ...'.   He

illustrates the use of gaan by the example below:

> '2.1   yu na go si mi, mi go komaut, mi go
>   gaan (148/24(191).
>   'You won't see me, I'm leaving, I'll
>   have gone.' (p.28)

He continues:

> 'It is, in other words, equivalent to don go,
> which seems in consequence seldom or never to
> occur; thus while i go a tong 'he went to town'
> is devoid of presuppositions as to the person's
> present whereabouts, i gaan a tong pre-
> supposes that he has not yet returned.' (p.28)

I agree with the semantic distinction Bickerton draws between

the use of go and gaan in the examples quoted above, but gaan

is not equivalent to don go.   gaan means 'left' or 'gone',

but don go means 'stopping going' - in which case don is

functioning as a main verb and go is functioning as a

nominal[4].   This of course indicates that gaan is not merely

a completive verb.   In Chapter 3 I suggest that gaan is a

stative-resultative verb and it belongs to the same class as

---

4.   I have interpreted go as a nominal on the basis of a
      morpheme-for-morpheme translation.   But see also
      Bickerton (1975a:74)

the above mentioned <u>lef</u>, <u>los</u> and <u>brok</u>.

I find it strange that Bickerton should refer to irrealis <u>go</u> as an 'aspect marker', if, as he later explains (1975a:42), irrealis <u>go</u> functions as a future tense marker and a modal.

2.3.1 <u>Non-stative stem forms in the basilect</u>

Bickerton points out that the functions of the 'stem form' depend on the stative : non-stative distinction. He explains:

> 'In its commonest function, with non-statives, it
> signifies 'unmarked past' - that is, a (usually)
> single action that happened at a moment in the
> past that may or may not be specified but should
> not predate any action simultaneously under
> discussion.' (p.28)

Therefore, he concludes, the stem contrasts with 'past-before past' (in which case <u>bin</u> precedes the verb), and with continuative-iterative forms. In narratives, he claims, continuative-iterative forms are used for the speaker's generalizations and comments. Thus, we have a morphologically unmarked past and marked non-past. Bickerton illustrates these claims with the narrative below:

> '2.2 Well a - we <u>get up</u>, a - we <u>wake up</u>, L - <u>run
> out</u>. Me <u>wake up</u> them pikni and so, all of
> them <u>hold on</u> 'pon me. Well all a - we <u>de</u> -
> a - we <u>de</u> - a - we <u>say</u> 'Oh God, a what <u>go
> happen</u> now with this - trouble?' Well,
> a - we <u>stand</u> for a time. A - we <u>frighten</u>
> because you i.e. L- <u>left</u> the house and <u>go</u>
> 'way and a - we <u>left</u> in the house. Well a - we
> <u>de</u> till morning. When morning <u>meet</u>, well,
> a - we <u>get up</u>, a - we <u>make</u> little tea and so,
> <u>eat</u> and so, not <u>eat</u> properly ## You <u>a always
> get</u> this thing in you mind steady stand, how
> you <u>go eat</u> properly? You <u>not eat</u> - you <u>a eat</u>

you' little food but you <u>not feel</u> satisfy.
Well one night more we <u>hear</u> drum a knock again.
Well that night me just <u>go</u> and me and L -, a - we
two <u>sit</u> down ... (28/9-19/28).'   (p.29)

He explains:
'In the first and third sections, practically
every verb denotes a past single action and is
therefore in the stem form.   In the second
section, every verb is morphologically marked,
one with irrealis <u>go</u> the others with <u>a</u>.   The
absence of surface <u>a</u> with negated verbs comes
about because the phonological shape of the
negative particle is <u>na</u> and an obligatory rule
assimilates consecutive low vowels.'   (p.29)

According to Bickerton, unmarked non-stative verbs are used

to illustrate a single action that happened in the past.   But

in the narrative quoted above there are unmarked non-stative

verbs <u>and</u> unmarked stative verbs.   There are three examples

of unmarked stative <u>de</u>, and one example of unmarked stative

<u>stand</u> - 'Well, a - we <u>stand</u> for a time'[5].   Thus Bickerton's

rule applies to non-stative verbs and stative verbs, and not

just to non-statives as he claims.   It is interesting that he

did not italicize the marked non-stative verb <u>knock</u> in the

third section: 'Well one night more we <u>hear</u> drum <u>a knock</u>

again'.   Highlighting <u>a knock</u> would create problems for him

since he claims that the third section is a narrative.   A part

of the third section is indeed narrated and then the events

are <u>sequenced</u>.   But the speech act 'Well one night more we <u>hear</u>

drum a knock again', seems to be a tensed construction in that

it is tied to the moment of utterance, and the use of <u>a knock</u>

indicates not only that the 'knocking' went on for a period of

time, but that they also heard it going on for a period of time.

_____

5.   See section 3.4.3, p.105 for a definition of stativity.

I also disagree with his statement that there is an obligatory phonological rule which assimilates consecutive low vowels. In my data there is:

(1) mi <u>na</u> <u>a</u> get wuk no wee

   I was not getting work anywhere. (21A/14/3)

(2) in di kontrii yu <u>na</u> <u>a</u> sii non a dem gyal wid lipstik

   In the rural areas you do not usually see any of the girls wearing lipstick. (21A/10-11/6)

If Bickerton's phonological rule does apply, there should be assimilation in the second section of the quoted narrative: 'you <u>a always get</u> ...' . The speaker should have said '<u>you always get</u> ...' . The truth is that the marked verb is in variation with the unmarked verb when making generalizations.

2.3.2 <u>Stative stem forms in the basilect</u>

Bickerton continues by explaining that with stative verbs, however, the stem form signifies non-past. (But as we saw above, unmarked stative verbs can also have past meaning.) He illustrates with the following sentences:

'2.3 mi na no wai dem a du dis ting (5/25/3)
   'I don't know why they are doing this.'

'2.4 di rais wok get mo iizia fi du bika trakta a
   plau am (9/21/9) 'Rice farming becomes easier
   to do because tractors do the ploughing.'

'2.5 nau fram wa mi ekspiirians, yu si, piipl a jelas
   dem iitsh an ada (221/2/276) 'Now from what
   I've experienced, you see, people get envious
   of one another.'

'2.6 wi a pak am op hai laik haus an wi kaal di plees
   karyaan (168/6/215) 'We pile it up as high as
   a house and we call the place the threshing-
   floor.' (p.29)

Here, he claims, the stative verbs no, get, ekspiirians and kaal are non-past and carry no marker of tense and aspect, while the non-statives du, plau, pak which are equally non-past are all preceded by the continuative-iterative a. I accept that no is a stative verb, but certainly not get, ekspiirians and kaal: get, to be more precise, is a change of state verb, and change of state verbs are not stative.

a jelas in 2.5, he continues, is not the counter-example it might seem. In the Guyanese basilect, 'adjectives' are in fact stative verbs but will take a when a 'process' rather than a 'state' is indicated. Bickerton does not define or explain the difference between a 'process' and a 'state', so it is difficult to understand in what way a + adjective can refer to a 'process'. At this point, he states it should be noted that:

> 'the stative - non-stative distinction in Guyanese
> Creole is a semantic one entirely: that is to say,
> it is not the case that specific lexical items are
> marked unambiguously [+ stative] or [- stative],
> rather that these categories apply to propositions
> irrespective of their lexical content. For
> instance, in the next two examples, though the
> surface verb is identical in each, the first
> sentence contains a stative proposition and the
> second a non-stative one:
>
> 2.9 tu an tu mek fo   'Two and two make four.'
>
> 2.10 dem mek i stap   'They made him stop.'
>
> Since 2.9 has a stative sense, mek here follows the
> rule for stative verbs (stem only for non-past).
> But 2.10 has a non-stative meaning, and in it, mek
> must therefore follow the non-stative rule (stem only
> for simple past).' (p.30)

If, as Bickerton claims, 2.9 has a 'stative' sense, and the sentences in which get, ekspiirians and kaal occur are also

stative, why then, we may ask, are the verbs du, plau and
pak preceded by a?   Surely the sentences in which they occur
are just as 'stative' as the sentences in which get, kaal and
ekspiirians occur, and especially when a pak and kaal occur
in the same construction (2.6)?   I agree that mek in 2.9
must be unmarked since in Guyanese the verb is obligatorily
unmarked in timeless propositions.   But in referring to
situations that are characteristic over a period of time, the
verb is optionally marked.   (See my Chapters 3 and 4.)   It
should be mentioned too that if get in example 2.4 is pre-
ceded by a, the meaning would be getting (a process) rather
than become (a change of state).   Thus the reason for a not
preceding get is certainly not of stativity.   Also, mek in
2.10 can be preceded by the tense marker bin and still yield
a simple-past meaning.   Therefore, the stem form of non-
stative verbs is not obligatory for simple past meaning.   The
stem form is obligatory if events are sequenced, but in
tensed constructions non-stative verbs (and stative verbs)
are optionally preceded by bin.

2.3.3 Other contexts of stativization

Other areas for the use of the stem form, and therefore
contexts of stativization, are in passives, temporal and
conditional clauses and before modals.

There are, Bickerton claims, two types of passive in
Guyanese.   One is where the object of the active sentence is
non-animate:

'2.12   yu laan nau lef wid di rais dok   (175/24/225)
        'Your land is now left with the rice flooded.'

2.13 *yu lan nau lef wid di rais a dok.

2.14 *yu lan nau a lef wid di rais dok.' (p.30)

On the basis of my knowledge as a native speaker, both 2.13
and 2.14 are acceptable. By using a dok in example 2.13
the speaker is making overt reference to the length of time
the field is flooded. By using a lef the speaker is making
overt reference to the fact that the land is usually left
with the rice flooded - it is a characteristic state.

The second Guyanese passive, he claims, applies usually
when the object of the active sentence is animate, though
sometimes when it is not, and it 'inverts subject and object
and deletes agent, but replaces aspect markers (or zero, if
they are none) with get' (p.31).

'2.20 bai, yu get stab! (121/20/154)   'Boy, you've
        been stabbed!'

'2.21 wel plenti get biitop, haatit an ting (9/5/10)
        'Well a lot were beaten up, wounded and so on.'
                                                (p.31)

It is possible to place a before get but the speaker would
then be referring to a 'process' rather than to a 'change of
state'. Thus, 'Boy you are being stabbed' and 'Well a lot
were being beaten up'.

Other sources of stativization, he claims, are in
temporal and conditional clauses and before modals.

Temporal clause:

'2.22 well wen yu kom yu go get dis bai go opn di do
        (146/11/188) 'Well when you arrive you'll get
        this boy to open the door.'

Conditional clause:

> '2.24   bot if reen faal, yu a go neks de   (9/1/8)
> 'But if it rains, you go on the following day.'

Before modals:

> '2.26   yu gatu hosl fu go kot rais somtaim, su yu a
> hosl fu get monii fu bai op rachin   (28/4-5/29)
> 'You have to hurry to go and cut rice sometimes,
> so you rush to get money to buy food with.'

> '2.27   wen di weda drai i a go gud   [Int .: bot wen it
> reen nau?] i kyaan go bika i a faal dong
> (129/6-7/178)   'When the weather's dry he can
> go all right. [But when it rains?] He can't go
> because he keeps falling down.'   (p.31)

(The modals are gatu (2.24) and kyaan (2.27))

It is possible to use a in the above environments, and it is
possible because the constructions are referring to
situations which are characteristic over a period of time
(habitual aspect).   It is not possible to use a before
modals such as wud, kud, shud, mait, but this is related to
the word-order pattern in the auxiliary. (See Auxiliary
Structures in section 3.4.5).

However, Bickerton goes on, an alternative to the
'deletion' analysis is suggested by the fact that while contin-
uatives and iteratives are deleted, completives (i.e.
completive aspect marker don, and past tense marker bin) are
not. Thus:

> '2.28   wen i don plau, put yu laan fi sook wan-tu de
> (192/18/221)   'When it's been ploughed, let
> your land flood for a day or two.'

> '2.29   wen i plau, put yu laan fi sook wan-tu de
> 'When it's being ploughed, let your land flood
> for a day or two.'

> '2.30   wen mi bin yong, yu no hau awi yuus tu wok
> (119/24/150)   'You know how we used to work
> when I was young.'

'2.31 *wen mi yong, yu no hau awi yuus to wok

'2.32 if mi bin no' a wan afta-blo [Guyanese proverb,
       quoted Abrams 1970:13] '[The thought] "If only
       I'd known" is an "after-blow".. [i.e. rubs salt
       in the wound, adds insult to injury].'

2.33 **if mi no a wan afta-blo

'2.34 injan piipl bin kyaan waak baut in jaajtong
       (22/30/21)   'Indians couldn't walk about in
       Georgetown.'

'2.35 injan piipl kyaan waak baut in jaajtong
       'Indians can't walk about in Georgetown.' (p.32)

In example 2.29 <u>wen i plau</u> cannot be glossed 'when it's being

ploughed'.   For a process meaning, <u>a</u> must be placed before

the verb <u>plau</u>.   It is obligatory not only because I reject

it as a native speaker, but because you cannot represent a

situation as an event (use of a punctual or perfective verb)

to provide the background to another event.   The verb which

provides the background must be imperfective, thus represent-

ing the background situation as a process or state.   (See

section 1.6; Comrie 1976:3; Lyons 1977:709)[6].   In fact 2.29

has the same meaning as 2.28.   Therefore <u>don</u> in 2.28 is

optional.   Furthermore, 2.31 is possible, and 2.33 is not

objectionable because of stativization.   (See section 3.8.1.)

Out of context 2.35 can have only a present meaning, but in

context the meaning can be present or past.   Thus <u>bin</u> is

optional.

---

6. Lyons (1977:707) gives a brief characterization of the
    difference between classifying a situation as an 'event',
    a 'process' or a 'state':
     'Events ... are non-extended dynamic situations that
      occur, momentarily, in time; processes are extended
      dynamic situations that last, or endure, through time;
      states are like processes in that they too last, or
      endure, through time, but they differ from processes in
      that they are homogeneous throughout the period of their
      existence ...'

2.3.4 <u>Stem form and stativity in the mesolect</u>

Bickerton does state that the stem form can be used for past and non-past meanings, but it is a rule of the mesolect as 'some speakers may simplify their grammar.'(p.112). Thus instead of two rules:

'(16) + past - punct - cont→ Ø

(17) - past - punct - cont→ doz.'

there is only one:

'(21) ⊄past - punct - cont→ Ø (- s).' (p.113).

This supposed rule simplification results because the stative category begins to weaken in the mesolect as the language is adjusting for the acquisition of acrolectal categories (p.72-75). (More will be said about this change below.) But as my counter-arguments and Bickerton's contradictions have indicated, stativity is not a category in the basilect. It seems that the stativity category was introduced to account for variation which could not be associated with linguistic change. I say 'introduced' for as Nichols (1976:993) in her review of <u>Dynamics</u> points out, we are not told whether stativization itself is a transformational deletion of morphemes, neutralization in the structuralist sense, or even a semantic constraint on deep structures.

2.4.1 Continuative/Iterative <u>a</u> in the basilect

In discussing the continuative/iterative aspect marker <u>a</u>, Bickerton says:

> 'One of the strongest rules in basilectal Guyanese
> Creole is that which restricts the use of <u>a</u> to

> non-stative verbs ... One seldom if ever en-
> counters sentences such as *mi a no, *dem a waan
> "I am knowing", "they are wanting". (pp.34-35)

But in my data there are:

(3) pippl na a biliiv mi

   People do not believe me   (624/28/2)

(4) dem a waant sting yu wan bil

   They want to take money from you (to go to the
   cinema)   (189/9/6)

He does mention, however, that some speakers say a de (p.35),

(de is a locative copula), but this is because 'speakers are

unevenly divided on the question whether de is a stative or

non-stative verb' (p.38)[7].   In discussing bina (a combina-

tion of past tense marker bin and continuative/iterative a),

he again illustrates the use of the form before statives, but

this, he claims, 'illustrates one way in which the exigencies

of discourse can affect otherwise categorical rules.' (p.38).

One example, he points out:

> 'can be written off as a performance error, as shown
> by its utterer's self-correction:

> '2.63 evriting bina chip - evriiting bin chiip
>   (198/19/261) 'Everything was cheap.' '(p.39)

Another token was collected

> 'by a student interviewer whose basilectal
> competence may have been eroded by contact with

---

7. By claiming that speakers are unevenly divided on whether
   de is a stative or non-stative verb, Bickerton appears to
   be contradicting his earlier statement that stativity is
   a semantic and not a lexical notion.

standard English. This interviewer used <u>bina</u>
with a sub-class of stative verb, and promptly
secured an 'echo effect' ...'

'2.64 Int.: lang taim piipl bina baad o gud?

219 : no, lang taim piipl bina ova gud, tumoch
gud. (199, 219/1-2/272) 'Were people
in the old days good or bad?' 'No, in
the old days people were very good,
extremely good.' (p.39)

He continues:

'An almost identical echo, though this time with a
slight hesitation, is secured from Speaker 220.
However, a third speaker, 222, produces four
tokens of <u>bina</u> + 'adjectival' verb in a single
sentence, without any stimulus from the inter-
viewer, and this leaves open the possibility
that the form may be a regional phenomenon of
limited distribution rather than a mere perform-
ance error and its echoes.' (p.39)

This explanation of <u>bina</u> + 'adjective' contradicts an earlier

explanation of <u>a</u> + 'adjective'. In the case of <u>a jelas</u>

(pp.28-29) he claims that <u>a</u> will occur before an 'adjective'

when a 'process' rather than a 'state' is indicated.

Contrary to what Bickerton may believe, it is a fact that <u>a</u>

can occur before stative verbs and adjectives.

In the basilect Bickerton notes that <u>a</u> functions as a

continuative aspect marker, and as an iterative aspect

marker and claims, incorrectly as I have noted, that it only

occurs before non-statives. On this basis he sets up an

aspectual category of $[\pm\text{Punctual}]$ for the basilect. He

says (p.46) that to ask whether a stative is $[+\text{punctual}]$ or

$[-\text{punctual}]$ makes no kind of sense since states have by

definition an extended duration. The distinction, however,

is meaningful for non-statives: $[+\text{punctual}]$ would imply a

single action, $[-\text{punctual}]$ an extended or repeated one.

Thus for Bickerton, _semantically_ there are two _a_'s:

$[+ \text{continuative}]$ _a_, and $[+ \text{iterative}]$ _a_; but _grammatically_ there is only one _a_, since it can only occur before non-statives.   In my reanalysis, however, _gramatically_ there are two _a_'s: _progressive_ _a_ (_continuative_ in Bickerton's terminology), and _habitual_ _a_ (_iterative_ in Bickerton's terminology).

2.4.2 _Iterative doz in the mesolect and acrolect_

In the mesolect, Bickerton points out, _a_ is replaced by _doz_ for iterative meaning, and _-ing_ is suffixed to the verb for continuative meaning.   This therefore indicates a division in the $[- \text{punctual}]$ category and the acquisition of the $[\pm \text{continuative}]$ category and thus movement towards the acrolect.

But as I state, gramatically there are two _a_'s.   Therefore the lexical changes that take place in the mesolect do not indicate a split in the $[- \text{punctual}]$ category.   There is indeed a formal differentiation but the aspectual category remains the same as in the basilect.

doz as an iterative aspect marker, he claims, follows the same main stative rule as _a_, and consequently 'it seldom or never appears before modals or stative verbs or in conditional or temporal ('wherever'-type) clauses.' (p.68).   I do not accept this (note his use of the adverb 'seldom'), and in my data there is:

(5)   de _doz_ _gat_ a waata lefin dong biloo
      There is usually a liquid left under it .(54A/32-33/4)

Five pages previous to stating this <u>doz</u> rule, Bickerton

gives an example of <u>das</u> (a phonetic variant of <u>doz</u>) before

the modal <u>gatu</u> (p.63).

> '3.3 lang taim wen awi bina plant rais ova kriik
> awi das gatu plau wid kau (15/11/15) 'In
> the old days when we used to plant rice over
> the creek, we used to have to plough with
> oxen.'

In the movement from mesolect to acrolect, <u>doz</u>

deletion begins (p.117). Apart from being excluded from

stativized environments, he says, '<u>doz</u> now begins to dis-

appear from hypothetical or generic utterances (in particular

those with generic 'you' as subject).' He continues:

> 'This process starts fairly early on in the
> mesolect; 125, for example, is variable on
> 'you' sentences:

> 4.2 You <u>does</u> price them, put on them extra, half-
> cent extra. (125/27/173)

> 4.3 You <u>lick</u> it [sc. the cane-stalk] down and
> you can cut two by the time that fall down -
> by the time the man lash one. He <u>take</u> the
> time, you just <u>scramble</u> and <u>knock</u> and <u>gone</u>.
> (125/6-7/173).

> In the upper mesolect, deletion is categorical in
> generics and hypotheticals, and <u>doz</u> is inserted
> only where actual behaviour by named persons is
> being described. Finally, it becomes variable
> even here:

> 4.4 They <u>sent</u> a plane and <u>pass</u> overhead so nothing
> <u>pass</u> through Bartica now, the only pork-
> knocker that <u>does pass</u> here is what we <u>call</u>
> the bad pork knocker. (111/4/142)

> From this point, it is only a step for the complete
> elimination of <u>doz</u>. (p.117).'

It seems that Bickerton has selected particular examples to

support supposed rule changes. The variation between marked

and unmarked verbs in the basilect was, he claims, due to

stativity.   Similar variation in the mesolect indicated

elimination of the aspect marker, and thus the language

moves closer to the acrolect, for as marked non-pasts de-

crease, so marked pasts increase and with them the acquisi-

tion of the acrolectal $\boxed{\pm\text{past}}$ category.

In the description of the mesolect to acrolect range,

he points out some 'odd' <u>doz</u> tokens - i.e. <u>doz</u> before

adjectives (p.119):

> '4.6   son doz hat he bad   'The sun gets very hot here.'
>   (160/15/198).

> 4.7   People does jealous him.   (99/4/117) (p.118).'

In the movement from mesolect to acrolect, he explains, this

is acceptable as long as 'we interpret <u>hot</u> and <u>jealous</u> as

adjectives and not merely the Guyanese forms of the verbs 'to

heat' and 'to envy' (p.118).   If this analysis is correct,

he goes on, then 'is frequently sick' is the meaning of <u>doz</u>

<u>ill</u> in example 4.5.

> '4.5   If the husband know that the mother does ill ...
>   (43/7/35) (p.118)'.

Bickerton may or may not have realized it, but 'frequently'

is also the meaning in the basilect when <u>a</u> occurs before

stative verbs and adjectives.   Thus neither the occurrence

nor the meaning of <u>doz</u> before adjectives need indicate a

grammatical change.   Bickerton encountered <u>a</u> before stative

verbs and adjectives in the basilect but chose to call the

occurrences 'performance errors'.   He probably took this

position as he could not find a suitable explanation.

Bickerton states that <u>bin</u> is introduced in the

mesolectal to acrolectal phase of the continuum, but like

Allsopp (1962) and Rickford (1974) has chosen to treat _bii_ as
a syntactic unit with _doz_ – thus _doz bii_. Devonish (1978),
however, treats _doz_ and _bii_ as separate items, and for syn-
tactic reasons I do the same in my reanalysis.

2.4.3 _Iterative yuuz tu in the mesolect_

In the mesolect Bickerton states that iterative _doz_
becomes restricted to non-past environments and a form _yuuz_
_tu_ is introduced to cover $\left[+ \text{ iterative}\right]$, $\left[+ \text{ past}\right]$ environ-
ments and thus a straightforward past : non-past time
distinction is gradually introduced (p.69). In the absence
of any contextual indication of time reference, _doz_
indicates non-past, but with an appropriate temporal adverb-
ial it can be past or non-past. _yuuz tu_, on the other hand,
is restricted to a past environment. His claim that _doz_ and
yuuz tu introduces a past : non-past time distinction is very
doubtful since in the basilect the past tense marker _bin_ can
be used with statives and non-statives to yield a simple-past
meaning. _yuuz tu_, therefore, is probably a relexification
of basilectal _bin_ + _a_ (habitual _a_).

2.5.1 _Past tense in the basilect_

The stative parameter, according to Bickerton, affects
not only the meaning of the stem form in the basilect, it
also affects the past tense. Unmarked statives mean 'now',
but _bin_ before statives means 'not now' (1975a:46). But in
my data there are also unmarked statives which mean 'not now':

(6) ii kaal tuu a dem bai a vilij wa <u>gat</u> taim –
smaal baiz wa na <u>gat</u> notn fu duu

He called two of the boys in the village who
had time – small boys who had nothing to do.
(62A/15-16/9)

(7) mi granmuda, non-badii, na <u>noo</u> mi plan

My grandmother, no one, knew my plan. (18A/5/8)

With non-statives, he claims, the stem form has past
reference, but with <u>bin</u>, non-statives have a past-before-past
meaning. But in my data there are examples of <u>bin</u> before
non-statives with a simple-past meaning:

(8) mi <u>bin</u> <u>mek</u> nof monii pan dem
I made a lot of money on them. (62A/15/1)

(9) shi kom an shi matii kuulii <u>bin</u> a <u>trai</u> wid shi
She came and her fellow Indians were trying
with her. (16A/13-14/5)

In Bickerton (1979), he again reiterates his claims of
<u>bin</u> and past meaning in Guyanese creole – unmarked statives
mean 'now' and <u>bin</u> + non-statives means past-before-past.
In a section of the extract he quotes to illustrate that
statives mean 'now', there is the unmarked stative verb <u>no</u>
(know) with past meaning:

'... wel mi na bin wan sen mesij hoom tel dem da mi
in jaajtong in haspital – wel, nat noin dat som
piiple mosi <u>no</u> [my emphasis] mi a di kajalti, an
dem sen mesij hoom ...'
Well, I didn't want to send a message home to tell
them (his family) that I was in Georgetown in
hospital – not knowing that some people in the
Casualty (Ward) must know me, and they sent a
message home ...' (1979:310).

But Bickerton has misunderstood the data. <u>mosi</u> in Guyanese
is not a modal of necessity – <u>mosi</u> is a modal of probability.
<u>mos</u> is the modal of necessity. Thus instead of a gloss

'must know me', we read 'probably knew me'.

He further explains in this paper that _bin_ + non-stative cannot always be translated by English pluperfect:

> '(3)   dem bin get wud plau lang taim - bina plau
>   raisfiil an deez tu kom deez tu kom, dem. bin
>   get aksn an dem bin get plau an dem a plau an
>   dem a mash wid aksn. 'In the old days they
>   got wooden ploughs, they ploughed the rice-
>   fields and then later on, later on they got
>   oxen and (iron) ploughs and they ploughed and
>   threshed with oxen.'
>
> Why is _bin_ used here?   We must understand the context,
> which is that of a comparison between ancient and
> modern methods of rice-farming: iron ploughs and oxen
> have now been outdated by tractors and combine
> harvesters.'   (1979:310).

The speaker is indeed comparing ancient and modern methods of rice farming, but this does not detract from the fact that the meaning is simple-past and not past-before-past.

The observations above seem to jeopardize Bickerton's [± Anterior] tense system which he posits for the basilect (1975a; 1979).   For stative verbs, [- anterior] would mean 'now', i.e., that the state of liking, knowing, wanting etc., though it may have commenced in the past, would still be in existence at the present moment.   For the same verbs [+ anterior] would mean 'not now', 'no longer' i.e. a terminated state.   These are the meanings of ∅ and _bin_ with statives.   But, as I have illustrated above and will illustrate further in Chapters 3 and 4, unmarked stative verbs can mean 'now' and 'not now'.   The use of _bin_ is optional for a 'not now' meaning.

Non-stative verbs, on the other hand, [+ punctual] implies a single action, and [- punctual] represents an extended or repeated one.   He continues (1975a:46):

> 'If we speak about a single, non-extended action, it can hardly be taking place in the immediate present (unless we are giving a running commentary, a rather unusual type of speech event!). However, it does not follow that because an action is [+ past] it must therefore be [+ anterior] , provided that our point of reference is another action or actions rather than the present moment. A [+ past] action can then be [- anterior] in that the past action was the last to occur, or the last of its kind to occur, or the second of two in which the speaker is interested. Likewise, a [+ anterior] action does not have to be a 'past-before-past', since it could be regarded as both related and prior to a state of affairs at present in existence.'

Bickerton claims that a [+ past] action can be [- anterior] in that the past action was the last to occur. If this is the case how does he account for an example such as:

(10) shi kom an shi matii kuulii bina trai wid shi

She came and her fellow Indians were trying with her. (16A/13-14/5)

where the first action is unmarked for tense and the second action is marked for tense? According to Bickerton's theory trai should have been unmarked for tense, and kom should have been marked. He further claims that [+ anterior] does not have to be 'past-before-past' since it could be regarded as both related and prior to a state of affairs at present in existence. This explanation, he says, accounts for the examples below:

'2.91 hau awi dis bina wok dem na eebl fi wok bikaz dem gro saaf (188/3/246)

'They can't work like we worked because they've grown soft.' (p.47)

2.53 dis fut bin swel he si di tu a saiz (185/26/236)

'This foot has swelled up, compare the size of the two.'

2.54   wen mi bin smaal laik a dem pikni dis den
       mi bin faal a trensh   (198/2/262)

       'When I was as small as these children, I
       fell in a canal.'   (p.36)'.

But in his 1979 paper he contradicts the above by saying:

       '... if [+ punctual] actions are always past as
       well as usually [- anterior] , then bin with non-
       statives will indicate a past-before-past
       whether or not the English pluperfect would also
       apply.'   (1979:311)

Bickerton seems to have got himself into this dilemma for

possibly two reasons: first, he wrongly believes that

stative verbs must be preceded by bin for past meaning; and

secondly he omits the future from the grammar on the grounds

that the future is a 'performance feature' since the future

form simultaneously functions as a future tense marker as

well as a modal.   A more plausible explanation for bin

usage is that bin is an optional past tense marker and

depending on the context we can obtain a past-before-past or

simple-past meaning.

       In his most recent book, and in support of his bio-

program argument, in order to accommodate what appears to be

deviant data in Seychelles creole, Bickerton (1981:91) finds

it necessary 'to refine the concept of anterior, which we

can provisionally define as 'prior to the current focus of

discourse'.   But, he goes on, current focus may be explicit -

where the tenses of an earlier and later event are directly

contrasted; or implicit - where the relationship between the

earlier and later events is simply assumed; or there may be

nothing prior to current focus.   He illustrates this refine-

ment by contrasting English and Guyanese creole (GC):

'/103/Current focus, nothing prior:

    Eng.:   Bill has come/came to see you

    GC: Bil (don) kom fi sii yu

/104/Prior event, current focus implicit

    Eng.:   Bill came/*has/*had come to see you
             yesterday, too

    GC: Bil bin kom/*don kom/*kom fi sii yu
            yestide an aal

/105/Prior event, current focus explicit

    Eng.:   When I got home, Bill had come/*has come
            /*came already

    GC: Wen mi riich, bil bin kom/*don kom/*kom
            aredi

In /104/ current focus is on the present, second
visit of Bill implied by too; this, English can
handle by one of the means available for /103/,
but the anterior system of GC cannot.   Example
/104/ has to be treated exactly like /105/ in GC,
/105/ must be treated differently from /104/ in
English.   This illustrates just one of the many
differences between past-nonpast and anterior –
nonanterior systems.'(1981:91-92)

With respect to example /103/ it is possible to say

either: Bil kom fi sii yu

  or

    Bil don kom fi sii yu

for the meaning 'Bill has come to see you'.   The use of

aspectual don emphasizes that Bill is there waiting to see

you.   But for a meaning 'Bill came to see you', it is

possible to say any of the following:

            Bil kom fi sii yu

            Bil don kom fi sii yu

            Bil bin kom fi sii yu

            Bil bin don kom fi sii yu.

If the speaker chooses to emphasize the pastness of the situation, the speaker will use the tense form _bin_; if the speaker chooses to emphasize the aspectual nature of the situation, the speaker will use _don_. If the speaker chooses to emphasize neither the tense nor aspectual nature of the situation, he will use plain uninflected _kom_. The speaker can emphasize both the tense and aspectual nature of the arrival by using both _bin_ and _don_.

In example /104/ it is possible to say either

       Bil bin kom fi sii yu yestide an aal

or

       Bil kom fi sii yu yestide an aal.

Aspectual _don_ cannot be used. _don_ would have been possible without _an aal_ 'too', since you will be saying that 'Bill came to see you yesterday, but at the time of utterance he is not there'.

With respect to example /105/ it is possible to say any of the following:

            wen mi riich, bil kom aredi

            wen mi riich, bil don kom aredi

            wen mi riich, bil bin kom aredi

            wen mi riich, bil bin don kom aredi.

The explanation for the variation is the same as given above for example /103/, 'Bill came to see you'.

I agree with Bickerton that the above examples illustrate the differences between the English past-nonpast tense system, and the creole system. But my refutation otherwise of Bickerton's arguments indicates that the tense system of

Guyanese creole is <u>not</u> anterior-nonanterior; nor do I think Bickerton can maintain that the variation is due to language change in progress.

2.5.2 <u>Past tense in the mesolect</u>

In the movement from basilect to mesolect, Bickerton claims, <u>bin</u> is replaced by <u>did</u> in the identical syntactic and semantic slot. But then a syntactic shift begins. In the basilect 75% of <u>bin</u>-occurrences are with statives. The figure is reversed for <u>did</u> - 75% of <u>did</u>-occurrences are with non-statives (1975a:72). This shift, he claims, indicates the weakening of the basilectal stative category and he attributes this change to several factors. <u>did</u> continues to be used by some speakers above the mesolectal level and their use of <u>did</u> differs from that of truly mid-mesolectal speakers in several ways. For instance, such speakers have all acquired <u>had</u> so that one of the most favourable environments for <u>did</u> - i.e. before stative <u>gat</u> - disappears. Further, the distinctively [+ anterior] character of <u>did</u> weakens shortly before its disappearance, so that it occurs a number of times in simple-past non-stative environments. Thirdly, a number of stative <u>bin</u>-occurrences precede 'adjectival verbs'; in the mid-mesolect, these are reanalysed as predicate adjectives, and are never (at least in his data) preceded by <u>did</u>.

However, a fourth and 'more critical' explanation for a reduction in the incidence of stative <u>did</u>, is that:

'Some of the rules which most sharply differentiate
the basilect from standard English are those which,
on a formal level, equate non-past statives and
past non-statives (giving both zero marking) as
well as past statives and past-before-past non-
statives (marking both with bin).   These rules
must yield at some stage before standard rules can
be established, and it is at this level that they
begin to weaken ... with increasing frequency,
stative verbs are left unmarked even where there
is a clear [+ anterior] reference and even where
non-statives have [+ anterior] markings ..' (p.73).

But as I have illustrated, unmarked stative and non-stative

verbs can both have a past-before-past meaning in the

basilect, and both classes of verbs are optionally preceded

by bin to yield a simple-past meaning.   Therefore this

supposed grammatical change is in fact not a change.   The

grammatical change Bickerton posits here is similar to the

change he posits for aspect marking.   In the basilect the

use of unmarked non-stative verbs in variation with marked

verbs for habitual meaning was due to the stative category,

the identical variation in the mesolect indicated elimina-

tion of the aspect marker.

2.5.3 Past tense in the acrolect

      In the movement from mesolect to acrolect, did,

Bickerton claims, ceases to be a specifically [+ anterior]

marker and is reduced to simply another alternative for

expressing [+ past] (1975a:121).   The 'precise' changeover

is as follows: first, forms tied specifically to [- anterior,

+ past] - i.e. neva, had, waz - are introduced into the

lexicon.   Bickerton defines [- anterior, + past] as a past

action that was the last to occur.   But the form neva can

have past and non-past meanings:

> (11) shi <u>neva</u> sing – she never sang

> (12) shi doz <u>neva</u> duu it – she never does it.

The form <u>had</u> in the examples below refer to 'past-before-past' situations: (<u>had</u> is a past mesolectal form of the basilectal possessive, existential and locative copula <u>gat</u>).

An informant describing a situation when he first began to teach:

> (13) aal mi bin noo a wa mi <u>had</u> from hai skuul
>
> All I knew (when he began to teach) was
> what I had learnt (what he 'possessed')
> from high school. (16A/31-32/1)

> (14) an wen ii kom hoom, ii <u>had</u> about oova four
> touzan daala
>
> And when he came home, he had about over
> four thousand dollars. (18A/25-26/13)

<u>waz</u> in the example below also has a non- $\left[- \text{ anterior}, + \text{past}\right]$ meaning:

> (15) wen mi <u>waz</u> a lil bai, mi did laik dis hairy
> dory biznis
>
> When I was a little boy, I liked to play a
> game called 'hairy dory'. (15A/5-6/4)

The second change is that the form <u>didn</u> – the negative past tense form – (as opposed to <u>did</u>) – spreads from $\left[+ \text{ anterior}\right]$ to $\left[- \text{ anterior}, + \text{past}\right]$ environments; third, the first <u>-ed</u> forms appear, and as these spread to finite verbs, the grammar is restructured to replace $\left[\pm \text{anterior}\right]$ by $\left[\pm \text{past}\right]$; fourth, <u>did</u> is reinterpreted to conform with this underlying shift (i.e. as a 'pure' $\left[+ \text{past}\right]$ marker); fifth, <u>did</u>, now the disfavoured competitor of other forms of past marking,

is abandoned (1975a:121-122).   I do not agree with this supposed grammatical shift since, in my opinion, _did_ like _bin_ is a past marker and depending on the context we can obtain a simple past or past-before-past meaning.   Also, I find too many flaws with Bickerton's [±anterior] tense system to believe that it adequately describes the basilect, far less that it actually changes to [±past].   Finally, I find his claims unconvincing since he provides no linguistic evidence to support his position that _did_ disappears via these five stages.

2.5.4 Acquisition of past tense morpheme _-ed_

In the movement from basilect to mesolect the form _-ed_ is acquired in [+ anterior] environments (1975a:109).   But the majority of _-ed_ occurrences must be interpreted as learning of a category new to the Guyanese system, that of English simple past.   Thus:

'3.110   When tractor come in we _started_ now with big
          quantity plant.   (183/24/231)' (p.109)

But my example (10) on p.65, and the examples below show instances of _bin_ in simple-past environments:

(16)   mi _bin_ du big gyardenin
       I did farming on a large scale.   (63A/16/1).

(17)   de ribz boon hee _bin_ plat
       The ribs here were plaited.   (62B/12/7).

The first area of acquisition of _-ed_ forms are the past participles of +syll verbs — such as 'populated', 'accommodated', 'admitted', 'innoculated', 'excited' etc.

(1975a:107). For the majority of speakers, these are 'learned words' and are not indicative of a grammatical change. The second environment for the acquisition is V + syll (and this indicates acquisition of the English simple past). In the movement from mesolect to acrolect past tense acquisition moves to completion by the inflection of 'strong verbs' and the 'V - syll'. Thus the rank order is: V + syll, Strong, V - syll. In Bickerton (1972) he also claims that this is the order of acquisition of the standard English past tense. But Edwards (1975:251) says:

> 'As far as my informants are concerned,
> Bickerton is clearly wrong. They seem to be
> more familiar with the strong past forms. A
> conclusion similar to that shown in my table
> was arrived at by Bobb-Semple (1972) who studied
> the 'mistakes' made by forty secondary school
> children (from a Georgetown school) in their
> written compositions.'

Bobb-Semple found that:

> 'irregular (i.e. strong) verbs were inflected for
> past tense 93 per cent of the time, whereas
> regular verbs were inflected 65 per cent of the
> time.' (1972:33)

2.6 Loss of Stative Category

In the movement from mesolect to acrolect past stative verbs are unmarked (1975a:122-132) and this indicates that stative is lost as a distinct category. This loss creates a category [α past, - punctual] in opposition to [+ punctual, + past] for some speakers (p.136). But as I have already

illustrated, stative verbs are unmarked for past meaning in the basilect, so this 'supposed' mesolectal to acrolectal development does not indicate a grammatical change. I have also indicated that stativity is not a valid category in the basilect, therefore it cannot be lost in the movement from basilect to acrolect.

Bickerton gives a 'possible alternative explanation (p.125)' for the loss of the stative - non-stative distinction in the case of 'have':

> 'Speaker 223's <u>you have cow was smashing rice</u> is a morph-for-morph translation of basilectal <u>dem</u> <u>gat kau bina mash rais</u>. 'There were oxen threshing the rice.' (p.125)

The use of unmarked 'have' is due to the fact, he claims, that:

> 'There is apparently a basilectal rule which deletes tense-marking in higher (possessive or existential) sentences. It may be that ... past - non-past neutralisation of <u>have</u> should be attributed to this rule rather than to the general unmarking of anterior statives.'
> (p.126)

But earlier, (p.72), Bickerton explained that 'stative <u>gat</u>' is 'one of the most propitious environments for <u>did</u>' - the mesolectal past tense marker.

2.7   'Performance Feature' <u>don</u>

In the basilect, Bickerton is unable to fit the completive aspect marker <u>don</u> into the parameters of $[\pm \text{anterior}]$ and $[\pm \text{punctual}]$ and dubs the form a 'perform-

ance feature' (p.39).   He, however, finds a means of fitting

don into the grammar in the movement from basilect to

mesolect.   He claims (p.85) that _don_ could not root firmly

in the grammar until it can combine with other verbal markers,

and 'this stage had been cut off by the decreolisation

process'.   He continues by explaining that:

> '... puzzling forms in decreolised lects could
> only satisfactorily be accounted for by appeal
> to less decreolised ones; there is no need to
> assume identity of sense or function between
> lects, but where a form exists in both, at least
> some plausible type of change-process must be
> invoked to account for any differences.' (p.85)

Bickerton assumes an identity between Guyanese _don_ and

standard English _have_.   The function of _don_ in temporal

subordinate clauses,

> '3.51   _When_ you _done peel_ the top straw you get
>   other straw.   (15/2/6).'   (p.85).

is equated with its lexical force 'completely' as used in

main clauses:

> '2.74   mi don gat wan dag.
>
>   'I have a dog'   still, and therefore don't
>   need another one .

> 2.76   mi don se da
>
>   'I said that'   and I stick to it .'   (p.41).

And the whole is associated with the perfect.   Thus in his

analysis, Completely = + Completive   =   + Perfect .   In

the movement from mesolect to acrolect, _don_ 'vanishes

altogether' (p.122) since,

> '_don_ would be hard put to it to exist in a
> grammar that contained an established

perfective aspect with <u>have</u>; the two forms, though by no means synonymous, would be in competition for the same semantic niche.'

Nichols (1976:993) in her critique of <u>Dynamics</u> points out that a glance at traditional and structural literature (for example, Kuryłowicz, 1964) shows that [+ Completive] is at best a substantive implication of [+ Perfect] . This suggestion seems reasonable especially in light of the fact that <u>don</u> is an aspect marker, and I tend to agree with Ridjanović (1969) and McCoard (1978) that <u>have</u> in English is a carrier of tense. The two forms, therefore, grammaticalize different concepts. In Chapters 3 and 4 I will illustrate that it is possible to fit <u>don</u> into the grammar without equating it with the perfect, or appealing to de-creolization.

Proof that <u>don</u> vanishes, according to Bickerton, is that at this point in the continuum <u>have + en</u> 'begins to establish itself'. I agree that some speakers use <u>have + en</u> but it seems to be use of a feature which can be identified as 'English' rather than a grammatical change from 'Creole' to 'English'.

In Bickerton (1981:80), he points out that an overview of the creoles indicates that completive aspect markers can have three distinct distributions:

'First, they may remain as marginal particles, occurring optionally in clause-final position. This state is exemplified in SR, [Sranan] in which <u>kaba</u> can only occur clause-finally and is never incorporated into Aux. The same is true of PP [Papiamentu] <u>caba</u>. In basilectal GC, <u>don</u> often occurs clause-finally ... Second, they may be incorporated into Aux

but without its being possible to combine them
with other Aux constituents.   This state is
exemplified by mesolectal GC don and possibly
also JC [Jamaican Creole] and other Caribbean
don and by HC [Hawaian Creole] fin.
   Third, they may be incorporated into Aux
where they may combine with other Aux constituents
quite freely.   This state is exemplified by Krio
(KR) don, and IOC [Indian Ocean Creoles] (fi)n,
among others.

He continues by explaining that these three states consti-

tute stages in a diachronic development and exemplify a

gradual process of incorporation which is well advanced in

some creoles and has not begun in others.   Basilectal

Guyanese creole has both postclausal and preverbal don, the

latter becoming obligatory in the mesolectal varieties.

Thus Guyanese creole represents the transition between states

one and two.   He says that evidence for Indian Ocean creoles

is conflicting, but by some accounts, stages intermediate

between noncombinability and free combinability (states two

and three) are to be found there.

   In Guyanese creole (basilect and mesolect), don can in-

deed occur before or after the predicate, and this variation

is probably due to the fact that it never co-occurs with a

predicate inflected for aspect.   Thus

    Basilect: (a) * shi don a sing

                (b) * shi a sing don

    Mesolect: (c) * shi don doz sing

                (d) * shi doz sing don

                (e) * shi don singing

                (f) * shi singing don.

(Example (e) is acceptable, but then don is interpreted as a

main verb, and _singing_ as a nominal.)

But: (g)   shi don sing ⎫
  or   ⎬she has sung.
        (h)   shi sing don ⎭

don can combine with tense and modal auxiliaries in the
basilect and mesolect.   When it co-occurs with other auxil-
iaries, it must occur before the predicate:

    Basilect: (i) shi wuda (bin) don sing ⎫
                                            ⎬ she would have
                                            ⎬   sung
    Mesolect: (j) shi wuda (did) don sing ⎭

                    (M)   (T) (A) (PRED)

Therefore, we can claim that _don_ in Guyanese creole has
nothing to do with Bickerton's three states.   Again he seems
to have gone on the wrong path with his assumption that
variation implies change.   Note, too, that the ordering of
the elements is mood, tense, aspect (MTA) and not TMA as he
proposes for Guyanese Creole and other creoles.

2.8   'Performance Feature' _go_

    Another 'performance feature' is basilectal _go_ (which
varies with a form _sa_).   _go_ has been dubbed a performance
feature since it simultaneously functions as a future tense
marker and a conditional modal (p.42-43).   In the movement
from basilect to mesolect _gon_ replaces _go_, and another form
would is introduced to vary with _gon_ for past probables.
Thus 'the scope of _gon_ is gradually being narrowed to that of

a pure future' (p.91).   I agree that <u>would</u> can indeed be
used for past probables, but like <u>gu</u> and <u>gon</u> it can also
have future meaning:

   (18)   yu tink shi <u>wud</u> duu it.
           Do you think she will do it?

   (19)   she <u>wud</u> bii a gud styuudent.
           She will be a good student.

Bickerton provides no linguistic evidence to support his
claim that <u>gon</u> becomes a pure future.   In the movement from
mesolect to acrolect, he claims that <u>will</u> is acquired and the
acquisition of the acrolectal future is complete.   He illu-
strates with the example below (p.133):

   '4.54 If you remember you will see, if you consider.
        (122/16-17/163)

    4.55 If I happen to live your age I will have - at
        seventy-five I'll have no fears, at seventy-five
        you closer to you coffin but you braver than
        anybody.   (241/26-8/312)

And he finds it necessary to say:

   'Though control of the acrolectal future is complete,
   the speaker still retains many non-standard forms,
   e.g. zero copula before adjectives and non-standard
   second-person possessive adjective before
   consonants.'   (p.133-134)

On the basis of my knowledge as a native speaker, it is
possible to use basilectal <u>gu</u> or mesolectal <u>gon</u> and <u>wud</u> where
Bickerton's speaker uses <u>will</u>.   We can therefore question
whether it is true to say that the basilect and the mesolect
do not have a grammatical 'future'.

    In Bickerton (1981:93) he claims that counterfactuals

are expressed by a combination of anterior and irrealis because current focus in such cases is always on the consequences of not having done whatever one didn't do; and irrealis because the action or event in question is an imaginary one. Thus

> '/113/GC: if mi bin sii am mi bin go tel am
>   'If I had seen him I would have told him'.

Bickerton's example is quite acceptable, but it is also possible to say:

> if mi bin sii am, mi wuda tel am

and an informant says:

> if mi bin liv a tong, mi kuda duu beta
> If I were living in town, I could do better.

Thus it is possible to obtain a modal meaning by combining bin + go or to use the other modals wuda, kuda, shuda, maita. However, bin + go can only give the meaning expressed by wuda.

He further points out that complementizer fi can also function as an auxiliary in basilectal Guyanese creole:

> '/120/ mi fi go
>   I should/ought to go' (1981:95).

He explains that fi in general does not combine with other auxiliaries, but in Guyanese creole it does occasionally occur with bin:

> '/121/ mi bin fu nak am
>   'I should have hit him' or 'I was about to
>   hit him'
>
> 'The construction is not common in GC, and
>   native speakers are more or less evenly

> divided as to which gloss is the more
> appropriate.' (1981;95-96).

I am not surprised that native speakers are more or less evenly divided as to which gloss is more appropriate since the utterance means neither of the two. The gloss should read, 'I went to hit him', in which case <u>bin</u> is a directional copula and <u>fu</u> is a complementizer. According to Bickerton there is only one <u>bin</u> in Guyanese creole, that is, the past tense morpheme. But as I illustrate in Chapter 3, there are four <u>bin</u> morphemes in Guyanese creole, and Bickerton's example /121/ above is one of the morphemes that is not the past tense marker.

The utterance <u>mi bin fu nak am</u> means 'I went to hit him'. But the utterance

> mi gu fu nak am

can be glossed 'I went to hit him' or 'I was about to hit him' depending on the linguistic and situational context. Both glosses indicate movement towards a person to strike him, but the first gloss lacks the inceptive meaning. When <u>bin</u> is used, it is not possible to have an inceptive reading. In order to have a 'I should have hit him' reading, we can say either:

> (a)   mi shuda nak am

or

> (b)   mi shuda bin nak am

or

> (c)   mi fu bin nak am.

In examples (b) and (c) the modal precedes the tense form, thus indicating an MT(A) ordering, rather than a TM(A) order-

ing as Bickerton claims.

2.9   Negation

Negation, Bickerton claims, has implications for the tense and aspect systems.   In the basilect, na is the negative marker for all verbal forms (1975a : 431; 91).   In the mesolect, the forms en, doon(t), di(d)n(t) and neva make their appearance and are soon followed by izn(t), wazn(t), wudn(t), en etc. (1975a : 91-102).   The changes that come about in the mesolect serve as levers for more wide-spread grammatical changes in the tense and aspect systems. So that, for example, 'Until neva is acquired, the category of 'simple past' simply does not exist in Guyanese Creole.' (p.103).   But as my example (12) illustrates, neva can also have non-past meaning:

> (12)   shi doz neva duu it.
>   She never does it.

I agree with Bickerton that formal changes do take place in the negation system and that these changes have implications for the co-occurrence relations with the lexical substitutions that take place in the tense and aspect systems, but in my opinion the tense and aspect grammar does not change.

2.10   A Further Examination of Bickerton's Process of Change

We can further examine Bickerton's overall process of change by looking at earlier documents in Guyanese.   In Rickford (ed.) (1978) there are reprints of texts first published between 1881 - 1940.   In two of the early extracts, McTurk (1881) and Speirs (1902), there is a form _da_ which functioned as a topicalizer, progressive aspect marker, habitual aspect marker, demonstrative pronoun, definite article. In McTurk (1881), there is also a form _a_ which functioned as a topicalizer, progressive aspect marker, habitual aspect marker, locative preposition, indefinite article and first person pronoun.   Synchronically, the only function of _da_ today is that of a demonstrative pronoun, while _a_ has continued as a focalizer, progressive aspect marker, habitual aspect marker, indefinite article, locative preposition and pronoun.   On the basis of the data, I have not observed any grammatical changes with the replacement of _da_ by _a_ - the changes I observe are lexical.   According to Bickerton's theory the lexical changes should have been followed by a change in the grammar.   In his description, Bickerton does not refer to earlier tense and aspect forms to see what possible changes there may have been or to note whether the changes may have been purely lexical, or lexical followed by a shift in the grammar[8].

8.   In the basilect he states that a form _sa_ which is in variation with _gu_, was the principal irrealis marker in Quow (1877) and proverbs, and in his data only five _sa_ tokens were used - _gu_ is currently more frequently used. (In my data there is only one _sa_ token.) If _gu_ has replaced _sa_, we can ask why there has not been a grammatical change; even Bickerton states that 'there is apparently no distinction in meaning between the two.' (1975a:42).

2.11   Other Discrepancies in Text

Sankoff (1977:296) notes that Bickerton treats his data 'in an irregular, even cavalier fashion'.   An examination of his tables and figures shows that many of them contain discrepancies, 'a weakness which may be due to some combination of faulty editing, printing errors and careless proofreading.' (1977:296).   For example,[9] Table 2.1 lists outputs for sixteen heavy users of basilectal items (1975a:24-25).   Figures are given for various forms, including -ing, doz and a.   In the movement from basilect to mesolect, doz replaces a, and Table 3.1 (1975a:64) repeats the a and doz figures for eleven of the speakers of Table 2.1.   For three of the speakers there are discrepancies between the two tables.   Speaker No. 178 has 6 doz and 56 a in Table 2.1; 8 and 56 respectively Table 3.1.   Speaker No. 198 has 8 doz and 15 a in Table 2.1; 4 and 15 respectively in Table 3.1.   Speaker No. 176 has 12 doz and 39 a in Table 2.1; 11 doz and 39 a in Table 3.1.   Also, Speaker No. 99 appears in Table 3.3 as having 3 tokens Ving and 2 tokens of Ning, but in Table 3.2 he is shown with a total of 23 ing forms.

There are also instances of speaker omission.   For example, Table 3 is said to contain those speakers who have both doz and a, and who use at least one of them 5 times.   But Speaker No. 242, shown in Table 3.3 as having 2 doz and 6 a, is not listed.   In the discussion of the phonological conditioning for past marking, the text tells us that of the 14 speakers of Table 4.7, there are 9 who produce past forms in weak -syll verbs.   Their data are grouped in terms of phono-

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9.   The examples noted here are from Sankoff (1977).

logical environment in Table 4.11. This would be fine except that there are 10, not 9, such speakers shown in Table 4.7. Speaker No. 125 is inexplicably missing from Table 4.11, so we are unable to find out whether his data would have obeyed the regular conditioning shown in Figure 4.3. (See Sankoff (1977) for further discrepancies in Bickerton's tables.)

Since Bickerton's analysis is based on the distribution of data, the errors noted above are very disquieting.

2.12   Summary

In this critique I have illustrated the observational, descriptive and explanatory inadequacies of Bickerton's analysis of the Guyanese tense and aspect systems.   On the basis of the criticisms I am therefore faced with two tasks:

(1)   Find alternative tense and aspect systems.

(2)   Attempt to see whether it is the case that we are dealing with grammatically similar coexistent varieties, rather than Bickerton's continuum of grammatical change.

CHAPTER III

THE SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS OF THE TENSE

ASPECT ITEMS IN GUYANESE CREOLE

3.1   Introduction

In this analysis I will be describing a variety which

on formal grounds can be identified as 'basilect' and

another variety which formally can be identified as

'mesolect', and together they constitute 'Guyanese Creole'.

The 'acrolect' is not described, since, grammatically, if

not totally formally, it can be identified as 'English'. I

adopt the analysis of the English tense system as $[\pm \text{ Past}]$

and the aspectual system as $[\pm \text{ Progressive}]$. There is a

perfect tense which is in opposition to the preterit..

(See McCoard 1978 for categorization of the English

perfect[1].)   I observe in the data that speakers can switch

between 'English' and 'Creole' - but I will not assume the

switching implies that sooner or later the Creole will

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1. The English perfect is often categorized as 'aspect'.
   (See, for example, Palmer 1965; Allen 1966; Bickerton
   1975a ; Quirk et al. 1973; Leech and Svartik 1975.)
   Lyons (1968 a : 316) categorizes the perfect as 'aspect',
   but notes that 'in certain circumstances at least, it is
   a secondary, or relative, tense, rather than aspect'.
   (See also Lyons 1977.) Comrie (1976) discusses the
   English perfect but mentions that the 'difference between
   the perfect and the other aspects has led many linguistics
   to doubt whether the perfect should be considered as an
   aspect at all.' (p.52). Palmer (1974) notes that the
   perfect seems to have tense and aspectual functions and
   creates a category 'phase' to accommodate it.   But
   Ridjanović (1969) and McCoard (1978) have put forward
   arguments for considering the perfect as 'tense'.

acquire the categories of English as Bickerton assumes. By
not making such an assumption I will not have to postulate
the disappearance of forms and categories, especially since it
will mean postulating that disappearance without linguistic
evidence. The fact that a Creole speaker can utter an English
form is in itself no proof that the Creole language is acquir-
ing the categories of English.

It is not unusual for speakers to vary between 'English'
and 'Creole' in their speech acts. Thus in response to the
question 'What job do you do?' an informant replied to Edwards:

(1) at prezent ai am not working. mi na a wok nau

     'At present I am not working. I am not working now.
                                             (62A/2/1)

The forms, word-order, and the overt marking of tense ('am'),
and aspect ('-ing') identifies the first part of the utterance
as 'English'. The second part of the utterance can be identi-
fied as 'Creole' (basilect, to be precise) on the basis of the
forms used, word-order, and the fact that the utterance is
only marked for aspect ('a'). At times the distinction is not
so clearly defined. Thus an informant speaking about the
cultivation of plants:

(2) wen de kom tu a seerteen saiz, yu plau dem around - dis
     iz di ruut - yu plau dem til about hee, an den yu troo
     di kau mool around it

     'When they (the plants) come to a certain size, you
     plough around them - this is the root - you plough them
     to about here, and then you throw the manure around it.'
                                             (21B/5-7/2)

The above verb forms could be 'English' since in generaliza-
tions and sequencing of the kind exemplified the uninflected
verb form is used. In Guyanese Creole, the plain uninflected

verb form is also used in generalizations, but it can be optionally marked by a or doz for habitual aspect. We seem to have in example (2), therefore, an instance of neutralization between two different varieties.

Another instance of neutralization is exemplified in example (3) below:

(3) wel, hii waz a nais maan tu mii, an wen hii had tu lef
    hee, mi sarii, bot di wok bin finish
    'Well, he was a nice man to me, and when he had to leave
    here, I was sorry, but the work had finished.'
                                                    (22A/21-23/1)

Formally and syntactically the utterance 'hii waz a nais man tu mii could be English or mesolect. It could be mesolect since the mesolectal past tense form did cannot be used in copular constructions because of a *did a word constraint in Guyanese Creole. It would have been possible to say:

(4) hii did nais tu mii
 or
(5) hii waz nais tu mii   he was nice to me

 but not
(6) *hii did a nais maan tu mii.

Therefore, if a Guyanese speaker chooses not to use basilectal bin + a in a noun copular construction, he must use waz. had tu can be identified as English or mesolect (bin gat fu is the basilect construction). lef, however, and the rest of the construction can formally and grammatically be identified as Creole. Since hii waz a nais maan and had tu can be instances of neutralization, and since the rest of the speech act can be identified as 'Creole', I would consider the entire speech act to be 'Creole'.

There are instances which are English and not Creole.
For example:

(7) aal ai tel dem, 'wel, ai am not afreed ov yor dadii,
     ar enibadii laik dat. soo, bikaaz yor dadii mos
     noo ai wudnt biit yuu witout a kaaz, deerfoor, ai'l
     bii glaad tu miit dadii ar momii

     'The only thing I told them, 'Well, I am not afraid
     of your daddy, or anybody like that. So, because
     your daddy must know I wouldn't beat you without a
     cause, therefore, I'll be glad to meet daddy or
     mommy.' (4B/24 – 27/1).

The first four items, aal ai tel dem, would be considered a

Creole construction - the use of the plain uninflected verb

for past time reference, and even ai (which could otherwise

be classified as English). (In section 3.5.9 I present

arguments for considering ai as part of the Creole as well

as the English pronominal system.) But the rest of the

speech act can formally and grammatically be identified as

English.

Example (8) below would be considered as Creole

(mesolect, to be precise):

(8) a doz stitch baag
     I stitch bags. (22B/2/1).

And so would example (9), although we can say that the use

of 'biiheevyu' and 'sityuueeshanz' can be English. The

use of ga a would be considered as basilect.

(9) yu ga a luk at piipl, hau de biiheev, studii de
     biiheevyu, sii hau de aplai deself tu ada
     sityuueeshanz an ting

     'You have to look at people, how they behave, study
     their behaviour, see how they apply themselves to
     other situations and thing.' (18B/17 – 18/1).

This brief discussion indicates that in selecting

Creole utterances from my corpus of data, not only do I have

to consider forms, word-order, and possible instances of neutralizations, but that my native-speaker intuition plays a major role in the selection process.

3.2 Models

My aim is to provide an account of the semantics of the Guyanese tense and aspect systems. For this a necessary preliminary is a grammatical description but it need not be of much sophistication. To provide a complete description is a very large task. I use the universal sentence pattern schema proposed by Lyons (1977) as a starting point.

My model of lexical change is partially that of Bickerton (1975a:1980), but mostly that of Kuryłowicz (1964) which illustrates the persistence of categories in the face of formal innovation. According to Kuryłowicz's theory, before there can be change there must be first of all formal <u>identification</u> of morphemes. There is then a formal renewal which subdivides the categories. This he calls the principle of <u>differentiation</u>. There is then <u>integration</u> with subsequent extension to the entire range. Thus in Classical Latin, the form <u>amabo</u> functioned as a modal and future tense form (identification); then in Vulgar Latin <u>amare habeo</u> functioned as a modal, and <u>amabo</u> as the future tense form (differentiation); in Romance <u>amare habeo</u> functioned as the modal as well as the future tense form (integration). My description stops at the level of differentiation since I have not observed integration (or even a grammatical change as Bickerton posits). Kuryłowicz's model, however, postulates that the initial changes are a purely internal phenomenon, and the subsequent changes are externally

motivated (i.e. spread via imitation). Bickerton's initial changes are externally motivated, thus on this point my description of Guyanese is more in keeping with Bickerton than Kuryłowicz.

3.3   Sources of Synchronic Variation

This chapter is concerned with the items which mark tense and aspect in Guyanese Creole. It is necessary, however, to set out not only the syntactic and semantic constraints on these forms within the tense and aspect systems, but also their functions other than tense and aspect marking since there is a considerable degree of homonymy between different functions and variations in the forms used for particular functions.   There is substantial homonymy in that a form a can function as a progressive aspect marker, habitual aspect marker, modal, copula, preposition, first person subject pronoun etc.. There is variation in that a form a is in variation with pan as a locative preposition, a is in variation with mosii as a modal, a is in variation with wan as an indefinite article etc..

3.3.1 Lexemic categories

Some of the homonymy and some of the variation is a consequence of the extent to which the language employs selective or lexemic categories.   Whorf (1956:93) defines selective categories:

'A selective category is a grammatical class
with membership fixed, and limited as com-
pared with some larger class. A PRIMARY
selective category, or LEXEMIC category, is
one compared to which the next larger class
is the total lexicon of the language. <u>Certain
semantic and grammatical properties are
assured in the word by selecting it from a
certain class</u> of fixed membership not cotermin-
ous with the whole vocabulary. In order that
a certain grammatical property may be "in the
lexeme", it cannot be in all lexemes.   The
familiar "parts of speech" of most European
languages, but not of English, are lexemic
categories.'   [my emphasis] .

Whorf (p.94) further explains that lexemic categories may

be overt or covert.   In French, Latin, Aztec and Navaho,

for example, they are overt.   So that in French, <u>ange</u> and

<u>mange</u> belong to different compartments of the vocabulary

(noun and verb) and there is always a feature in the

sentence that tells which.   In Hopi, on the other hand,

the lexemic categories are covert. For example, there is

no distinction in the 'simplex (base-stem) forms' between

nouns and verbs, and sentences are possible in which there

is no distinction in the sentence.   Thus <u>le·'na</u> or <u>pam</u>

<u>le·'na</u> means 'it is a flute', and <u>pe·'na</u> or <u>pam pe·'na</u>

means 'he writes it'.   Therefore, Whorf goes on:

'... nouns and verbs MAY BE alike in overt
characteristics.   But it is easily possible
to make sentences in which le·'na appears
with case suffixes and in other forms quite
impossible for pe·'na and vice versa. One has
to know, and cannot always tell from the
sentence, that le·'na and pe·'na belong to
different compartments of the grammar.' (p.94).

Whorf (p.95) also explains that lexemic categories can in-

clude not only nouns, verbs, adjectives and other 'parts of

speech', but also 'full' words and 'empty' words or stems

(grammatical functors), as in, for example, Chinese.   He

defines an 'empty' word or stem as one 'that is highly

specialized for grammatical or syntactic indication,

perhaps in a way that does not admit of being assigned a

concrete meaning'.   Thus such a word may function as an

indicator tense, mood, voice etc..

The reliance of Guyanese Creole on lexemic categories

can be expected from the assertion made by Bailey (1966:6)

based on her work on Jamaican Creole.   She says:

> 'One of the most striking features to be
> noted in any study of the Creole languages
> is the fact that, compared with the source
> language from which they draw their lexicon,
> their inflectional content is exceedingly
> meagre, so that the grammatical information
> is carried almost entirely by the syntactic
> system.   Typologically, these languages, like
> Chinese, are characterized by having syntact-
> ically independent elements which account for
> the total grammatical structure.   Creole
> words are invariable, with no inflectional
> endings, and grammatical relations are
> expressed by means of particles or purely
> tactical devices.'

In my treatment of the grammatical function classes a,

de, don, bin and gu I have been influenced by my native-

speaker intuition as to certain areas of semantic overlap

between each member of each of these classes.   I have also

been influenced by B.L. Whorf's arguments concerning lexical

categories, referred to above.   I would wish to argue that

there are derivational relationships between each member of

each of these classes, although one can map fairly distinct

syntactic functions for each member.   Thus I distinguish

for grammatical purposes twelve uses of the form /a/, seven

of /de/, two of /don/, four of /bin/ and three of /gu/.

(Comparable, though not exactly similar, uses of some of these forms are distinguished lexically in the Dictionary of Jamaican English (1979).)

My semantic intuition, used in my analysis of Edwards' texts, is that all the {DE} morphemes are deictic, all the {DON} morphemes are completive; all the {BIN} morphemes are associated with marking predication about the past; all the {GU} morphemes imply movement towards a goal or destination.

The case of the {A} morphemes is more complex; the semantic range here includes the marking of a noun copular, of a focalizer, pronominal use, modal use, prepositional use etc. Out of context, however, we frequently find ambiguities about {A}; for example, in the case of mi a tiicha 'I am a teacher', we postulate the neutralization of an underlying a from mi a a tiicha with the sense that the remaining surface form carries the meaning of both underlying morphemes, just as The in 'The man's hat' does.

If we assume a morpheme unity, we can have simple explanations for the variation between a and mosii as a modal, a and pan as a preposition, a and wan as an indefinite article etc., in that the variation is due to these overlaps in semantic functions I have described. Guyanese speakers exploit their knowledge of these overlaps for stylistic purposes. If we do not accept this fact not only will we be hard pressed to explain the origins of the various morphemes, but we will also have difficulty in explaining which member of each class is in any particular case varying with mosii, wan, pan etc..

My intuitions seem to provide a simple explanation of

why an earlier form /da/ which functioned as a noun copula, progressive/habitual aspect marker, preposition, topicalizer was replaced by a form /a/ in the above functions. The class of {A} morphemes was extended to cover the range of functions of the class of {DA} morphemes and ultimately replaced it. The class of {DA} morphemes was not lost, but synchronically today is limited to the demonstrative pronoun[2].

3.3.2 Externally motivated lexical changes

Some of the synchronic variation is due to externally motivated lexical changes - that is, changes resulting from the imitation of Standard English forms, and their use alongside the Creole forms. For example, in the basilect, a functions as a progressive and as an habitual aspect marker. In the mesolect there is a formal differentiation in that -ing is suffixed to non-stative verbs for progressive aspect, and doz occurs before all classes of verbs for habitual aspect. There is also the example of the form bin which in the basilect functions as a past tense marker, a locative copula with past meaning, a directional copula with past meaning, and a noun copula with past meaning. In the mesolect, did replaces bin as past tense marker, waz as the past form in noun copular constructions, but bin continues to function as a locative and directional copula

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2. See Rickford (1978:197-221) for reprints of texts first published between 1881-1902 in which the variation between the forms /da/ and /a/ in the above functions is observed.

3.3.3 Variation between varieties

Although on formal grounds and internal consistency we can identify a variety which can be called 'basilect' and another variety which can be called 'mesolect', it should be noted that neither is homogeneous, and their non-homogeneity is another source of synchronic variation. For example, the basilectal locative copula de is in variation with mesolectal bii. bii, however, can only occur in habitual constructions with the mesolectal habitual aspect marker doz. de, on the other hand, can occur in non-habitual constructions, and habitual constructions with basilectal habitual a , and with mesolectal habitual doz. Also, whereas the basilectal past tense form bin can co-occur with basilectal progressive a, and mesolectal progressive -ing, the mesolectal past tense form did can only co-occur with mesolectal progressive -ing.

The variation noted between the basilect and mesolect above is predictable. But there are times when it appears to be random.

(Basilect underlined with double lines, mesolect with a single line.)

(7) yu ga a luk at piipl, hau de biiheev, studii de bii-
heevyu, sii hau de aplai deself tu ada sityuueeshanz
an ting.

You have to look at people, how they behave, study
their behaviour, see how they apply themselves to
other situations and things.   (18B/17-18/12)

(8) yu gat tu bii raang, ar yu gat tu bii rait, wan out a di
tuu. if yu raang, piipl gon korek yu. bot if yu na
taak, noobadii na gu noo wu yu waant fu se at aal.

You have to be wrong, or you have to be right, one out of
the two. If you are wrong, people will correct you. But
if you do not talk, nobody will know what you want to say.
(18B/27-29/4)

Then there is variation between a variety which can be identified as 'Creole' (basilect/mesolect) and a variety which can be identified as 'English'. This variation is un-predictable. ('Creole' is underlined.)

(9) soo yuur puting aan door freemz an su aan. wat
     doz dat involv. <u>wu yu gat tu duu</u>.

     So you're putting on door frames and so on. What
     does that involve? What do you have to do?
                                                 (26B/14-15/1)

(10) ai tink dat aal ov us <u>gat tu</u> surv owu kontrii in som
      wee or di ada, and ai biliiv dat edyuukeeshan iz a
      vaital aspek.and ai also hav a kaaling <u>fu</u> children.

      I think that all of us have to serve our country in
      some way or the other, and I believe that education
      is a vital aspect. And I also have a calling for
      children. (18B/20-22/1)

3.3.4 <u>Summary on synchronic variation</u>

The three sources of synchronic variaion - overlap in classes, diachronic lexical changes, and overlap between the basilect and mesolect (but not variation between 'Creole' and 'English') - will be further exemplified below. The assumption of lexemic categories, besides coping with the data exemplified in Rickford 1978, provides a substantially simpler and better integrated account of Guyanese than Bickerton's.

The forms I am concerned with are basilectal <u>a</u>, <u>de</u>, <u>don</u>, <u>bin</u>, <u>gu</u> and their variants. In the illustration of the forms, I will refer to the mesolectal variants usually on the grounds of a formal relationship between the forms used in Guyanese Creole and those used in Standard English.

3.4   Syntactic Patterns

First, it is necessary to give a brief description of the simple indicative declarative sentence in the language. To illustrate the syntactic structure of the simple sentence, I have decided to use the kernel sentence schema proposed by Lyons (1977:467-475) which operates with a set of terms and concepts that comes partly from traditional grammar and partly from more recent grammatical theory.   I have chosen this model as it allows me to treat tense and aspect as extra-nuclear categories, and also because of the inter-dependence between form, structure and meaning in the language, as high-lighted below in sentence pattern (6).   On the basis of my data, I therefore deem it best to begin with syntactic structures which can be identified on purely formal grounds.

The sentence patterns will be followed by a simple statement of the syntactic distribution of the basilectal forms a, de, don, bin, qu and their variants.   This will be followed by a statement on the classification of verbs, and other 'verb' classes, and a statement on the auxiliary when the above forms and their mesolectal variants are functioning as markers of tense and aspect.

3.4.1   Kernel sentence patterns

Below are six basic kernel sentence patterns.   (The symbols that occur in the sentence schemata are as follows: NP = noun-phrase (including nominals); V = verb; ADJ = adjective; COP = copula; LOC = locative (adverbial) expression; ADV = adverb.   The brackets ( ) indicate optional elements.)

1. NP + V:

   (In this pattern, V indicates verb, adjective and adverb.)

       da gyal wok (haard) (a skuul)
         NP + V + (ADV) + (LOC)
       That girl worked hard at school

       da gyal brait
        NP + ADJ
       That girl is intelligent

       shi aalweez
       NP + ADV
       She is frequently like that

2. NP + V + NP:

       di bai plee di piyana (pan a aaftanuun)
        NP + V + NP + (LOC)
       The boy played the piano in the afternoon

3. NP + COP + NP:

       paal a wan (brait) bai
        NP + COP + NP
       Paul is an intelligent boy

  (mesolect: paal iz a (brait) bai)

4. COP + NP:

       a tii-taim
       COP + NP
       It is tea-time

  (mesolect: iz tii taim)

5. NP + COP:

> laiyan de
>   NP + COP
> Lions exist

6. NP + (COP) + LOC:

> hii (de) hoom (nau)
> NP + (COP) + LOC + (ADV)
> He is at home now

With regard to sentence pattern (6) there are instances when the locative copula is obligatory:

(a) shi de a chorch - she is in church   (basilect)

(b) it de a teebl   - it is on the table   "

(c) hii de a shap   - he is at the shop   "

But de is optional in the sentences below:

(d) shi (de) in chorch   - she is in church (mesolect)

(e) it (de) pan di teebl - it is on the table   "

(f) hii (de) at di shop - he is at the shop   "

(g) hii (de) hoom   - he is at home (basilect + mesolect)

On the basis of the above constructs it can be generalized that if the locative phrase begins with a form other than a, de is optional. If, for example, de is deleted from a sentence such as shi de a chorch, the meaning would be no longer locative, but 'she is a church' with a syntactic structure NP + COP + NP instead of NP + (COP) + LOC.

3.4.2 Distribution of the forms /a/, /de/, /don/, /bin/, /gu/ and their variants

Distributional criteria point to the need to recognize several a, de, don, bin and gu morphemes respectively. On the assumption of lexemic categories, the separate morphemes reflect classes which are a part of the basic morpheme class. Thus the morpheme class $\{A\}$, for example, is comprised of twelve classes - the classes being identified on syntactic distribution.

The postulation of morpheme classes simplifies problems concerning diachronic lexical change. Thus if a morpheme class has several morphemes, and one or more of the morphemes is formally renewed, it is not the morpheme class which is being renewed, but only a morpheme corresponding to a part of the class's functional range. Therefore, the changes are only lexical and not grammatical. Bickerton, for example, posited one a which functioned as a progressive and habitual aspect marker. When the a occurred before non-stative verbs, the positing of one morpheme a was fine. But it is also a fact that a can occur before stative verbs, which suggests that there may be another aspectual a. Bickerton chose to ignore such occurrences and referred to a + stative verbs as 'performance errors'. The formal renewal of his one basilectal a into -ing and doz ~ yuuz tu in the mesolect, indicated the formation of two categories. However, syntactically there are two aspectual a's in the basilect. Thus the formal renewal in the mesolect is indicative of a lexical change and not a grammatical change. By positing a morpheme class $\{A\}$ not only will it be possible

to safely classify two aspectual a's (as the data indicates), but it will also maintain the unity that there seems to be between the two morphemes.

3.4.2.1 Distribution of the form /a/ and its variants

1. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{doz\}$ ~ $\{yuuz\ tu\}$ ~ $\{-s\}$

   Between subject and predicate as an habitual aspect marker. The morpheme $\{-s\}$ is suffixed to the verb.

2. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{-ing\}$

   Between subject and predicate ($\{-ing\}$ is suffixed to the verb) as a progressive aspect marker.

3. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{mosii\}$

   Between subject and predicate as a modal of probability.

4. $\{A\}$

   Occurs after the modals kud, wud, shud, mait in referring to past possibilities.

5. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{fu\}$ ~ $\{tu\}$

   Occurs after the copula gat as a complementizer to form a modal of obligation.

6. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{bin\}$ ~ $\{iz\}$ ~ $\{woz\}$

   Between subject and predicate in noun copular constructions.

7. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{-iz\}$

   Before noun-phrases as a focalizer.

   Before nominals in predicate clefting.

   Before noun-phrases in impersonal constructions.

8. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{pan\}$

   Before noun-phrases as a locative preposition.

9. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{wan\}$

   Before noun-phrases as an indefinite article.

10. $\{A\}$ ~ $\{ai\}$ ~ $\{mi\}$ ~ $\{mii\}$

    Before predicate as a first person subject pronoun.

3.4.2.2 Distribution of the form /de/, represented phonetically as [dɛ], and its variants.

1. $\{DE\}$ ~ $\{bii\}$

   Between subject and predicate as a durative aspect marker.

   Between subject and predicate as a copula.

2. $\{DE\}$

   After predicate as a locative adverb.

   After predicate as a focussing locative adjunct.

3. $\{DE\}$ ~ $\{dee\}$ ~ $\{dem\}$ ~ $\{den\}$

   Before predicate as a third person plural subject pronoun.

   Before noun-phrases as a third person plural possessive
   pronoun.

4. $\{DE\}$ ~ $\{dee\}$ ~ $\{dem\}$ ~ $\{den\}$ ~ $\{ii\}$ ~ $\{yu\}$

   Before the copulas gat and get as an existential pronoun.

3.4.2.3 Distribution of the form /don/ and its variant

1. $\{$ DON $\}$

   Between subject and predicate, or after predicate, as a punctual (completive) aspect marker

2. $\{$ DON $\}$ ~ $\{$ finish $\}$

   A main verb.

3.4.2.4 Distribution of the form /bin/ and its variants

1. $\{$ BIN $\}$ ~ $\{$ biin $\}$ ~ $\{$ en $\}$ ~ $\{$ did $\}$ ~ $\{$ -ed $\}$

   Between subject and predicate ($\{$ -ed $\}$ is suffixed to the verb) as a past tense marker.

2. $\{$ BIN $\}$ ~ $\{$ biin $\}$

   Between subject and predicate as a locative copula.
   Between subject and predicate as a directional copula.

3. $\{$ BIN $\}$ ~ $\{$ a $\}$ ~ $\{$ woz $\}$

   Between subject and predicate in noun-copular constructions.

3.4.2.5 Distribution of the form /gu/ and its variants

1. $\{$ GU $\}$ ~ $\{$ gon $\}$ ~ $\{$ wud $\}$

   Between subject and predicate as a future tense marker/
   modal.

2. $\{$ GU $\}$ ~ $\{$ gaan $\}$

   A main verb.

3. $\{$ GU $\}$ ~ $\{$ fu $\}$

   Infinitival complementizer.

3.4.3 Syntactic classification of verbs

Three classes of verbs have been identified in the data: (a) non-stative; (b) stative; (c) stative-resultative.

The stative/non-stative classification relates to the semantic distinction between a 'state' and an 'event' or 'dynamic' situation.   According to Leech (1971:14):

> 'A state is undifferentiated and lacking in
> defined limits.   An event, on the other hand,
> has a beginning and an end; it can be viewed
> as a whole entity, and can also make up one
> member of a sequence or plurality of
> happenings.'

To this succinct definition can be added Comrie's (1976: 49-50) claim that states, like a dynamic situation, can also start and cease.   But with a state, unless something happens to change that state, then the state will continue. With a dynamic situation, on the other hand, the situation will only continue if it is subject to a new input of energy. Stative verbs refer to 'states', non-stative verbs refer to 'events' or dynamic situations.

The following are a selection of non-stative verbs: ron 'run', tel 'tell', sing 'sing', get 'get', staart 'start'.

The following are a selection of stative verbs: noo 'know', biliiv 'believe', waant 'want', stand 'stand' gat 'have'.

Stative-resultative is a term I have introduced (and which I have borrowed from Kuryłowicz (1964) to classify the problematic, and as yet unclassified, group of verbs brok 'broke', lef 'left', laas 'lost', marid 'married', gaan 'gone' and deed 'dead'.   That they may be stative is stated by Le

Page (1974:48) who says the forms <u>brok</u>, <u>lef</u>, <u>laas</u>

> 'may derive from the adoption of (English)
> <u>broken</u>, <u>left</u>, <u>lost</u> as stative predicates
> distinct from the normal verb-classes, as
> perhaps happened also with gone (/gaan/),
> and the use of their Creole reflexes as,
> apparently, action-verbs as a back-
> formation from this stative use under the
> influence of the grammatical thinking of
> the model language.'

But I have discovered the group of verbs is also <u>resultative</u> in that they also refer to the successful completion of a situation[3]. Unmarked non-stative verbs, unless contextually defined, have past meaning - i.e. they refer to a situation which is complete at the time of utterance. It is probably this semantic overlap between stative-resultative verbs and their unmarked non-stative counterparts which makes them variable in some contexts. Thus:

1. <u>shi liiv</u> or <u>shi lef</u> - she left or she has left.

2. <u>it breek</u> or <u>it brok</u> - it broke or it has broken.

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3. See section 3.9.2 for a description of <u>gu</u> as a main verb and which includes a discussion of <u>gu</u> being variable with <u>gaan</u> in constructions with past meaning.

3.4.4 Other 'Verb' classes

By 'verb' is meant any word which can be modified by the negative markers na, n, en and doon[4], and which can serve as the predicate or the centre of the predicative expression. 'Verb' in this broad sense is then synonymous

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4. In Guyanese Creole, na and n are basilect negatives, and n, en and doon are mesolect negatives.
Co-occurrence with progressive/habitual a (basilect) and the negative forms:
(a) i shi na a duu it - she is not doing/does not usually do it.
   *ii shi an duu it
  *iii shi en a duu it
  *iv shi a doon duu it
(Example (a)*iii is possible, but then en is interpreted as a past tense form.)

Co-occurrence with mesolect habitual doz and yuuz tu:
(b) i shi na doz duu it - she does not usually do it.
  ii shi dozn duu it
 iii shi en doz duu it
  iv shi doz doon duu it

(c) i shi na yuuz tu duu it - She did not usually do it.
  ii shi yuuzn tu duu it
 iii shi en yuuz tu duu it
  iv shi yuuz tu doon duu it

Co-occurrence with basilect/mesolect durative de:
(d) i shi na de a duu it - she is not doing it.
  *ii shi den a duu it
 iii shi en de a duu it
  iv shi doon de a duu it

Co-occurrence with basilect/mesolect punctual don:
(e) i shi na don duu it - she has not done it
  *ii shi donn duu it
 iii shi en don duu it
  *iv shi doon don duu it

Co-occurrence with basilect past tense form bin, and mesolect past tense form did:
(f) i shi na bin duu it - she did not do it.
  *ii shi binn duu it
 iii shi en bin duu it
  *iv shi bin doon duu it

(g) i shi na did duu it
  ii shi didn duu it
 iii shi en did duu it
  *iv she did doon duu it

4. (cont'd.)

Co-occurrence with basilect future tense form gu, and
mesolect future tense form gon:
(h) i   shi na gu duu it - she will not do it.
    *ii shi gun duu it
    iii shi en gu duu it
    *iv shi gu doon duu it

(i) i   shi na gon duu it
    *ii shi gonn duu it
    iii shi en gon duu it
    *iv shi gon doon duu it

Co-occurrence with the basilect and mesolect modal wud:
(j) i   shi wud na duu it - she would not do it.
    ii shi wudn duu it
   *iii shi en wud duu it
    iv shi wud doon duu it

Co-occurrence with the basilect and mesolect modal kyan
(k) i   shi na kyan duu it - she cannot do it
    *ii shi en kyan duu it
   *iii shi kyan doon duu it
    iv shi kyaan duu it
(In example (k)iv, negation is signalled by vowel length-
ening.)

With verbs, the semantic difference between na, n, en
and doon is revealed:
(l) i   shi na sing - she did not sing; she does not sing.
    *ii shi n sing
    iii shi en sing - she did not sing; she does not sing.
    iv shi doon sing - she does not sing; *she did not sing.

The fact that doon cannot have a punctual meaning,
implies that it is semantically non-punctual. The
inherent non-punctual meaning would therefore make it
possible to co-occur with habituals yuuz tu and doz,
durative de, and the modal wud, but non-occurrence with
the tense forms bin, did, gu, gon, and the modal kyan if
we assume that the latter five forms are punctual. The
negatives na, n, en are probably semantically 'empty'
hence their wider co-occurrence and semantic potential.

with 'predicate', which will include verbs in a narrow
sense, as well as adjectives and adverbs[5].

In footnote 4 we see that 'auxiliary verbs' and 'main
verbs' can occur in the position of predicate and can be
negated.

'Adjectives' are also verbal in that they can occur
in the predicate position without a distinctive class mark:

1.   shi <u>taal</u> - she is tall.

Like main verbs, adjectives can be modified by 'auxiliary
verbs':

2.   shi <u>wuda</u> <u>jelos</u> - she would have been jealous

3.   shi <u>bin</u> <u>jelos</u> - she was jealous

4.   shi <u>doz</u> <u>jelos</u> - she is usually jealous

5.   shi <u>don</u> <u>jelos</u> - she is already jealous

Like verbs, adjectives can also be negated:

6.   shi $\left\{ \begin{matrix} \underline{na} \\ \underline{en} \end{matrix} \right\}$ <u>jelos</u> - she is not jealous

7.   shi <u>doon</u> <u>jelos</u>   - she is not usually jealous

But adjectives differ from verbs in that they can occur
attributively:

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5.   This general definition of 'verb' is borrowed from
     Chao (1968:663) in his description of Chinese.

8. dis a wan <u>smaal</u> teebl - this is a small table.

   *dis a wan sing teebl[6]

   Adverbs are also like verbs in that they can occur in the predicate position without a distinctive class mark:

9. shi <u>aalweez</u> - she frequently behaves in a particular

   manner.

They can be modified by 'auxiliary verbs' and negatives:

10. shi doz somtaimz de a sing - she sings sometimes

11. shi did neva de a sing   - she was never singing

12. shi wuda aalweez de a sing - she would have always been

   singing.

Adverbs are like verbs, and thus functioning as an adjective, in that they can occur before some nouns:

13. shi a wan <u>prapa</u> gyurl - she is a decent girl.

But adverbs differ from verbs in that they can modify adjectives:

14. shi <u>prapa</u> nais - she is really nice

                 or

               she is really ugly (sarcastically)[7].

_____

6. Main verbs and adjectives overlap if the modified noun is 'girl', 'boy', 'man', 'lady'.
(a) shi a wan <u>jelos</u> <u>gyurl</u> - she is a jealous girl.
(b) shi a wan <u>sing</u> <u>gyurl</u> - she is a singer.
   The intonation signals the semantic difference. Or, adjective + noun can be attributive or non-attributive.
(c) hii a wan <u>baad</u> <u>bai</u>   he is a bad boy
                            he is a criminal
   The intonation signals the semantic difference.

7. Adjectives can also function adverbially:
(a) hii <u>bad</u>   - he is bad (adjective)
(b) hii <u>bad</u> bad - he is very bad (adverb)
(c) it <u>hat</u> hat - it is very hot (adverb)

Within the larger class of 'verb' we can also include the copula verbs a and de. They can both be modified by 'auxiliary verbs' and negatives:

15. shi a wan tiicha — she is a teacher

16. shi bin a wan tiicha — she was a teacher

17. shi de hoom — she is at home

18. shi doz de hoom — she is usually at home

19. shi wuda de hoom — she would have been at home

20. shi did de hoom — she was at home

21. shi na a wan tiicha — she is not a teacher

22. shi na de hoom)
)she is not at home
    shi en de hoom)

23. shi doon de hoom — she is not usually at home[8]

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8. Unlike copula de, copula a cannot co-occur with modals or aspectuals:
(a) shi a nors — she is a nurse.
(b) *shi doz a nors
(c) *shi don a nors
(d) *shi wuda a nors
(e) *shi a a nors
   For nors to occur with modals and aspectuals, it must be interpreted as a verb:
(f) shi a de a nors — she is usually nursing (she is usually a nurse)
(g) shi mait de a nors — she may be nursing (she may be a nurse)
   If the predicate cannot be verbalized, the form de functions as the verbal marker:
(h) dem a di seem — they are the same.
(i) dem a de di seem — they are usually the same.
(j) dem mait de di seem — they may be the same.
   The copula a, which is basilect, cannot co-occur with the mesolect negatives en or doon. iz and waz are the mesolect noun copulas. de is a copula in both the basilect and mesolect.

The copula _de_ is in variation with adverbs in predicate
position:

24.　shi _de_ hoom ）
　　　　　　　　　 ）she is at home
　　　shi hoom 　　）

25.　shi _de_ in di shap ）
　　　　　　　　　　　 ） she is in the shop
　　　shi _in_ di shap 　）

Predicate nouns, on the other hand, are distinguished
from the other classes by an obligatory verbal marker:

26.　da _a_ shurt-jak - that is a shirt-jacket.

So that nouns are not in the same class as verbs, adjectives
and adverbs.

　　　Therefore, it seems that the primary classification for
the Guyanese 'parts of speech' is NOUN:VERB with VERB being
sub-categorized into VERBS, ADJECTIVES and ADVERBS. Thus:

NOUN　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　VERB

non-　　stative　stative-　auxiliary　copula　adjectives　adverbs
stative　verbs　resultative　verbs　　verbs
verbs　　　　　　verbs
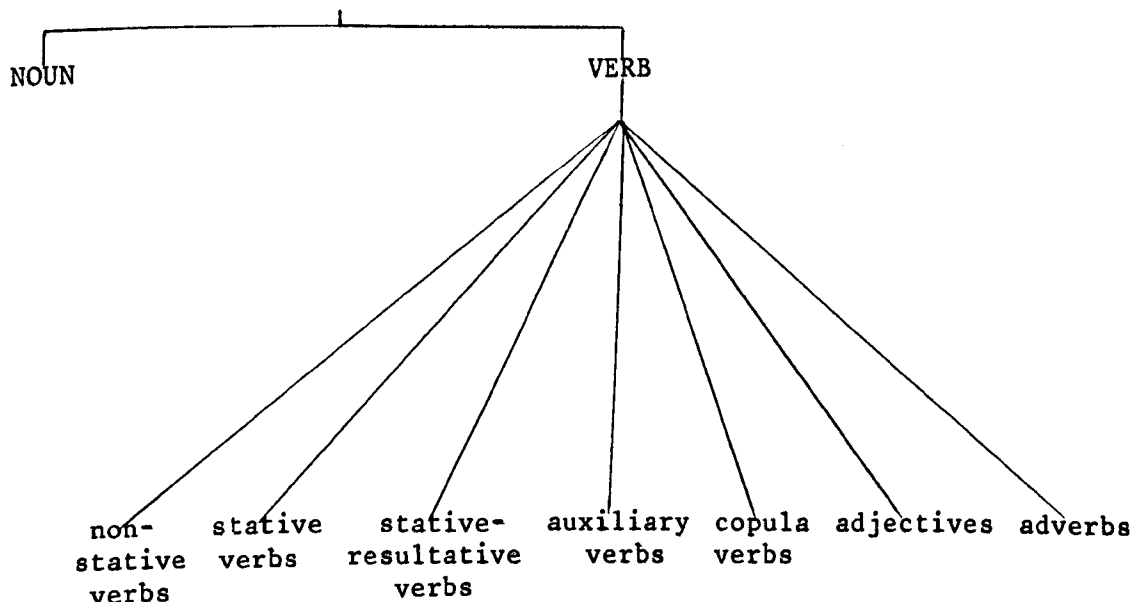
With this hierarchial classification we can explain the
similarities and differences between the classes, and thus

have a neat way of explaining the creole problem of 'multi-functionality'. The category VERB in Guyanese Creole is therefore that which Whorf (1956:93) calls a PRIMARY selective category (see section 3.3.1).

3.4.5 Simple syntactic statement of the auxiliary

To establish the auxiliary group of verbs, I have decided to use the universal criteria proposed by Steele (1978:13-20).

The auxiliary comprises the notions modality, tense and aspect. By modal is meant elements which mark any of the following: possibility or the related notion of permission; probability or the related notion of obligation; certainty or the related notion of requirement. Aspect includes such notions as perfective, progressive etc. Tense includes notions such as past, present and future. On the basis of these semantic requirements, word-order patterns in the data, and difficulties in accounting for aspectual a and doz before the modals kyan, gat fu, and get fu, and the need to separate habitual a from progressive a, I postulate the following ideal-ized auxiliary structures for the Guyanese basilect and mesolect:

Idealized basilect

Subject +	M	M	M	T	A	A	M	M	M	T	A	A	+ Predicate	A
	(mosii)	wud(a) kud(a) shud(a) mait(a)	(mos)	(bin)	(don)	(a)	(gat fu)	(kyan)	(get fu)	(gu)	(de)	(a)		(don)

MODAL OF PROBABILITY | MODALS OF POSSIBILITY | MODAL OF CERTAINTY | PAST TENSE | PUNCTUAL ASPECT | HABITUAL ASPECT | MODAL OF OBLIGATION | MODAL OF PERMISSION | MODAL OF REQUIREMENT | FUTURE TENSE | DURATIVE ASPECT | PROGRESSIVE ASPECT | PUNCTUAL ASPECT

Idealized mesolect

Subject +	M	M	M	T	A	A	M	M	M	T	A	A	+ Predicate	A
	(mosii)	wud(a) kud(a) shud(a) mait(a)	(mos)	did -ed	(don)	doz yuuz tu -s	hav tu had tu	(kyan)	(get fu)	(gon)	de bii	(-ing)		(don)

The notions expressed in the first M M M T A A pattern are in semantic opposition to the notions expressed in the recursive M M M T A A structure. As we can see, the pattern differentiates habitual a from progressive a, the pattern explains why habitual a or doz can occur before the modals gat fu, get fu and kyan - a phenomenon which caused Bickerton to make contradictory statements. The ordering also accounts for the possibility of bin gu, attested in Guyanese by Bickerton (1975a:43), Mufwene (1980:5), or bin sa (sa is the more archaic future tense/modal form) attested by Alleyne (1980:11). But the structure is indeed unusual for an auxiliary, so I will attempt to support the assignments formally. Some of these are perhaps best taken to be verbs, and others form a distinct sub-group of adverbs.

Beginning with the modals, one test we can devise for auxiliary membership is Subject - Aux inversion since verbs cannot invert:

(1)   yuu mosii iit di keek - you probably ate the cake.
       mosii yuu iit di keek - it is probably you who ate the
                                          cake.

(2)   yuu wud iit di keek   - you would eat the cake.
       wud yuu iit di keek   - would you eat the cake?

(3)   yuu kud a iit di keek - you could have eaten the cake.
       kud yuu a iit di keek - could you have eaten the cake?

(4)   yuu shud iit di keek - you should eat the cake
       shud yuu iit di keek - should you eat the cake?

(5)   yuu mait a iit di keek - you may have eaten the cake.
       mait yuu a iit di keek - might you have eaten the cake?

(6)　yuu mos iit di keek　- you must eat the cake.

　　　mos yuu iit di keek　- must you eat the cake?

(7)　yuu kyan iit di keek - you can eat the cake.

　　　kyan yuu iit di keek - can you eat the cake?

　　　But gat fu, get fu, hav tu and had tu cannot be inverted.

(8)　yuu gat fu iit di keek.)

　　　yuu get fu iit di keek } you have to eat the cake.

　　　yuu hav tu iit di keek)

　　　*gat fu yuu iit di keek

　　　*had yuu tu iit di keek (This construction is acceptable
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　in the acrolect.)

(9)　yuu get fu iit di keek - you are allowed to eat the cake.

　　　*get yuu fu iit di keek

　　　*get fu yuu iit di keek

The inability of get fu, gat fu, hav tu and had tu to invert,

seems to indicate that they are not members of the auxiliary

group.　In fact they are best classified as copular verbs.

Lyons (1967:390) defines the copula as a 'purely grammatical

element which carries distinctions of tense, mood and aspect

in the surface structure of certain classes of stative

sentences'.　That they are in the class of verbs can be seen

if we substitute gat, get, hav and had by other verbs.

(10) shi ⎧ get ⎫ fu iit di keek
　　　　　⎪ gat ⎪
　　　　　⎨ hav ⎬
　　　　　⎩ had ⎭

(11) shi <u>gu</u> fu iit di keek   - she went to eat the cake.

shi <u>disaid</u> fu iit di kook - she decided to eat the cake.

shi <u>noo</u> fu kot di keek   - she knows (how) to cut the cake.

Like <u>get</u>, <u>gat</u>, <u>hav</u> and <u>had</u>, verbs cannot invert with the subject:

(12) *<u>gu</u> shi fu iit di keek

*<u>disaid</u> shi fu iit di keek

Thus <u>get</u>, <u>gat</u>, <u>hav</u> and <u>had</u> are best classified as copular verbs and it is <u>get</u>, <u>gat</u>, <u>hav</u>, <u>had</u> + infinitival complement which give modal meaning.   (See Section 3.10 for a critique of Bickerton's analysis of <u>get</u> and <u>gat</u> and my reanalysis.)

By positing <u>get</u>, <u>gat</u>, <u>hav</u>, <u>had</u> as verbs, we no longer have to worry about the occurrence of aspectual <u>a</u> and <u>doz</u> before them.   Furthermore, the re-categorization of these forms leaves us with an auxiliary pattern M M M T A A/M T A A.

The remaining modals, except <u>mosii</u>, can occur in the predicate position without a complement:

(13) <u>kyan</u> shi sing - can she sing?
     yes, shi <u>kyan</u> - yes, she can.

(14) <u>mos</u> shi sing   - must she sing?
     yes, shi <u>mos</u>   - yes, she must.

(15) <u>wud</u> shi sing   - would she sing?
     yes, shi <u>wud</u>   - yes, she would.

(16) <u>kud</u> shi sing   - could she sing?
     yes, shi <u>kud</u>   - yes, she could.

(17) <u>shud</u> shi sing   - should she sing?
     yes, shi <u>shud</u> - yes, she should.

(18) <u>mait</u> shi sing   - might she sing?
     yes, shi <u>mait</u> - yes, she might.

     <u>mosii</u>, however, cannot occur alone in the predicate

     position:

(19) mosii shi huu sing - it was probably she who sang.
     *yes, shi <u>mosii</u>

     But it is possible to say:

(20) <u>mosii</u> shi - it is probably her.

In this syntactic position <u>mosii</u> is similar to the copular

verb <u>a</u> which occurs before nominals and in impersonal

constructions.

(21) <u>a</u> shi huu sing   - it is she who sang.
     <u>a</u> shi   - it is her.

(22) <u>a</u> sing hii sing   - it is sing, he sang.
     <u>mosii</u> sing hii sing - it is probably sing that he sang.

Like the copular verb <u>a</u>, and verbs, <u>mosii</u> can be predicated

by noun complements:

(23) dis leta <u>a</u> <u>fu yuu</u>   - this letter is for you
     dis leta <u>kom</u> <u>fu yuu</u>   - this letter came for you.
     dis leta <u>mosii</u> <u>fu yuu</u> - this letter is probably for you.

The other modals cannot occur in the above syntactic position:

(24)*<u>kud</u> sing shi sing

     *shi <u>mos</u> fu sing

     *dis leta <u>kyan</u> fu yuu

On the basis of the above, therefore, it seems best to
eliminate <u>mosii</u> from the auxiliary group and reclassify it as
a <u>modal verb</u>.

We are thus left with an auxiliary structure M M T A A/
M T A A . Unlike the remaining modals of possibility, the
modals <u>kyan</u> and <u>mos</u> can be preceded by the tense forms:

(25) yu <u>gu</u> <u>kyaan</u> de a iit di keek   ) you (surely) will not be
) eating the cake.
      yu <u>gon</u> <u>kyaan</u> bii iiting di keek)

(26) yu <u>bin</u> <u>mos</u> noo di aansa) you must have known the
) answer.
      yu <u>did</u> <u>mos</u> noo di aansa)

In this syntactic position, the modals are similar to the
adverbs <u>aalweez</u> 'always' and <u>neva</u> 'never'.

(27) shi <u>gu</u> <u>aalweez</u> de a iit - she will always be eating
      di keek   the cake.

      shi <u>did</u> <u>neva</u> noo di   - she never knew the answer
      aansa

Like these adverbs, <u>kyan</u> and <u>mos</u> can be preceded by aspect
markers.

(28) shi <u>a</u> ⎧ kyaan ⎫ de a sing - she usually cannot be singing
            ⎨ aalweez ⎬   she is usually always singing
            ⎩ neva   ⎭   she is usually never singing

(29) shi <u>doz</u> ⎧ mos   ⎫ iit di keek - she usually must eat the
                                          cake.
              ⎨ aalweez ⎬   she usually always eats
                                          the cake.
              ⎩ neva   ⎭   she usually never eats
                                          the cake.

Whereas <u>kyan</u> and <u>mos</u> can be preceded by tense and aspect
markers, the remaining modals of possibility cannot be
preceded by tense and aspect markers:

(30) *shi <u>bin</u> <u>wud</u> noo

      *shi <u>did</u> <u>shud</u> noo

      *shi <u>a</u> <u>kud</u> noo

      *shi <u>doz</u> <u>mait</u> noo.

On distributional grounds, therefore, it seems best to classify <u>kyan</u> and <u>mos</u> as <u>modal adverbs</u>.

 With the elimination of five modal notions from the auxiliary group, we are left with an M T A A/T A A pattern.

 Unlike the modals, the tense and aspect forms cannot occur before the subject. In this respect, the tense and aspect forms are like verbs.

(31) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{bin} \\ \underline{did} \end{Bmatrix}$ iit di keek - she ate the cake.

 * $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{bin} \\ \underline{did} \end{Bmatrix}$ shi iit di keek

(32) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{gu} \\ \underline{gon} \end{Bmatrix}$ iit di keek - she will eat the cake.

 * $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{gu} \\ \underline{gon} \end{Bmatrix}$ shi iit di keek

(33) shi <u>don</u> iit di keek - she has eaten the cake.

 *<u>don</u> shi iit di keek

(34) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \end{Bmatrix}$ iit di keek - she usually eats the cake

 * $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \end{Bmatrix}$ shi iit di keek

(35) shi <u>de a</u> iit di keek)
)she is eating the cake.
 shi <u>de</u> <u>iiting</u> di keek)

 *<u>de a</u> shi iit di keek[9]

---

9. Interrogation with the tense and aspect forms is carried by intonation. With the modals, however, interrogation is carried either by Subject-Aux inversion, or by intonation, or both.

Punctual <u>don</u>, however, can occur before or after the predicate[10]:

(36) shi <u>don</u> iit di keek)
) she has eaten the cake
      shi iit di keek <u>don</u>)

Tense and aspect forms differ from modals and from verbs in that they must be followed by a verb complement:

(37) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{bin} \\ \underline{did} \end{Bmatrix}$ sing - she sang

     *shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{bin} \\ \underline{did} \end{Bmatrix}$

(38) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{gu} \\ \underline{gon} \end{Bmatrix}$ sing - she will sing

     *shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{gu} \\ \underline{gon} \end{Bmatrix}$

(39) shi <u>a</u> riid - she is reading

     *shi <u>a</u>

(40) shi <u>de a</u> riid)
) she is reading
      shi <u>de</u> riid<u>ing</u>)

     *shi <u>de a</u>

(41) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \end{Bmatrix}$ riid - she usually reads

     *shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \end{Bmatrix}$

---

10. Aspectual <u>don</u> can probably occur before or after the predicate because it never combines with any of the other aspectual forms. When the form does combine, <u>don</u> is interpreted as a main verb.

(42) shi <u>don</u> riid - she has read

   *shi_, <u>don</u>

   (Example 42* is acceptable if <u>don</u> is interpreted as a

      main verb.)

Unlike verbs, the tense and aspect forms (and the modals of

possibility) cannot be followed by an infinitival verb

complement or a noun complement:

(43) shi $\begin{Bmatrix}\underline{bin}\\\underline{did}\end{Bmatrix}$ sing - she sang

   *shi $\begin{Bmatrix}\underline{bin}\\\underline{did}\end{Bmatrix}$ fu sing

   (<u>shi bin fu sing</u> 'she went to sing' is acceptable, but

   <u>bin</u> is interpreted as a <u>directional copula</u>.)

   *shi $\begin{Bmatrix}\underline{bin}\\\underline{did}\end{Bmatrix}$ fu yuu

   (<u>shi bin fu yuu</u> is acceptable with <u>bin</u> interpreted as

   a directional copula.)

(44) shi $\begin{Bmatrix}\underline{qu}\\\underline{qon}\end{Bmatrix}$ sing - she will sing

   *shi $\begin{Bmatrix}\underline{qu}\\\underline{qon}\end{Bmatrix}$ fu sing

   *shi $\begin{Bmatrix}\underline{qu}\\\underline{qon}\end{Bmatrix}$ fu yuu

   (<u>shi qu fu sing</u> and <u>shi qu fu yuu</u> are acceptable but <u>qu</u>

   is then interpreted as a main verb.)

(45) shi <u>a</u> sing - she is singing

   *shi <u>a</u> fu sing

   *shi <u>a</u> fu yuu

(46) shi <u>don</u> sing - she has sung

   *shi <u>don</u> fu sing

   *shi <u>don</u> fu yuu

(48) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \end{Bmatrix}$ sing - she usually sings

*shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \end{Bmatrix}$ fu sing

*shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \end{Bmatrix}$ fu yuu

Although the modals of possibility and tense and aspect forms belong to separate classes as distributional differences indicate, they form a 'group' in that they have a fixed word-order, and they cannot be followed by infinitival verb complements or noun complements. Therefore, I will posit an auxiliary structure type $M \begin{Bmatrix} T_1 \\ T_2 \end{Bmatrix} \begin{Bmatrix} A_1 \\ A_2 \\ A_3 \\ A_4 \end{Bmatrix}$ for

Guyanese Creole.   (The pattern is exemplified on the following page.)

Idealized basilect

Subject +	M	T	T	A	A	A	A	+ Predicate	(A)
	wud(a) kud(a) shud(a) mait(a)	(bin)	(gu)	(don)	(a)	(de)	(a)		(don)
	MODALS OF POSSIBILITY	PAST TENSE	FUTURE TENSE	PUNCTUAL ASPECT	HABITUAL ASPECT	DURATIVE ASPECT	PROGRESSIVE ASPECT		PUNCTUAL ASPECT

Idealized mesolect

Subject +	M	T	T	A	A	A	A	+ Predicate	(A)
	wud(a) kud(a) shud(a) mait(a)	{did -ed}	(gon)	(don)	{doz yuuz tu -s}	{de bii}	(-ing)		(don)

3.4.5.1 Is there an AUX constituent?

There is a controversy at the moment concerning whether the AUX is a constituent. Steele (1978) and Akmajian, Steele and Wasow (1979) claim that the AUX is a constituent in universal grammar. Muysken (1981:186) accepts their position and sets up a universal base rule for creoles:

S → NP, AUX, VP ...

He says:

> 'This base rule states that in every natural
> language there is a category AUX. While
> pidgins may or may not have an AUX, as soon
> as they become creolized, i.e. become native
> languages, they must have one.'

Guyanese Creole, however, does not really support this claim. One of the criteria for a category AUX is that 'the notional categories which are realized separate from the verb cannot be positioned in a number of positions in the sentence (Steele 1978:13).' In Guyanese Creole, the modals can preceed the subject:

1. yuu wud duu it - you would do it?

   wud yuu duu it - would you do it?

Also, the punctual aspect marker don can occur before or after the predicate:

2. shi don get tuu piknii)
) she already has two children
   shi get tuu piknii don)

Secondly, the constituent AUX is an obligatory feature of the sentence, but in Guyanese Creole it is optional:

3. shi <u>bin</u> sing)
) she sang
   shi ∅ sing

4. shi <u>yuuz tu</u> sing evriidee)
) she used to sing everyday
   shi ∅ sing evriidee   )

It is evidence such as that exemplified above, which has in-
fluenced the decision to treat tense and aspect as op-
tional categories, and not as a part of the sentence. (See
Pullum 1981 for arguments against positing a universal AUX
constituent.)

3.4.5.2 <u>Ordering of notions in the auxiliary</u>

       The basic ordering in the auxiliary posited on p.123
is M T A .   This ordering differs from Bickerton (1975b;
1981) who proposes α anterior   β irrealis   δ nonpunctual
                        T   M   A

               and the T M A orderings posited by Thompson

(1961) and Taylor (1971) for creoles.   Muysken (1981:188)
also conforms to T M A ordering for creoles and says it is
'a principle of universal grammar that specifies that aspect
is interpreted before mood, and mood before tense'.

       Alleyne (1980:81) posits an M T A ordering for
Guyanese and other 'Afro-American Creoles'[11]:

  VP → (Modal) + (Particle) + (Auxiliary) + Predicate

$$\text{Pred} \rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{Pred Vb} + \text{(NP)} \\ \text{Pred Adj} \end{cases}$$

_____

11.   Included in the Afro-American group are creoles such as
      Jamaican, Sranan, Papiamentu, Haitian, Krio, etc..

Part   →   (Tense) + Asp

Asp   →   Nonperfective, Perfective

Nonperf.   →   Hab, Prog

Tense   →   Past, Future

Perf.   →   ∅

The above underlying structure is illustrated by an example
from Jamaican Creole (p. 78):

VP   (Modal) + (Particle) + (Auxiliary) + Predicate + (X)
JA   (mos)   (bin)   (wan)   kom   (yeside)
(they) (must) (have wanted to) come (yesterday)

But the problem with this underlying structure is that it does
not account for Guyanese durative and punctual aspects, it
does not differentiate habitual and progressive aspects, and
he fails to explain what he means by 'Auxiliary'.   However,
his implicit M T A ordering coincides with my ordering of the
notions.

Although Muysken (1981) states that a T M A ordering
is a principle of universal grammar, my data dictates differ-
ently.   That an M T A ordering is superior to a T M A pattern
is suggested by the fact that the tense and aspect categories
behave syntactically in an identical manner, but the modals
behave differently.   Furthermore, aspectual reference is
dependent on the syntactic classification of the verb.   Tense,
in turn, is sometimes dependent on the aspectual catergoriza-
tions.   Mood is not dependent on the verb or tense and
aspectual categorizations.   So it is natural that tense and
aspect are contiguous, rather than 'interrupted' by mood.

3.5   Syntactic and Semantic Functions of the Form /a/

/a/ is the formal realisation of the following morphemes in Guyanese Creole:

(1) auxiliary
- (i)   progressive aspect marker
- (ii) habitual aspect marker
- (iii) modal of probability

(2) occurs after the modals wud, kud, shud, mait, to indicate past reference

(3) occurs after the copula gat as a complementizer

(4) noun copula

(5) introductory verb in predicate-clefting, and impersonal constructions

(6) focalizer

(7) preposition

(8) pronoun.

3.5.1.1 Progressive aspect a and habitual aspect a

a occurs before non-stative verbs as a progressive and an habitual aspect marker in the basilect: S - V. Progressive aspect is a combination of continuousness with non-stativity; habitual aspect refers to a situation which is characteristic over a period of time. (See Comrie 1976.)

(a) at prezent mi a du faarmin
     At present I am doing farming. (62B/2/1)

(b) mi na a wuk nau
     I am not working now. (62A/2/1)

(c) mi na a get wuk noo wee
     I was not getting work anywhere. (21A/14/3)

(d) dem a chuuz dem oon kompanii
     They usually choose their own company. (21A/3-4/7)

(e) aanz groov piipl na a duu laarj skeel a kasaava wuk.
     de na a duu am.

     The people of Ann's Grove do not usually do cassava
     planting on a large scale. They do not usually do it.
                                                    (18A/2-3/4)

(f) a de we yu a get staarch from
     It is there where you usually get starch from.
                                                    (18A/34/1)

The situational context, as in the examples above, usually
specifies when a before non-stative verbs is functioning as a
progressive or as an habitual aspect marker.   But the
syntactic difference between progressive a and habitual a is
exemplified in example (g) below:

(g) shi a de a sing
     She is usually singing.

From left to right, the first a is the habitual a, and the
second a is the progressive aspect marker. (See Idealized
basilectal auxiliary structure, section 3.4.3, p.123.)

Basilect progressive a is in variation with mesolect -ing
for progressive aspect: -ing is suffixed to the verb.

(h) de fiiling sik
     They are feeling ill. (54A/15-16/3)

(i) a freeming picha
     I am framing pictures. (62A/5/6)

     Basilect habitual a is in variation with mesolect doz,
-s and yuuz tu as an habitual aspect marker. yuuz tu is
marked for past reference.

(j)　de <u>doz</u> gat a waata lefin dong biiloo
　　There is usually a liquid left under it. (54A/32-33/4)

(k)　ai sel<u>z</u> miit
　　I sell meat. (54A/2/1)

(l)　wel, of kors, mi na <u>yuuz tu</u> chaarj dem
　　Well, of course, I never used to charge them.(16A/22-23/2)

The morphemes <u>a</u>, <u>doz</u> and <u>-s</u> can also have past reference but
this is defined by the linguistic (i.e. adverbs) and situa-
tional context.　Basilectal habitual/progressive <u>a</u> can be
preceded by the basilectal past tense morpheme <u>bin</u>, but <u>doz</u>
and <u>-s</u> cannot co-occur with a past tense morpheme.　Thus <u>doz</u>
and <u>-s</u> rely solely on the context for past meaning.

(m)　shi <u>bin</u> <u>a</u> sing
　　She used to sing/she was singing.

　　*shi $\left\{\begin{matrix}\underline{bin}\\\underline{did}\end{matrix}\right\}$ <u>doz</u> sing
　　　　　　　　　(<u>did</u> is the mesolectal past tense morpheme)

　　*shi $\left\{\begin{matrix}\underline{bin}\\\underline{did}\end{matrix}\right\}$ sing<u>z</u>

Although <u>yuuz tu</u> can only have past reference, it can still
co-occur with the past tense morphemes:

(n)　shi$\left\{\begin{matrix}\underline{bin}\\\underline{did}\end{matrix}\right\}$ <u>yuuz tu</u> sing
　　She used to sing.

This co-occurrence possibility seems to indicate that the
primary function of <u>yuuz tu</u> is to mark habitual aspect.

　　　Mesolectal progressive <u>-ing</u> can have present or past
reference depending on the linguistic and situational context.

(o)　shi sing<u>ing</u>
　　She is singing/was singing.

(p) shi $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{bin} \\ \underline{did} \end{Bmatrix}$ singing

She was singing.

Uninflected non-stative verbs can also have habitual meaning in the <u>basilect</u> <u>and</u> <u>mesolect</u>:

(q) de <u>pee</u> yu a paart, an wen de <u>don</u> du dem wok, yu noo, <u>mek</u> dem breed, dem staarch, an <u>don</u> sel, di neks wiik dem <u>kom</u> bak fu moo kasaava an de <u>pee</u> yu da balans

They pay you a part, and when they have finished doing their work, you know, made their starch and finished selling, the next week they come back for more cassava and they pay you the balance (of money). (18A/6-8/4)

In describing generalities the inflected form is in variation with the uninflected form:

(r) somtaim, nau an den, yu <u>doz</u> souwa waata - wii <u>kaal</u> am souwa waata in di kontrii

Sometimes, now and then, you usually 'sour' (i.e. detoxify) water - we call it 'sour' water in the country.
(54A/31-32/4)

Only the uninflected form, however, is used in timeless propositions, such as:

(s) tuu an tuu <u>mek</u> foor

Two and two makes four

The context, lingustic and situational, specifies when un-inflected non-stative verbs are referring to situations which are characteristic over a period of time. Context is an important factor since, out of context, uninflected non-stative verbs have past meaning, thereby aspectually 'Perfective'.

3.5.1.2 Habitual aspect <u>a</u>

<u>a</u> occurs before <u>stative</u> verbs, <u>stative-resultative</u> verbs, and <u>adjectives</u>, as an <u>habitual aspect</u> marker in the basilect: S – $\begin{Bmatrix} V \\ A \end{Bmatrix}$

(a) piipl na <u>a</u> <u>biliiv</u> mi

    People do not usually believe me. (62B/32/6)

(b) dem na <u>a</u> <u>waant</u> dem riid

    They never usually wanted them to read. (62A/28/2)

(c) dem na <u>a</u> <u>gat</u> ... dem na <u>a</u> <u>gat</u> seen

    They do not usually have ... they do not usually have seins. (62A/16-17/3)

(d) dem <u>a</u> <u>waant</u> sting yu wan bil

    They usually want to take money from you to go to the cinema. (18A/19/6)

(e) hii na <u>a</u> <u>satisfai</u> wid notn

    He is never usually satisfied with anything. (16A/7/6)

(f) bai taim mi get de, shi <u>a</u> <u>gaan</u> hoom

    By the time I get there, she has usually gone home.

We need to make a distinction between <u>stative</u> and <u>dynamic</u> <u>adjectives</u>. If the predicate adjective is dynamic, e.g. <u>ruud</u> 'rude', <u>jelos</u> 'jealous', <u>kruuwel</u> 'cruel' etc., it can be preceded by <u>a</u> if the subject NP refers to a singular or plural subject, or a plural subject in the sense of a class of people. Thus:

(g) hii <u>a</u> <u>jelos</u>

    He is usually jealous.

(h) dem <u>a</u> <u>jelos</u>

They are usually jealous.

(i) bos-draiva dem <u>a</u> <u>jelos</u>

Bus drivers are usually jealous.

But if the predicate adjective is stative - e.g. <u>taal</u> 'tall",
<u>big</u> 'big', <u>fat</u> ' fat' etc., it can only be preceded by <u>a</u> if
the subject NP refers to a class of people.   Thus:

(j) *hii <u>a</u> <u>taal</u>

  *dem <u>a</u> <u>taal</u>

(k) bos-draiva dem <u>a</u> <u>taal</u>

Not all bus drivers are tall, but some of them are
usually tall.

The mesolect habitual forms, <u>doz</u>, and <u>yuuz tu</u> can
occur with stative verbs, stative-resultative verbs, and
adjectives.

(1) de <u>doz</u> <u>gat</u> a waata lefing dong biiloo

There is usually a liquid left under it.   (15A/32-33/4)

(m) bai taim a get de, shi <u>doz</u> <u>gaan</u> hoom

By the time I get there, she has usually left for home.

(n) hii <u>yuuz tu</u> jelos

He used to be jealous.

Mesolect habitual <u>-s</u> can be suffixed to stative verbs, but not
to stative-resultative verbs and adjectives.

(o) ai <u>nooz</u> him

     I know him.

(p) *bai taim a get de, shi <u>gaanz</u> hoom

    *hii <u>ruudz</u>

3.5.1.3 <u>Summary on habitual and progressive aspect markers</u>

<u>basilect</u>

progressive <u>a</u> : before non-stative verbs

habitual   <u>a</u> : before non-stative verbs
                        stative verbs
                        stative-resultative verbs
                        adjectives

<u>mesolect</u>

progressive <u>-ing</u> : suffixed to non-stative verbs

habitual <u>doz</u>   : before non-stative verbs
         <u>yuuz tu</u>   stative verbs
                                stative-resultative verbs
                                adjectives

         <u>-s</u> : suffixed to non-stative verbs
                     stative verbs

In both basilect and mesolect, uninflected non-stative verbs
can have habitual meaning.

3.5.1.4 <u>Modal a</u>

     <u>a</u> occurs before verbs as a <u>modal of probability</u> in the
basilect: S - V

(a) mi doz lef hee about 5.30/6.00 an mi <u>a</u> gu riich op de ...
     mi gu riich op de about 9.00 ar 8.00

     I usually leave here about 5.30/6.00 and I would probably
     arrive there ... I would arrive there about 9.00 or 8.00.
                                                  (18A/12-13/1)

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(b)   bikaa mi biliiv hii nak mi, mi <u>a</u> <u>deed</u>

Because I thought he had hit me, (and) I would probably
die. (21B/21/6)

The situational context usually defines whether <u>a</u> is function-
ing as a modal or an aspect marker in this syntactic position.
A second modal of probability used in the basilect and
mesolect is <u>mosii</u>.   When <u>a</u> is functioning as a modal of
probability the only auxiliary form it can co-occur with is
future tense/modal <u>qu</u> (example (a) above).   <u>mosii</u>, on the
other hand, can be followed by any other auxiliary form, verbs,
noun complement, infinitival verb complement.

(c)   shi $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \underline{a} \\ \underline{mosii} \end{array} \right\}$ <u>qu</u> sing di saang

She will probably sing the song

(d)   shi $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} * \ \underline{a} \\ \underline{mosii} \end{array} \right\}$ <u>bin</u>   sing di saang
                           <u>did</u>

She probably sang the song.

(e)   shi $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} * \ a \\ \underline{mosii} \end{array} \right\}$ <u>wuda</u> sing di saang

She would have probably sang the song.

(f)   di leta $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} * \ \underline{a} \\ \underline{mosii} \end{array} \right\}$ <u>fu yuu</u>

The letter is for you.

(Example (f) is acceptable with <u>a</u>, but then <u>a</u> is
interpreted as a <u>noun copula</u>.)

(g)   shi $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} * \ \underline{a} \\ \underline{mosii} \end{array} \right\}$ <u>fu sing</u>

She is probably to sing.

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3.5.2 <u>a</u> after modals <u>kud</u>, <u>wud</u>, <u>shud</u>, <u>mait</u>

<u>a</u> occurs after the modals <u>kud</u>, <u>wud</u>, <u>shud</u>, <u>mait</u> in the basilect and mesolect, when referring to a situation which may possibly have occurred in the past.   In hypothesizing about a future event the modal alone is used.

(a) dem wa a had bifoor tu, a <u>kud</u> <u>a</u> disiplin dem

  Those I had before too, I was able to discipline them.
                                                    (16A/19-20/6)

(b) yu <u>wud</u> <u>a</u> tink dat dis maan H-- <u>wud</u> <u>a</u> giv op

  You would have thought that this man H-- would have given up.   (1/10-11/7)

(c) shi <u>shud</u> <u>a</u> duu it

  She should have done it.

(d) shi <u>mait</u> <u>a</u> did noo di aansa

  She may have known the answer.

3.5.3 <u>a</u> after copula <u>gat</u>

<u>a</u> occurs after the copula <u>gat</u> as a <u>complementizer</u> in the basilect S + gat a V.

(a) yu <u>ga</u> <u>a</u> ga monii

  You have to have money.   (21A/6/7)

(b) yu <u>ga</u> <u>a</u> get siks injekshans

  You have to get six injections.   (21A/26/8)

(c) ii tel mi mi <u>ga</u> <u>a</u> rait noots a lesons

  He told me (that) I had to write notes of lessons
                                                    (16A/2/2)

Although gat is in variation with get in this syntactic

position, get cannot be followed by a . get must be followed

by fu, which is the general infinitival complementizer:

(c) i *yu get a ga

　ii *mi get a rait

(d) i yu get fu get

　ii mi get fu rait

gat can also co-occur with fu

(e)　　yu doz gat fu kyerii it rait de

　　　You would have had to carry it right there. (54A/3/3)

But while it is possible to say:

(f)　　shi gat fu

　　　She has to

it is not possible to say:

　　　*shi ga a

　　　It is possible for tu to vary with fu in this syntactic

position. On formal grounds the variation between tu and fu

seems to be indicative of a lexical change. But the variation

between a and fu seems to be an overlap in morpheme classes.

3.5.4 Noun copula a

　　　a occurs as a noun-copula in the basilect: S – NP.

(a)　　elefant a cheerman

　　　Elephant was the chairman. (16A/36/8)

(b)　　hii a rich maan da taim

　　　He was a rich man (at) that time. (16A/17/2)

(c) som a dem bai <u>a</u> klerk

Some of the boys were clerks.   (21A/16/3)

<u>a</u> is in variation with mesolectal <u>iz</u> and <u>woz</u> in noun copula constructions.   But unlike <u>a</u>, <u>iz</u> and <u>woz</u> are marked for tense.   <u>iz</u> indicates present tense, <u>woz</u> indicates past tense.

(d) wen mi <u>woz</u> a lil bai, mi did laik plee dis hairii doorii biznis

When I was a little boy, I liked to play a game called 'hairy dory'.   (15A/5-6/4)

(d) abiir <u>iz</u> fu plee di pagwa

Abir (a red powder) is for playing the Phagwah (an Indian festival).   (62A/7-8/4)

3.5.5   <u>Predicate-cleft <u>a</u></u>

<u>a</u> occurs as an introductory verb in predicate-clefting in the basilect: a + P, S - P.

(a) <u>a</u> <u>sing</u> hii a sing

It is singing he is singing

(b) <u>a</u> <u>taal</u> hii taal

It is tall he is tall.

Bynoe-Andriolo and Sorie Yillah (1975) analyse the predicate copy as a nominal sentence since the copy is introduced by a form which introduces NP's.   This seems a plausible solution especially in light of the fact that <u>a</u> is the form used in <u>impersonal constructions</u> in the <u>basilect</u>.

(c)   somtaim shi tel mi, 'wel bai, <u>a tii-taim</u>

     Sometimes she tells me, 'Well boy, it is tea-time'.

                                           (21A/21-22/1)

(d) <u>a pyuur indiya piipl</u>

     There were only Indians.

<u>a</u> is in variation with mesolectal <u>iz</u> in predicate clefting
and impersonal constructions:

(e) <u>iz sing</u> hii singing

     It is singing he is singing.

(f) iz tii-taim

     It is tea-time.

3.5.6   Focalizer <u>a</u>

     <u>a</u> occurs before subjects as an optional <u>focalizer</u>,
usually in sentence-initial position in the basilect: a + S.

(a) <u>a hii</u> pee mi paseej kyer mi a bush

     He paid my passage and took me into the interior.

                                          (18A/33/8)

(b) an nof blakmaan na a sii laika <u>a mii</u>

     And a lot of blackmen do not see like me. (18A/36/5)

(c) <u>a bai</u> hit mii

     That boy hit me.

(d) <u>a we</u> yu a gu

     Where are you going?

(e) a de dem liv

There they live. (18A/19/4)

In contrast with the other examples of focalizing a, the
a in example (c) is stressed. This is necessary because
focalizing a is in contrast with indefinite a in this syntactic
position (before count-nouns). Another example is (f) below:

(f) hii jomp pan a teebl

He jumped on to (a specified or unspecified) table.

If the table is specified, a is stressed (focalizing a). If
the table is unspecified, a is unstressed (indefinite a). a
is in variation with mesolect iz as a focalizer.

(g) iz hoom hii de

He is at home.

(h) iz hii tel me

He told me.

(i) shi gain aan laik iz mii iit di keek

She is behaving as if it were I (who) ate the cake.

But if the noun iz precedes is a count-noun, the demonstrative
pronoun da must occur between iz and the noun.   Thus:

(j) iz da bai tel mii

That boy told me.

(k) *iz bai tel mii

da is optional before count-nouns if a is the focalizer. Thus:

(l) a (da) bai tel mi

3.5.7 Preposition <u>a</u>

<u>a</u> occurs before noun-phrases as a <u>locative</u>
<u>preposition</u> in the basilect: a + NP.   The meanings are 'at',
'to', 'in', 'on'.

(a)   mi baarn <u>a</u> klanbrok

I was born at Clonbrok. (18A/19/5)

(b)   mii kud gu <u>a</u> yuu, yuu kud gu <u>a</u> mii

I could come to you, you could come to me. (21A/9-10/7)

(c)   da taim, dem don de somwee <u>a</u> big maarkit

(By) that time, they are already somewhere in Big
Market. (23A/23-24/2)

(d)   dis maan tek hii gitaar an gi hii wan lash <u>a</u> hii heed su.
nak di jombii <u>a</u> hii heed

This man took his guitar and gave him a lash on his head
like this. (He) knocked the ghost on his head.
(21B/15-17/9)

(e)   mi bin esikwiboo riva an wok <u>a</u> graant

I went to the Essequibo river and worked on a (timber)
grant. (18A/22/7)

Where the spatial location means 'on', <u>a</u> can vary with a
form <u>pan</u> (~ <u>pon</u>). But there are syntactic restrictions.   In
example (e) it is possible to say <u>pan a graant</u> and obtain the
same reading as <u>a graant</u>.   In example (d) it is not possible
to say <u>*pan a hii heed</u>, one must say <u>pan hii heed</u>. The reason
is that in Guyanese creole <u>a</u> functions not only as a locative,

but also as an indefinite article before nouns.   When pan
is the locative and is followed by a, the only function a can
assume is that of an indefinite article.   And since you
would never have an indefinite article followed by a pronoun,
*pan a hii heed is unacceptable.   It is acceptable, however,
if the a is ···focussing a, and then it is stressed.

pan and not a is used if the prepositional phrase is
functioning as:

(f)   an adjunct

wen a goo hoom pan iivning

When I go home in the evenings.   (21B/29/1)

(g)   a conjunct

pan a aaftanuun, mi doz gu hoom

Every afternoon, I usually go home.   (21A/18/3)

(h)   postmodifier in a noun-phrase

di piipl pan di bos bina sing

The people on the bus were singing.

(i)   a verb complement

wii diipend pan yuu

We depend on you.

a, and not pan, is used as head of a partitive pre-
positional phrase postmodifying a noun:

(j)   di amount a ting wa mii sii pan di teebl

The amount of things which I saw on the table. (21A/14/5)

Prepositional a is in variation with mesolect in, at,

on, to, of:

(k) hii de in di maarkit

He is in the market.

(l) hii gaan tu di shap

He has gone to the shop.

But as Rickford and Greaves (1978:47) note, creole speakers tend to use the 'wrong' prepositions. Thus:

'18. when I arrived to the fire

20. the smaller ones come over in my house

21. anytime at the day'.

The variation between a and pan in the basilect seem to indicate an overlap in morpheme classes rather than being indicative of change.

3.5.8 Indefinite article a

a occurs before nouns and adjectives as an indefinite article in the basilect and mesolect: a + (A D J)N.

(a) evrii dee a maan doz get a kuk dee

Every day a (different) man usually gets a day for cooking. (54A/27/6)

(b) mi klaas mos bii a disiplin klaas

My class must be a disciplined class. (16A/24/6)

As an indefinite article, a varies with wan which is also the numeral 'one', but this overlap is primarily in the basilect.

(c) ii heer <u>wan</u> maan a plee <u>wan</u> gitaar

He heard a man playing a guitar. (21A/6-7/9)

There is an *<u>a a</u> word constraint in Guyanese creole.
Thus whenever an indefinite article is required following the
basilectal noun copula <u>a</u>, <u>wan</u> is used.

(d) da a <u>wan</u> red stoon

That is a red stone. (18A/1/2)

*da a <u>a</u> red stoon

It is possible to say:

(e) da <u>a</u> red stoon

That is a red stone

but it is not as emphatic as example (d). Another example is:

(f) mii <u>a</u> meel nors

I am a male nurse. (21A/2/1)

It is possible to say:

(g) mii a <u>wan</u> meel nors

but only if being a 'male nurse' is a special occupation.
Thus <u>wan</u> is used for emphasis.

The 'neutralization' between the <u>indefinite a</u> and the
<u>copula a</u> in examples (e) and (f) seems to provide supportive
evidence for my description of <u>indefinite a</u> as a member of
the morpheme class $\left\{ A \right\}$.

3.5.9   Pronoun a

a occurs before predicate verbs and adjectives as a
first person subject pronoun in the mesolect: a + P.

(a)   wel, a mos kova ... a gon tel yu from di staarting

Well, I must cover ... I will tell you from the
beginning. (54A/4-5/1)

(b)   a jelos

I am jealous.

a is in variation with the basilectal morphs mii/mi/ and mi
/mɪ/ as a first person subject pronoun.   But since there is
an *a a word constraint only mii or mi can co-occur with the
basilectal progressive/habitual aspect marker a:

(c)   mii ~ mi a sing

I am singing/I usually sing.

       *a a   sing

When a is the pronoun, it can only co-occur with the
mesolectal aspect markers -ing, -s, doz and yuuz tu.

(d)   a singing

I am singing.

(e)   a doz / yuuz tu sing

I'usually/used to sing.

The basilectal morphs, however, can also co-occur with
mesolectal aspect markers:

(f)   mi singing

I am singing.

(g) <u>mii doz</u>/<u>yuuz tu</u> sing

    I usually/used to sing.

    A fourth first person subject pronoun morph is

mesolectal <u>ai</u>.   Allsopp (1958), Bickerton (1973a) and

Rickford (1979) treat mesolectal <u>a</u> as a phonological reduction

of <u>ai</u>.   Bickerton (1973:663) analyzes the difference as 'a

function of the difference between fast and slow speech'.

Rickford (1979:323) claims that '<u>a</u> must clearly be derived

diachronically from <u>ai</u>, regardless of the fact that monoph-

thongization seems to be restricted, synchronically, to this

single form' in the Guyanese pronominal system.   <u>a</u> must be

derived from <u>ai</u>, he further points out, because <u>ai</u> is

obligatory under primary stress, and in his data only one

speaker used one variant to the exclusion of the other.   The

speaker's output included two <u>a</u>'s and seventy-seven <u>mi</u>'s, but

no <u>ai</u>'s.

    Edwards (1975), however, finds a phonological

solution to <u>a</u>/<u>ai</u> alternation unsatisfactory.   He bases this

opinion on counter-examples in his data.   He claims it is

quite plausible 'that for some people (a) and (ai) are in

free variation as alternative, semantically identical, items

with (a) being a reinterpretion of (ai) (1975:177)'.

    A phonological solution to the use of <u>a</u> as a pronoun

is very tempting in view of the phonetic and semantic

resemblance between <u>ai</u> and <u>a</u>.   But I support Edwards'

position that <u>a</u> is an alternative form of <u>ai</u>.   My agreement

is based on the observation made by Edwards (1975:177-178)

that <u>a</u> as a pronoun was in widespread use at the turn of the

century; and as I have observed from reprints of texts first
published between 1881 and 1902, (see Rickford 1978:197-221),
the widespread use of a as a pronoun coincides with the time
period when a form a was replacing a form da as a copula,
locative, focalizer and aspect marker. Thus, in my opinion,
pronominal a is derived diachronically and synchronically from
the form a which functions as a copula, aspect marker,
locative etc.. This opinion is reinforced by the fact that a
form de which functions as a locative copula, locative adverb,
focussing adjunct, aspect marker, also functions as a third
person pronoun. Furthermore, according to Khan (1973:20,40),
it is possible for the copula to function as a pronoun in some
languages. And of course, this interpretation is in keeping
with the view that the grammar of Guyanese relies on lexemic
categories.

The implication of this interpretation is that
basilectal mii ~ mi are to be treated as allomorphs rather
than as phonetic variants. Rickford's (1979) reason for
treating the variation as phonetic is mysterious since /i/ and
/I/ are separate phonemes in Guyanese creole:

/hit/ - heat   /sit/ - seat   /fit/ - feet
/hIt/ - hit   /sIt/ - sit   /fIt/ - fit.

Furthermore, he states that the tense form is obligatory under
primary stress - which emphasizes that the variation is allo-
morphic rather than phonetic. That the tense form is
obligatory under stress can be shown by the fact that only mii
can be focussed:

(h) a <u>mii</u> duu it

   It is I who did it

  *<u>a</u> <u>mi</u> duu it

In the mesolect only <u>ai</u> can be focussed:

(i) <u>iz</u> <u>ai</u> duu it

  *<u>iz</u> <u>a</u> duu it[12].

Treating the variation between <u>mii</u> and <u>mi</u> as allomorphic

simplifies the problem of whether <u>a</u> is a morph or a phonetic

variant for <u>ai</u>: for <u>a</u> is the mesolect lexical replacement of

<u>mi</u>, and <u>ai</u> is the mesolect lexical replacement for <u>mii</u>. Thus

the system would be

	basilect	mesolect	acrolect (English)
	mii	ai	ai
	mi	a	

<u>mii</u> and <u>mi</u>, <u>ai</u> and <u>a</u> are optional forms in unstressed position,

but only <u>mii</u> and <u>ai</u> can be stressed.

   Thus in Guyanese creole there are <u>four</u> first person

subject morphs, and not just two, <u>mi</u> and <u>ai</u>, as Rickford (1979;

1980:176) posits.

_____

12. It is possible for the mesolect ·focalizer <u>iz</u> to co-
     occur with basilect <u>mii</u>, but basilect .focalizer <u>a</u>
     cannot co-occur with the mesolect pronoun <u>ai</u>.   Thus
     <u>iz mii</u> but not *<u>a ai</u>.

3.5.10   Summary of functions of the form /a/

1.   **Aspect**

   Progressive/habitual

   S + a + P

   hii <u>a</u> taak
   He is talking/usually talks.

2.   **Modal**

   Modal of probability

   S + a + P

   mi <u>a</u> deed
   I probably would have died.

   Occurs after modals <u>kud</u>,
   <u>wud</u>, <u>shud</u>, <u>mait</u>

   S + MODAL a + P

   shi shud <u>a</u> riid
   She should have read.

   Occurs after the copula <u>gat</u>

   S + gat a $\begin{cases} verb \\ adj \end{cases}$

   shi ga(t) <u>a</u> gu
   She has to go.

3.   **Copula construction**

   S + a + NP

   da <u>a</u> shurt-jak
   That is a shirt-jacket.

4.   **Impersonal construction**

   a + NP

   <u>a</u> (pyuur) (indiya) piipl
   There were only Indians.

5.   **Predicate clefting**

   a + P

   <u>a</u> taal hii taal
   It is tall he is tall.

6.   **Focalizer**

   a + S

   <u>a</u> da bina hapn
   That was happening.

7. Preposition

    a + NP

mi baarn a̱ jaajtong
I was born in Georgetown

tuu taip a̱ jaab
Two types of jobs

8. Indefinite article

    a + (ADJ)N

a̱ (brait) bai
An (intelligent) boy

9. Pronoun

    a + P

a̱ tel ii
I told him

3.5.11 Summary of formal renewal of the morphemes with form /a/, from basilect to mesolect

      Basilect (Identification)   Mesolect (Differentiation)

	Basilect (Identification)		Mesolect (Differentiation)
Progressive aspect	a	⟶	-ing
Habitual aspect	a	⟶⟵	doz / -s
	bin + a	⟶	yuuz tu
Modal of probability	a		
After the modals kud, wud, shud, mait	a	⟶	a
After the copula gat	a		
Noun copula	a	⟶	iz
	bin + a	⟶	waz
Predicate cleft	a	⟶	iz
Impersonal constructions	a	⟶	iz
Focalizer	a	⟶	iz

```
                                                    in
                                               ⟶
                                               ⟶    on
Preposition                      a ⟨            ⟶   to
                                               ⟶    at
                                               ⟶    of


Indefinite article      a ⟶                         a

Pronoun                                             a
```
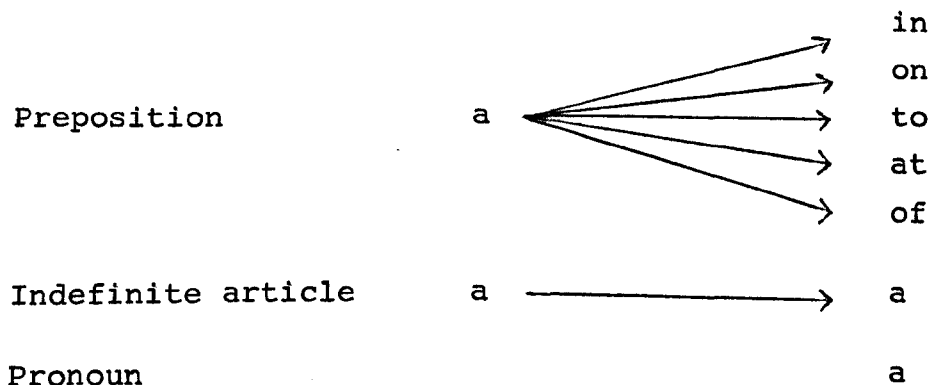
3.5.12 <u>Summary of variation due to overlap between morpheme classes</u>

	<u>Function</u>	<u>Variant</u>
Progressive	a, -ing	-
Habitual	a, doz, -z, yuuz tu	Uninflected non-stative verbs
Modal of Probability	a	mosii (only in basilect)
After the modals kud, wud, shud, mait	a	-
After the copula gat	a	fu, tu (tu is due lexical change of fu in mesolect).
Noun copula	a, iz bin + a, waz	bin (only in basilect).
Predicate cleft	a, iz	-
Impersonal constructions	a, iz	-
Focalizer	a, iz	-
Preposition	a "on", on	pan ~ pon (used in basilect and mesolect - pon is mesolect pronunciation
Indefinite article	a	wan
Pronoun	a	mi

3.6   Syntactic and Semantic Functions of the Form /de/

/de/ is the formal realisation of the following morphemes in Guyanese Creole:

(1)   auxiliary : durative aspect marker

(2)   copula

(3)   locative adverb

(4)   focussing adjunct

(5)   pronoun
- (i) existential pronoun
- (ii) third person plural subject pronoun
- (iii) third person plural possessive pronoun

3.6.1 Durative aspect de

de occurs as a durative aspect marker, in the basilect and mesolect, before an adjectival predicate which is aspectually CONTINUOUS; or before a predicate which is aspectually PROGRESSIVE - a or -ing + non-stative verb.   Durative aspect refers to the fact that a given situation is conceived of as lasting for a certain period of time.   (See Comrie 1976:41.)

(a)   haaf-past faiv mi de a wok

    (At) half-past five I am working. (21A/4-5/1)

(b)   mi de a freem mi lil picha an su

    I am framing my little pictures and so on.   (62A/2/2)

(c)   an mi de a spin

    And I was spinning.   (21B/15/6)

(d)   su ai de wislin

    So I was whistling.   (17B/10-11/4)

All the situations described in examples (a) - (d) are aspectually progressive, and thus make reference to their internal temporal structure.   But the added use of _de_ implies that the situations went on for some time, or are likely to go on for some time.

Durative _de_ cannot co-occur with <u>stative</u> verbs which are aspectually CONTINUOUS[13].

(e)   *shi _de_ <u>noo</u> di maan

       *shi _de_ <u>waant</u> di buk

       *shi _de_ <u>biliiv</u> di stoorii[14]

But it can combine with <u>adjectives</u> which are also aspectually CONTINUOUS:

(f)   shi _de_ <u>kwaiyit</u>

       She is quiet

(g)   yu get fren wid hii, yuu an hii _de_ <u>nais</u>

       You become friendly with him, you and him will get along well.   (21B/18-19/10)

(h)   mi bin _de_ <u>gud gud</u> aal di taim

       I was in good health all of the time.   (62A/25-26/8)

       _de_ is in variation with mesolect <u>bii</u> as a durative aspect marker.   But <u>bii</u> can only be used if:

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13. Continuous aspect is imperfectivity that is not occasioned by habituality.   (See Comrie 1976.)

14. The possible explanation for the semantic rejection of durative _de_ with stative verbs, stative-resultative verbs and non-stative verbs is given in Chapter 4.

i. the construction is habitual with mesolectal <u>doz</u> and
<u>yuuz tu</u> as the habitual aspect marker

ii. the mesolect progressive aspect marker <u>-ing</u> is suffixed
to non-stative verbs.

(i) i. hii <u>de</u> <u>a sing</u> - he is singing

  ii.*hii <u>bii</u> <u>a sing</u>

(j) i. hii <u>de</u> <u>singing</u> - he is singing

  ii.*hii <u>bii</u> <u>singing</u>

(k) i. hii <u>a</u> <u>de</u> <u>a sing</u> - he is usually singing

  ii.*hii <u>a</u> <u>bii</u> <u>a sing</u>

(1) i. hii <u>doz</u> <u>de</u> <u>singing</u> - he is usually singing

  ii. hii <u>doz</u> <u>bii</u> <u>singing</u>

(m) i. hii $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{bin} \\ \underline{did} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>de</u> <u>singing</u> - he was singing

  ii.*hii $\begin{Bmatrix} \underline{bin} \\ \underline{did} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>bii</u> <u>singing</u>

(n) i. hii <u>yuuz tu</u> <u>de</u> <u>singing</u> - he used to be singing

  ii. hii <u>yuuz tu</u> <u>bii</u> <u>singing</u>

(o) i. hii <u>yuuz tu</u> <u>de</u> <u>sik</u> - he used to be ill

  ii. hii <u>yuuz tu</u> <u>bii</u> <u>sik</u>

Durative <u>de</u> and <u>bii</u> are obligatory before PROGRESSIVE
predicates in constructions which make reference to the
future, but <u>bii</u> can only be used if:

i. mesolectal <u>gon</u> is the future tense form

ii. mesolectal progressive <u>-ing</u> is suffixed to non-stative
verbs:

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(p) i. wen yu get de, shi <u>gu</u> <u>de</u> <u>a sing</u> - when you get there,
she will be singing.

ii. *wen yu get de, shi <u>gu</u> <u>bii</u> <u>a sing</u>

(q) i. wen yu get de, shi <u>gu</u> <u>de</u> <u>singing</u>

ii. *wen yu get de, shi <u>gu</u> <u>bii</u> <u>singing</u>

(r) i. wen yu get de, shi <u>gon</u> <u>de</u> <u>singing</u>

ii. wen yu get de, shi <u>gon</u> <u>bii</u> <u>singing</u>

In examples (p) - (r), progressive aspect provides the back-
ground to some event, in this case, your arrival.   The mean-
ing would be inceptive if non-stative verbs were unmarked for
progressive aspect:

(s)   wen yu get de, shi $\begin{Bmatrix} gu \\ gon \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>sing</u> fu yu - when you get there,
she will sing for you.

With CONTINUOUS (adjectival) predicates in future constructions,
DURATIVE <u>de</u> and <u>bii</u> are optional.

(t) i. hii gon taal - he will be tall

ii. hii gon <u>bii</u> taal - hii gon <u>de</u> taal

In fact <u>hii gon bii taal</u> could also have a non-durative
aspectual meaning as <u>hii gon taal</u>, but the context differ-
entiates whether or not the meaning is durative. <u>hii gon de
taal</u> never has the same meaning as <u>hii gon taal</u>.

3.6.2 <u>Copula de</u>

de occurs as a <u>locative copula</u> and a <u>noun copula</u> in the
basilect and mesolect:

$$NP + (COP) + LOC^{15}, \qquad NP + COP + NP$$

(a) wen mi <u>de</u> a kontrii

When I am in the country. (21A/6/6)

(b) yu doz sleep wen yu <u>de</u> pon sii

You usually sleep when you are at sea. (54A/25/6)

(c) hii stil <u>de</u> de nau

He is still there now. (18A/30/13)

With copula <u>a</u>, we have a sentence pattern COP + NP.
With copula <u>de</u> we have a sentence pattern NP + COP.

(d) laiynz <u>de</u>

Lions exist.

(e) a <u>de</u>

I am. When asked 'how are you?', by saying <u>a de</u>, the
speaker is implying he is 'existing' - nothing 'dynamic' is
happening to him.

(f) plentii yuu doz <u>de</u>

A lot of you are usually there. (62A/31-32/4)

With respect to example (f) it is also possible to say:

(g) plentii yuu doz de de

and obtain the same meaning - the first <u>de</u> being the locative

---

15. Note that LOC includes 'adverbial expressions'.

copula, the second _de_ is the locative adverb.   Example (f) provides good evidence for claiming that the locative copula _de_, and locative adverb _de_ are derived from the same morpheme class.

_de_ is in variation with mesolectal _bii_ as a locative copula.   _bii_, however, can only be used if:

(i)   the construction is habitual with mesolectal _doz_ or _yuuz tu_ as the habitual aspect markers;

(ii) the locative phrase begins with a locative preposition other than basilectal _a_.

(h) i. hii _de_ a shap - he is in the shop

   ii.*hii _bii_ a shap

(i) i. hii _de_ in di shap - he is in the shop

   ii.*hii _bii_ in di shap

(j) i. hii a _de_ a shap - he is usually in the shop

   ii.*hii a _bii_ a shap

(k) i. hii doz _de_ a shap - he is usually in the shop

   ii.*hii doz _bii_ a shap

(l) i. hii doz _de_ in di shap - he is usually in the shop

   ii. hii doz _bii_ in di shap

(m) i. hii yuuz tu _de_ in di shap - he was usually in the shop

   ii. hii yuuz tu _bii_ in di shap

In examples (l) and (m) _de_ or _bii_ is obligatory probably because the location is 'concrete'.   If the location is 'abstract', _de_ or _bii_ is optional:

(n) hii doz $\left(\left\{\begin{array}{c}\underline{de}\\ \underline{bii}\end{array}\right\}\right)$ in chaarj ov evriibadii

He is usually in charge of everybody.

de is obligatory in example (h)i. since deletion of de would indicate that a is a copula and not a locative preposition. (See section 3.4.1, sentence pattern 6.) de is obligatory in examples (j)i. and (h)i. because of an *a a and a *doz a word constraint respectively.

It was noted in section 3.4.4, note 8, that the noun copula a cannot be preceded by modals or aspectuals:

(o)   i.   shi a tiich - she is a teacher

   ii.   *shi a a tiich

  iii.   *shi doz a tiich

   iv.   *shi don a tiich

   v.   *shi wuda a tiich

In these instances the form de functions as the verbal marker:

(p)   i.   dem a di seem - they are the same

   ii.   dem a de di seem - they are usually the same

  iii.   dem doz de di seem - they are usually the same

   iv.   dem don de di seem - they are already the same

   v.   dem mait de di seem - they may be the same.

Mesolect copula bii is in variation with de in these examples, except examples (p)ii. and (p)iv. because of an *a bii and *don bii constraint respectively.

3.6.3 Locative adverb de

de occurs as a locative adverb within the predicate in

the basilect and mesolect: S + P.

(a)   several taimz (maan) mi bin <u>de</u>

   Several times (man) I have been there.   (18A/19/4)

(b)   hii stil de <u>de</u> nau

   He is still there now.   (18A/30/13)

(c)   yu mosii paas am <u>de</u>

   You probably passed it there.   (18A/37/3)

(d)   a <u>de</u> dem liv

   It is there they live.   (18A/29/4)

   This is a transformation of

   dem liv <u>de</u>

   (<u>a</u> is the optional topicalizer).

When locative adverb <u>de</u> is an adjunct and is fronted for
emphasis, the main clause is relativised by the introduction
of the adverbial pronoun <u>we</u> (where):

(e)   <u>de</u> we yu get dis intareeshal somting

   There is where you get this inter-racial something.
                                              (16A/28-29/4)

   A transformation of:

   yu get dis intareeshal somting <u>de</u>

3.6.4   <u>Focussing adjunct de</u>

      <u>de</u> occurs within the predicate as an optional <u>focussing</u>
<u>adjunct</u> in the basilect and mesolect: S + P.

(a)   wel di fors dee wu de bat <u>de</u>

   Well the first day which they have batted (there)
                                              (21B/16-17/7)

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(b)   su dem gu de wid yu _de_

So they would be with you (there).   (16A/6/4)

(c)   wii bin in abarii _de_ workin

We were in Abary (there) working.   (23B/26/8)

_de_ in example (c) could be functioning both as a focussing adjunct and a durative aspect marker.   It is functioning as a focussing adjunct since it occurs within the predicate; and it is functioning as a durative aspect marker since it occurs before the progressive construction _workin_.   This neutralization seems to indicate that _focussing de_ and _durative de_ are derived from the same morpheme class.

3.6.5.1 _Existential pronoun de_

_de_ occurs before the copulas _gat_ and _get_, _hav_ and _had_ as an _existential pronoun_: - + P.   _de_ is a mesolect pronoun.

(a)   _de_ gat a taim

There was a time ...   (54A/22/6)

(b)   _de_ doz gat a waata lefin dong biloo

There is usually a liquid left under it.   (54A/34/4)

As an existential pronoun _de_ varies with mesolectal _dee_, basilectal pronominals _dem_ ~ _den_ ~ _ii_, and basilectal and mesolectal _yu_ ~ _yuu_.

(c)   _dem_ gat wan romshap a di kaarna

There is a rum-shop at the corner.

(d) ii gat wan ada wan neem kapa tin, ii get jaspa ...

There is another one called Copper tin, there is
jasper ...   (18A/39-1/11-12)

(e) yu hav ada pest de tu

There are other insects there too ...   (23B/16/5)

3.6.5.2 Third person plural subject pronoun de

de occurs before the predicate as a third person
plural subject pronoun; sometimes used impersonally as a
pseudo-passive construction- or in generalized impersonal
senses.   de is a mesolect pronoun.

(a) de na a gu

They do not usually go ...   (23A/32/2)

(b) de bring wii bak tu tong

They brought us back to town.   (54A/13/1)

(c) de did waant faarm a koo-op

They wanted to form a Co-op.   (54A/29-31/2)

de varies with mesolectal dee, and basilectal dem ~ den.

(d) dem na a gu

They do not usually go.

3.6.5.3 Third person plural possessive pronoun de

de occurs before noun-phrases as a third person
plural possessive pronoun followed optionally by oon.   de is
a mesolect pronoun:

(a)   de ga <u>de</u> <u>oon</u> kompanii

They have their friends.   (21A/3/7)

(b)   de gat a taim piipl doz tek it in <u>de</u> <u>oon</u> haan, <u>de</u> <u>oon</u>

laa in <u>de</u> <u>oon</u> haan ...

There was a time when people took it into their own

hands, their own law into their own hands ...

(54A/22-23/2)

<u>de</u> can vary with mesolectal <u>dee</u> and basilectal <u>dem</u> - <u>den</u> in

this function:

(c)   dem a chuuz <u>dem</u> <u>oon</u> kompanii

They usually choose their friends.   (21A/4/7)

3.6.5.4 <u>Derivation of pronominal <u>de</u></u>

I have been positing <u>de</u> [dɛ]   as a mesolectal pronoun

in variation with <u>dee</u> [de]   (they are allomorphs with <u>dee</u>

being obligatory under stress), and <u>de</u> as derived from the

morpheme class {DE} .   Rickford (1979:15) posits a variety

of sources for pronominal <u>de</u>[16]:

Person	Subject	Object	Possessive
3PL	dɛm~dɛn~dɛŋ~dɛ	ðɛm~dɛm~dɛn~dɛŋ	dɛm~dɛn~dɛŋ~dɛ
	ðɛn~de~dɛ~dɪ		de~dɛ~dɪ
			ðer~der

(Morphological variants are arranged vertically, phonological

variants horizontally.)

Although he posits a morpheme <u>de</u> in the possessive category,

---

16. IPA symbols are used for the rest of section 3.6.5.4

dɛ is posited as a phonetic variant of the possessive morphemes dɛm and de; and in the subject category dɛ is posited as a phonetic variant of the morpheme dɛm while de and dɛ are posited as phonetic variants of English ðe . He posits a morpheme de in the possessive category and not as derived from the morpheme ðer because of the rarity of final -r deletion in Guyanese speech (p.305). Consequently, with de's and dɛ's being derived from a variety of sources and no real arguments supporting the derivations, I find his system rather confusing.

On the basis of Kuryłowicz's principles of identification and differentiation, and using arguments similar to those explaining pronominal [mi] ~ [mɪ] ~ [ai] ~ [a] variation, (see Section 3.5.9), it is possible to arrive at a neater and more explanatorily adequate system. We could posit that in the basilect there are two morphs [dɛm] and [dɛn] in the subject, object and possessive categories, but only [dɛm] can be used in stressed position. Thus:

Person	Subject	Object	Possessive
3 PL (stressed)	dɛm	dɛm	dɛm
(unstressed)	dɛm~dɛn~dɛŋ	dɛm~dɛn~dɛŋ	dɛm~dɛn~dɛŋ

In the mesolect there is a formal differentiation with stressed [dɛm] being replaced by [de] and unstressed [dɛn] replaced by [dɛ] . [de] and [dɛ] , like the pronouns [dɛm] and [dɛn] and the first person allomorphs [mi] ~ [mɪ] ~ [ai] ~ [a], are in free variation in unstressed contexts, but only [de], [dɛm] , [mi] and [ai] can occur in stressed positions

and be focussed.   Similar to the case with [mi] and [ai],
basilect [dɛm] can be focussed by the basilect focalizer
a and the mesolect focalizer iz, but mesolect [de] can only
combine with mesolect iz.

(a) i. a dɛm sing di saang

    ii. iz dɛm sing di saang

   iii. *a de sing di saang

    iv. iz de sing di saang

It is noted that I have posited [dɛn] and [dɛŋ] as
phonetic variants although [n] and [ŋ] are separate phonemes
in Guyanese Creole – [sɪn] 'sin', [sɪŋ] 'sing'. Since [dɛn]
and [dɛŋ] are in free variation, in this instance we may have
to speak of free variation among phonemes. (See e.g. Hyman
1975:66.) We can posit the system below for Guyanese Creole:

Person	Subject	Object	Possessive
3 PL			
basilect	dɛm	dɛm	dɛm
	dɛn~dɛŋ	dɛn~dɛŋ	dɛn~dɛŋ
mesolect	de	dɛm	de
	dɛ~dɪ	dɛn~dɛŋ	dɛ~dɪ
acrolect (English)	ðə	ðɛm	ðɜr

The mesolect form [de] is derived from English [ðə], and [dɛ]
is an extension of the Creole form [dɛ] – the morpheme class
{DE}.

3.6.6 Summary of functions of the form /de/

1. **Durative aspect**

   S + de (a) + P   hii de a taak

                                     He is talking.

2. **Copula constructions**

   NP + (COP) + LOC   mi de a kontrii

                                     I am in the country.

   NP + COP + NP   it doz de di seem

                                     It is usually the same.

   NP + COP   laiyanz de

                                     Lions exist.

3. **Adverb**

   S + P   de de de

                                     They are there

4. **Focussing**

   S + P   da saang de sing de

                                     That song they sang there.

5. **Existential pronoun**

   de + P   de gat tuu klaas a piipl

                                     There are two classes of people.

6. **Third person plural subject pronoun**

   de + P   de taal

                                     They are tall.

7. **Third person plural possessive pronoun**

   de(oon) + N   de fren dem sing a saang

                                     Their friends sang a song.

3.6.7 Summary of formal renewal of the morphemes with form /de/ from basilect to mesolect

	Basilect (Identification)		Mesolect (Differentiation)
Durative aspect	de	⟶ ⟵	de / bii
Copula	de	⟶ ⟵	de / bii
Adverb	de	⟶	de
Focussing	de	⟶	de
Existential pronoun			de
Third person plural subject pronoun			de
Third person plural possessive pronoun			de

3.6.8 Summary of variation due to overlap between morpheme classes

Function		Variant
Durative	de	–
Copula	de	locatives
		hii de in di hous ∼
		hii in di hous
Adverb	de	–
Focussing	de	–
Existential	de	yu ∼ ii ∼ dem
Third person plural subject pronoun	de	dem
Third person plural subject pronoun	de	dem

3.7 Syntactic and Semantic Functions of the Form /don/

/don/ is the formal realisation of the following morphemes in Guyanese Creole:

(1) auxiliary: punctual aspect marker

(2) main verb.

3.7.1 Punctual aspect don

don occurs before or after the predicate as a punctual aspect marker in the basilect and mesolect: S + (don) P (don). Punctual aspect refers to a situation that is _not conceived of_ as lasting in time. (See Comrie 1976:41.)

The utterance has a punctual meaning when don co-occurs with non-stative verbs which are aspectually Perfective - i.e. non-statives make reference to situations which are viewed as a whole entity with the beginning, middle and end rolled into one.

(a) wen yu don put am pan triitment, yu gat tu sii di peeshent get di triitment

When he has been put on medication, you have to see that the patient gets the treatment. (21A/1-2/2)

(b) yu don avrij a wat a drom ii a sel fu

You have averaged at what price per drum it will probably sell for. (18A/27/3)

(c) shi don staart

She has begun.

When don co-occurs with stative verbs, stative-resultative verbs and adjectives, it is referring to a

temporally restricted but non-punctual situation. Stative verbs, stative-resultative verbs and adjectives are aspectually Continuous. Thus their co-occurrence with don refers to a situation which began in the past (it is 'temporally restricted'), but which is still going on in time (it is 'non-punctual').

(d) shi get tuu piknii don

She already has two children. (15B/34-35/3)[17]

(e) da taim dem don de somwee a big maarkit

(By) that time they are already somewhere in Big Market.
(23A/23-24/2)

(f) wen dem gu de, di maan don deed

When they got there, the man was already dead.
(18A/11/18)

(g) bai taim mi lef de fu kom hee, som a dem don marid

By the time I was ready to leave there to come here, some of them were already married. (16A/27/2)

(h) shi don taal

She is already tall.

don cannot occur with predicates which are inflected for habitual or progressive aspect:

(i) i.*shi don $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ doz \end{Bmatrix}$ sing (habitual)

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17. The copula get is a non-stative verb, but it overlaps with the stative copula gat. See section 3.10 for an analysis of get and gat.

ii. *shi <u>don</u> <u>a</u> <u>sing</u>   (progressive)

   *shi <u>don</u> <u>singing</u>

<u>shi don singing</u> is acceptable, but only if <u>don</u> is interpreted

as a main verb, and <u>singing</u> is interpreted as a nominal[18].

    Aspectual <u>don</u> is in variation with plain uninflected

non-stative verbs for punctual aspect.   Thus examples (a),

(b) and (c) would still have a 'completive' meaning without

<u>don</u>, but <u>don</u> emphasizes the punctuality of the situation.

    However, <u>don</u> is obligatory in constructions with the

future tense forms <u>gu</u> and <u>gon</u>

(j)   wen yu get de, shi $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \underline{gu} \\ \underline{gon} \end{array} \right\}$ <u>don</u> sing

    When you get there, she will have sung.

If <u>don</u> is not used the reading is <u>inceptive</u> ('she will begin

to sing') rather than completive.

3.7.2   <u>Main verb</u> <u>don</u>

    <u>don</u> occurs as a <u>main verb</u> meaning 'to finish' in the

basilect and mesolect: S + - (NP).

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18.   <u>shi don singing</u> is a mesolectal construction where
      nominalization is overtly marked by the suffixing of
      <u>-ing</u> to the verb.   In the basilect, <u>shi don sing</u> can be
      interpreted as NP + ASPECT + V or NP + V + NP depend-
      ing on the linguistic and situational context.   In the
      mesolect, the suffixing of <u>-ing</u> to verbs to mark nominal-
      ization overtly distinguishes nominals from verbs.   (See
      also Bickerton 1975a:74.)

(a) su wen di dee <u>don</u>, somtaim mi get trii foor daala

So when the day ended, sometimes I got three or four
dollars. (15A/14-15/3)

(b) an kontinyuu laik da, su til di bed <u>don</u>

And continue like that, until the (garden) bed is
finished. (15A/13-14/2)

(c) wen dem monii <u>don</u>, mii oon de pakit

When their money has finished, mine is in my pocket.
(17B/26-27/5)

(d) ii get maan a <u>don</u> wan bed dee

There are men (who can) usually finish one bed in one
day. (18A/17/2)

(e) shi <u>don</u>ing

She is finishing.

(f) shi mosii gon <u>don</u> suun

She will probably finish shortly.

In example (d) there is an instance of the habitual
aspect marker preceding <u>don</u>, and in example (e) there is an
instance of progressive <u>-ing</u> suffixed to <u>don</u>. Note, too,
that in all the examples above <u>don</u> is not modifying a verb
predicate - as aspectual <u>don</u> and the other aspect markers do.
It is examples like these which differentiate aspectual <u>don</u>
from main verb <u>don</u>. I had stated above that aspectual <u>don</u>
can occur before or after the predicate, it is not possible
for a main verb in serial verb constructions to occur after
the predicate:

(g) i. hii <u>ron</u> <u>tel</u> di maan di stoorii

He ran to the man and told him the story.

ii. *hii <u>ron</u> di maan <u>tel</u> di stoorii

iii. *hii <u>ron</u> di maan di stoorii <u>tel</u>

iv. *hii <u>tel</u> di maan di stoorii <u>ron</u>

As a form <u>don</u> can vary with <u>finish</u>. From Bickerton (1975a:85) there is:

'3.53 <u>After</u> you <u>finish</u> cut you draw out the straw.

(15/27/15)'

The use of <u>finish</u> may be an attempt to differentiate aspectual <u>don</u> from main verb <u>don</u>.

3.7.3 <u>Summary of functions of the form /don/</u>

1. Punctual aspect marker

S + (don) + P (don)   shi sing <u>don</u>

She has sung.

2. Main verb

S + (don) NP   shi <u>don</u>

She has finished.

3.7.4 <u>Summary of formal renewal of the morphemes with form /don/, from basilect to mesolect</u>

Basilect (Identification)   Mesolect (Differentiation)

Punctual aspect   don ⟶ don

Main verb   don   finish

3.7.5   Summary of variation due to overlap in morpheme classes

Punctual aspect   <u>don</u>   Uninflected non-stative verbs

Main verb   <u>don</u>

3.8   Syntactic and Semantic Functions of the Form /bin/

/bin/ is the formal realisation of the following morphemes in Guyanese Creole:

(1)   auxiliary:past tense marker

(2)   locative copula

(3)   directional copula

(4)   noun copula.

3.8.1   Past tense <u>bin</u>

<u>bin</u> occurs before the predicate as a <u>past tense marker</u> in the basilect: S - P.

(a)   a <u>bin</u> de in a fait

   I was in a fight.   (23A/11/10)

(b)   awii <u>bin</u> a fiftiin broda an sista

   We were fifteen brothers and sisters.   (16A/33/2)

(c)   kaa mii an wan bai <u>bin</u> laik waak leet

   Because a boy and I liked to walk late (at nights).
                                             (21A/4/9)

(d)   mi se hau wakenaam piknii heed <u>bin</u> haard an hau dem <u>bin</u> disgostin

   I remarked 'how Wakenaam children were hard-headed and how they were disgusting'.   (16A/24-25/5)

(e) an aafta mi faal bak flat, mi kunt a <u>bin</u> eebl ... mi na <u>bin</u> eebl ... mi na <u>bin</u> gat monii fu staart di gyardn bak

And after my collapse, I was not able ... I was not able ... I did not have the money to restart the farm.
(62A/26-28/1)

(f) wen mi <u>bin</u> a wok a hag ailan

When I was working on Hogg Island.   (21A/26/8)

(g) wen di porsn gaan ar su den de gon se, 'mi <u>bin</u> a waant se su'

When the person has left or so, then they would say, 'I had wanted to say so'.   (18B/22-23/4)

<u>bin</u> is used in contra-factual constructions:

(h) if mi na <u>bin</u> kom, mi na <u>bin</u> noo

If I had not come, I would not have known.

(i) if mi <u>bin</u> liv a tong, mi kud a duu bata

If I were living in town, I could do better.   (62A/6/8)

(Lyons (1977:818) claims that in many languages 'the grammatical category of past tense is regularly used to convert a non-factive into a contra-factive utterance'.)

Past tense <u>bin</u> can co-occur with habitual <u>a</u> (example (g)), progressive <u>a</u> (example (f)), or durative <u>de</u> or punctual <u>don</u>.

(j) shi <u>bin</u> <u>de</u> a sing

She was singing

(k) shi <u>bin</u> <u>don</u> sing

She had sung.

<u>bin</u> can be preceded by the modal constructions <u>wud a</u>, <u>kud a</u>, <u>shud a</u>, <u>mait a</u>.

(1)   shi shud a <u>bin</u> noo di aansa

     She should have known the answer.

     (See Idealized basilectal Auxiliary Structure,

      section 3.4.5.)

     <u>bin</u> is in variation with <u>en</u>, <u>biin</u> and mesolectal <u>did</u>
as a past tense marker.   <u>en</u> and <u>biin</u> are allomorphs of <u>bin</u>.

(m)   hii <u>en</u> de wid shi

     He lived with her. (16A/18-19/5)

(n)   di machiin wa mi <u>en</u> a yuuz a di treed

     The machine which I was using in the trade.
                               (18A/12-13/8)

(o)   bot if woz mi oon yaard, a mait a <u>biin</u> enkoreej

     But if it were my own yard, I might have been
     encouraged (to plant). (20A/20/9)

(p)   de <u>biin</u> teling mi fu plaant di yaard an ting

     They were telling me to cultivate the yard and thing.
                               (20A/16-17/9)

(q)   it <u>did</u> shaart an nais

     It was short and nice.

(r)   wel G.M.C., de <u>did</u> waant - nat G.M.C., govament - de
     <u>did</u> waant faarm a koo-op wid dis pig ting

     Well G.M.C., they had wanted - not G.M.C., government -
     they had wanted to form a Co-op with this pig thing.
                               (54A/29-31/2)

Basilectal bin can co-occur with the basilectal progressive
a, and the mesolectal progressive -ing (example (p) above),
the mesolectal past tense form did can only co-occur with
mesolectal progressive -ing:

(s) i. shi did singing

        She was singing.

    ii. *shi did a sing

Basilectal bin can co-occur with basilectal habitual a, and
mesolectal habitual yuuz tu; did can only co-occur with
yuuz tu:

(t) i. shi did yuuz tu sing

        She used to sing.

    ii. *shi did a sing

    iii. shi bin yuuz tu sing.

   bin and did are in variation with uninflected verbs for
past meaning:

(u) mi noo mi get wan big kot a mi said

     I knew (that) I had got a big cut in my side.
                                           (21A/11-12/18)

(v) ii kaal tuu a dem bai a vilij wa gat taim, smaal baiz
     wa na gat notn fu duu.

     He called two of the boys from the village who had time,
     small boys who had nothing to do.

(w) bikaa mi biliiv hii nak mi, mi a deed

     Because I thought he had hit me, (and) I would probably
     die.   (21B/21/6)

(x) di amount a ting wa mii <u>sii</u> pon di teebl

    The amount of things which I saw on the table.
                                            (21A/14/5)

    <u>Uninflected verbs</u>, <u>bin</u> and <u>did</u> are in variation with the mesolectal use of <u>inflected verbs</u> for past meaning:

(y) shi <u>weetid</u> ontil ai <u>keem</u> hoom, an shi staart kuking

    She waited until I came home, and (then) she began to cook.   (20A/33-34/5)

(z) faiv ov us <u>went</u>, an wii oonlii sii wan igwaana

    Five of us went, and we only saw one iguana. (20A/20/4)

3.8.2 <u>Locative copula</u> <u>bin</u>

    <u>bin</u> occurs as a <u>locative copula</u> with past meaning in the basilect and mesolect: NP + - + LOC

(a) an mi fos kwaata <u>bin</u> a 1950

    And my first quarter was in 1950 (18A/30/13)

(b) ii <u>bin</u> wid wan chap neem ...

    He was with a fellow (whose) name ... (18A/8-9/8)

(c) ai <u>bin</u> at di poblik haspital

    I was at the Public Hospital. (23B/7/8)

(d) an a <u>bin</u> 'in di sadl'

    And I was 'in the saddle' (everything was fine).
                                        (16A/9-10/2)

    <u>bin</u> in in variation with <u>biin</u> and mesolectal <u>woz</u> as a locative copula with past meaning. <u>biin</u> is an allomorph of <u>bin</u> and <u>woz</u>:

(e) hii <u>biin</u> in de tu

He was in there too.

(f) hii <u>woz</u> in de tu

He was in there too.

(g) hii <u>woz</u> wid wan chap neem ...

He was with a fellow (whose) name ...

But <u>woz</u> cannot function as a locative copula if the locative phrase begins with basilectal <u>a</u>:

(h)   *an mi fos kwaata <u>woz</u> <u>a</u> 1950

Locative <u>bin</u> can be used not only in referring to a state which at the time of utterance is complete, but also in referring to situations which had begun in the past but are still going on at the time of utterance:

(i) i. hau laang yu <u>bin</u> hee

How long have you been here?

ii. a <u>bin</u> hee mosii bout tuu houwaz nau

I have been here about two hours now.

In example (i) it is possible to use the locative copula <u>de</u>. But by using <u>bin</u> the speaker is making explicit reference to the fact that the situation began some time in the past. <u>de</u> simply refers to the fact that the situation is lasting for a period of time.

For examples (b), (c), (d), (e) and (i) it is possible to say <u>bin de</u>, with <u>de</u> as the locative copula and <u>bin</u> as a past tense marker. We could then argue for <u>de</u>

deletion. However not only do I find the deletion argument counter-intuitive, but it would be ungrammatical to insert de in example (a):

(j) *an mi fos kwaata bin de a 1950

3.8.3 Directional copula bin

bin occurs as a directional copula with past meaning in the basilect and mesolect: NP + - (NP)

(a) mi bin gold-diging a bush. mi bin esiikwiboo riva an wok a graant

I went gold-digging in the interior. I went (to) the Essequibo river and worked on a (timber) grant.
(18A/19-20/7)

(b) bot na de ii bin an get di monii

But it is not there he went and got the money.
(18A/23-24/8)

(c) dis seem bonds we yu bin

The very same Bonds to whom you went. (18A/14/9)

Directional bin has an allomorph biin.

(d) da wan griin taim mi biin

It was during the non-harvesting season that I went.
(17B/15-16/15)

As a directional copula, bin is in variation with the uninflected non-stative verb gu. It is possible to use gu in all the examples above, but the past meaning that is evident in using bin, would be absent with gu.

3.8.4   Noun copula bin

bin occurs as a noun-copula with past meaning in the basilect, but only if the following noun-phrase begins with the form wan.

(a)   da bin wan riil ting

That was a real thing.   (21A/36/7)

From Edwards (1975:254) there is:

'mi bin/bina wan tiicha

I was a teacher'

bin also occurs before impersonal a in COP + NP constructions:

(b)   laang taim bin a pyuur treen

Long ago there were only trains.   (62A/10/3)

(c)   laang taim in dis seem vilij, a bin a pyuur indiya piipl

Long ago in this very village, there were only Indians.
(62A/23/2)

(The a preceding bin is a   focussing a.)

3.8.5   Summary of functions of the form /bin/

1.   Past tense marker

S + bin + P :   shi bin sing

She sang.

2.   Locative copula with past meaning

NP + bin + LOC :   shi bin in skuul

She was in school.

3. **Directional copula with past meaning**

    NP + bin (NP) :   a <u>bin</u> esiikwiboo

                                         I went (to) Essequibo

4. **Noun copula with past meaning**

    NP + bin + NP   da <u>bin</u> wan riil ting

                                         That was a real thing

3.8.6 Summary of formal renewal of the morphemes with form /bin/, from basilect to mesolect

Basilect (Identification)		Mesolect (Differentiation)
Past tense	bin	did / -ed
Locative copula	bin ⟶	bin
Directional copula	bin ⟶	bin
noun copula	bin	

3.8.7 Summary of variation due to overlap between morpheme classes

Function		Variant
Past tense	bin	Uninflected verbs, en, biin
Locative copula	bin	biin
Directional copula	bin	gu
Noun copula	bin	a

3.9 Syntactic and Semantic Functions of the Form /go ~ gu/

/go ~ gu/ is the formal realisation of the following morphemes in Guyanese Creole:

(1) auxiliary:future tense/modal

(2) main verb

(3) infinitival complementizer.

3.9.1 Future tense/modal go

gu occurs before the predicate as a future tense marker/modal in the basilect: S + gu + P.

(a) dem gu a asooshiieet an su wid yu

They will usually associate and so on with you.
(16A/3-4/4)

(b) mi dout weda de gu gi op out de, bikaaz de gu gu fu di ronz

I doubt whether they will give up out there, because they will go for the runs.. (21B/27-28/7)

(c) su mi gu kyaan mek um

So I will not be able to make it. (16A/14-15/7)

gu is in variation with mesolectal gon as a future tense marker.

(d) wel di west indiiz gon win

Well the West Indies will win. (21B/4-5/8)

(e) a gon tel yu from di staarting

I will tell you from the beginning. (54A/4-5/1)

(f) yuu jos aask fu di feemos futbaal maan, an yu <u>gon</u>
fain mii

You just ask for the famous footballer, ... and you
will find me.   (54A/15-16/8)

<u>gu</u> and <u>gon</u> can also have modal meaning:

(g) mi doz lef hee about 5.30/6.00 an mi a <u>gu</u> riich op de...
mi <u>gu</u> riich op de about 9.00 ar 8.30

I usually leave here about 5.30/6.00 and I would
probably arrive up there... I would arrive up there
about 9.00 or 8.30.   (18A/12-13/1)

(h) wel wii taat de <u>gu</u> sel di daiman an divaid di monii

Well we thought they would have sold the diamonds and
(then) divided the money.   (21B/20-21/4)

(i) di kontrii piipl <u>gon</u> se 'kom le awii gu nu maan'

The rural people would say, 'Come let us go, why
not man'.   (62A/31/3)

Lyons (1968a:310) points out that in some languages
the forms that are used in referring to the future can also
have modal implications.   This, he claims:

> 'may be regarded as a 'natural' consequence
> of the fact that statements made about
> future occurrences are necessarily based
> upon the speaker's beliefs, predictions or
> intentions, rather than upon his knowledge
> of 'fact'.'

Examples (g), (h) and (i) do indeed have a 'predictive' mean-
ing, and example (j) below carries a meaning of 'intention'.

(j) shi se 'aarait bai, a <u>gu</u> giv yu di monii'

She said, 'Alright boy, I will give you the money'.
(21B/2-3/4)

It is possible to use the conditional modal <u>wud</u> in examples
(h) and (i) and the second part of example (g)[19], without
any meaning difference:

(k)   di kontrii piipl <u>wud</u> se ...

(1)   wel mi taat de <u>wud</u> a sel di daiman...[20]

or even in referring to future possibility:

(m)   a tink shi <u>wud</u> bii a gud styuudent

      I think she will be a good student.

But <u>wud</u> cannot substitute for <u>gu</u> in example (j) and still
yield a meaning of 'intention'.   If <u>wud</u> is used the mean-
ing would be 'conditional'.   There would also be meaning
differences if <u>wud</u> substituted for <u>gu</u> in examples (a) or
(c), or if <u>wud</u> substituted for <u>gon</u> in examples (d) or (e).
In example (a) <u>wud</u> followed by <u>a</u> would yield a meaning
'would have' – past conditional – instead of 'will usually' –
non-past habitual; and the meaning of (c), (d) and (e) would
be 'conditional' or 'predictive' rather than 'future'.

      Thus, formal as well as semantic differences indicate

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19.   <u>wud</u> cannot occur in the first part of example (g) since
      probability <u>a</u> can only co-occur with <u>gu</u> (see
      section 3.5.1.3).

20.   The form <u>a</u> must co-occur with <u>wud</u> since we are
      referring to a past possibility (see section 3.5.2).

that gu and gon be placed in a separate category to wud. Lyons (1968:311) also posits that mood and tense may interact in such a way that either one or the other label is appropriate. Syntactically (see auxiliary structures, Section 3.4.3), and from the point of view of the semantics of the tense system, 'tense' appears to be the most appropriate label for gu and gon.

gu and gon are in variation with non-stative verbs inflected for progressive aspect, in making reference to the future - but future reference is dependent on the linguistic (i.e. adverbs) and situational context:

(n)　neks wiik dem a staart di wuk

　　　Next week they are starting the work.　(22B/12-13/1)

(o)　shi go ing hoom tomaroo

　　　She is going home tomorrow.

3.9.2　Main verb go

go functions as a main verb in the basilect and mesolect: S + P. go implies movement in respect of a goal or destination.

(a)　a doz gu

　　　I usually go.　(23A/23/3)

(b)　hii se 'mi na a gu'

　　　He said, 'I am not going'.

(c)　if a hadnt helt, a woon gu

　　　If I were not healthy, I would not have gone.

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(20B/31-32/5)

(d)   a <u>gu</u> bak di neks dee

I went back the following day.   (20A/8/3)

(e)   mi jos bin <u>gu</u> an laarn wid di keen kota dem

I just went and learnt with the cane-cutters.
(23A/6-7/5)

Uninflected <u>gu</u> is in variation with <u>gaan</u> as a main verb with past meaning.   The variation is illustrated in example (f) where it is possible to use <u>gu</u> or <u>gaan</u>:

(f)   somtaimz wii de, wii <u>gaan</u> op makenzii aal about, sand
      hil. draiv from tong hee, yu noo, <u>gaan</u> street op, <u>go</u>
      an get a nais taim

      Sometimes we had nothing to do, we went up to Mackenzie,
      all around, Sand Hill. (We) drove from town here, you
      know, went straight, went and had an enjoyable time.
(23B/17-19/6)

(g)   i   dem <u>gaan</u> dem wee nau

      They have gone their way now. (62A/34/1)

      ii.*dem <u>gu</u> dem wee nau

Example (g)ii. is acceptable but with a punctual rather than a stative meaning: 'They went their way now'.

(h)   i. ii yuuziz tu <u>gu</u> tu 16, 15.   ii a drap, ii a drap
         nau.   ii <u>gaan</u> tu 13 somting

         It used to go to 16, 15 (dollars).   It is dropping,
         it is dropping now.   It has gone to 13 something.
(18A/28-30/3)

      ii *ii yuuziz tu <u>gaan</u> tu 16, 15 ... ii <u>gu</u> tu 13 somting

That <u>gaan</u> is stative is indicated by its co-occurrence with the aspect markers <u>a</u> and <u>don</u>.   When <u>gaan</u>

co-occurs with _a_ the meaning is habitual; when _gaan_ co-occurs with _don_, you are referring to a temporally restricted but non-punctual situation - the same meanings as when _a_ and _don_ co-occur with stative verbs and adjectives.

(i) i. shi _a_ _gaan_ skuul bai taim mi get de

     She has usually gone to school by the time I get there.

    ii. shi _don_ _gaan_

     She has already left.

The stativity of _gaan_ is further substantiated by the fact that it can co-occur with the mesolectal habitual _doz_, but not with mesolectal progressive _-ing_ - remembering that progressive aspect is a combination of continuousness with non-stativity.

(j) i. shi _doz_ _gaan_ skuul bai taim mi get de

    ii. *shi _gaan_ _ing_ skuul

Both _gu_ and _gaan_ imply movement towards a goal or destination. But _gaan_ also implies that you have reached your destination, that the movement from one state to another is complete. Thus _gaan_ is a stative-resultative verb.   Non-stative _gu_ is void of such implications.   Therefore, wherever a resultative meaning is required _gaan_ must be used.   _gu_ must be used in constructions where only movements towards a goal or destination are intended.   They are in variation, however, where the distinction between resultative or non-resultative meaning is unimportant.   Thus they are in variation in (k) but not (l):

(k) evrii aaftanuun dis maan <u>gu</u>, hii kom, hii bring a big baatl wiskii

Every afternoon this man left, he returned, he brought a large bottle of whisky. (21B/23-24/5)

(1) mi se, 'luk di jombii <u>gaan</u>. Le wii <u>gu</u> hoom

I said, 'Look the ghost has gone. Let us go home'. (12A/30-31/10)

(m) *mi se 'luk di jombii <u>gu</u>. le wii <u>gaan</u> hoom'.

The progressive basilectal construction <u>a gu</u> is in variation with the mesolectal forms <u>gain</u> ~ <u>goin</u>:

(n) hii se 'we yu <u>gain</u> todee'. ai se, 'maan, mi en <u>gain</u> noo wee'.

He said, 'Where are you going today?' I said 'Man, I am not going anywhere'. (54A/17-19/6)

(o) ii gu se, 'ai en <u>gain</u>'

He would say, 'I am not going'. (62A/1-2/4)

3.9.3 <u>Infinitival complementizer gu</u>

<u>gu</u> occurs as an infinitival complementizer in the basilect, but only if one of the main verbs is a movement verb: S + V - V.

(a) mi lef am an gaan <u>gu</u> duu somting els nau

I leave it and go to do something else now. (18A/1/3)

(b) yu gu tel dem 'ayu gu bak <u>gu</u> bai moo, ar gu <u>gu</u> wash di weerz

You would tell them, 'You go back and buy more, or go and wash the dishes. (17B/11-12/8)

(c) an kontrii piknii na gu waant gu <u>gu</u> laarn da nu moo

And (the) rural children would not want to go and learn
that any more. (54A/17-18/10)

<u>gu</u> is in variation with <u>fu</u> as an infinitival comple-
mentizer in the above syntactic environment. <u>fu</u> is the
complementizer in other syntactic environments. Informants
vary between <u>gu</u> and <u>fu</u>:

(d) su if yu ron <u>gu</u> kom op hee nau

So if you run up here now ... (17B/27/8)

(e) yu gu ron <u>fu</u> kom op nau

You would run up now ... (17B/26/8)

<u>gu</u> and <u>fu</u> are in variation with mesolectal <u>tu</u> as a
complementizer.

(f) wel yu had <u>tu</u> see wen de goo <u>tu</u> work

Well, you had to say when they went to work. (4B/20-21/2)

3.9.4 <u>Summary of functions of the form /go ~ gu/</u>

1. <u>Future tense/modal</u>

    S + gu + P :   a <u>gu</u> giv yu di monii

                               I will give you the money.

2. <u>Main verb</u>

    S + gu (NP)   a doz <u>gu</u>

                               I usually go.

3. <u>Infinitival complementizer</u>

    S + V gu V :   de gu <u>gu</u> bai di buk dem

                               They went to buy the books.

3.9.5 Summary of formal renewal of the morphemes with form /go ~ gu/, from basilect to mesolect

Basilect (Identification)		Mesolect (Differentiation)
Future tense/modal	go ————⟶	gon
Main verb	go ————⟶	go
Infinitival complementiser go ————⟶		tu

3.9.6 Summary of variation due to overlap between morpheme classes

Function		Variant
Future tense/modal	go	wud; non-stative verbs inflected for progressive aspect
Main verb	go	gaan
Infinitival complementizer go		fu

3.10 get and gat

Before describing the tense and aspect systems of Guyanese Creole, I will criticize Bickerton's analysis of the Guyanese verbs and get and gat and then set out my re-analysis of get and gat. This is essential since it not only gives an insight into the structure and overlap of the Guyanese aspectual system, but it also highlights the inter-relationship between concepts and structure, and the relevance of context in the interpretation of verb forms in Guyanese Creole.

3.10.1 Bickerton's description of get and gat

In Dynamics of a Creole System (1975a:18), Bickerton
tells us that the English verb to get is the source of two
distinct Guyanese verbs, get 'to obtain' and gat 'to have,
possess', and for a sharper distinction we must refer to
Bickerton (1971:479-480).   He explains in this article:

> 'Broadly speaking, gat may carry the sense of
> 'possessing' as well as 'being obliged':
>
> (24) i gat pyoo daata - 'he has daughters only'
>
> or an impersonal stative equivalent to
> there is/are:
>
> (25) dem gat wan romshap a sikstitree -
>   'there's a bar in Sixty-Three (village)'.

But in my data there are examples of get with the same mean-
ing that Bickerton claims are restricted to gat.   For
example there is the 'sense of possession' in the following
example:

(a) mi get plentii children

     I have a lot of children.   (62A/30/6)

And an informant talking about various semi-precious stones
switches between get and gat in what Bickerton calls an 'im-
personal stative sense' which he claims is restricted to gat:

(b) ii gat wan ada ting dem a kaal 'brong ai'. ii get wan
     nekst wan dem a kaal 'maika'

     There is another thing they call 'brown eye'.   There is
     another one they call 'mica'. (18A/1-2/12)

get, on the other hand, he claims, functions as an
auxiliary in the human-subject passive:

> '(26) i get lik dong - 'he was knocked down'.'(p.479)

I agree that gat is rejected in the passive. He further
explains that get also functions in a sense similar to 'be
able to, manage to' (p.479). He illustrates with the
example below:

> '(27) so di rais kan get tu draa i milk - 'so that
> the rice will be able to derive its
> nourishment' (p.479)'.

But it is not get that is carrying a sense of 'be able to',
it is the modal kan that is conveying this sense. If kan is
deleted there would no longer be a 'be able to' reading, but
there may still be a 'manage to' reading as this reading is
conveyed by get + infinitival complement, a unit which is a
modal of requirement. If get is deleted the sentence would
be ungrammatical as it is not possible for modal kan to be
followed by complementizer tu - *so di rais kan tu draa i
milk. However, I do agree that gat is not possible in this
example.

> Bickerton continues:

> 'Indeed, the two verbs are quite distinct (though
> the fact that they share an English etymon, as
> well as being phonologically similar, sometimes
> causes confusion between them ...' (p.479-480)

He illustrates:
> '(12) lang taim na bin get bul fu mash - 'in the
> old days there were no oxen to thresh with.'
> (13) yu ga tu mek biari fi troo bia - 'you have
> to make a nursery to raise young rice plants.'
> (p.469)

Bickerton's example (12) illustrates one instance of variation
between get and gat - although I disagree that it is caused
by speaker confusion; but there is a semantic difference
between gat followed by tu in example (13) and get followed

by _tu_ in example (27) above. If we assume that Bickerton is
correct in saying that _get_ in example (27) means 'be able to,
manage to', there is a great deal of semantic difference be-
tween that meaning and 'have to' which is the reading he gives
for _gat_ in example (13). Also, it is not _gat_, which is carry-
ing a meaning of 'have to' but _gat + infinitival complement_
which is the modal of obligation. (See Auxiliary Structures,
section 3.4.3₁)

However, he explains that _gat_ is a 'state' verb, and
get is an 'action' verb.   He illustrates 'the similarities
and differences' by the constructs below:

> '(28a)   yu get haksn fi haal am - you get oxen
>   (in order) to carry it
> (28b)   yu gat haksn fi haal am - you (already)
>   have oxen to carry it
> (28c)   yu gat fi haal am wid haksn - you have
>   to use oxen to carry it
> (29a)   dem bina get plau - they were obtaining/
>   used to obtain ploughs
> (a9b)   *dem bina gat plau - *they were possessing
>   ploughs.'   (p.480)

With regard to example (28a) the construction can have two
readings: the reading given by Bickerton, in which case _get_
is dynamic (or an 'action' verb); and the reading given for
gat in (28b), in which case _get_ is stative.   In (28b) and
(28c) I can use _gat_ or _get_ without any meaning difference.
For (29a) he gives a progressive meaning - _obtaining_ - and
an habitual meaning - _used to obtain_.   This is fine except
that it can also have an habitual stative reading - _used to
possess_.   He regards (29b) as unacceptable, but it is
acceptable with an habitual and not a progressive meaning.

The problem is why _get_ and _gat_ can occur in identical

structures when it appears that gat is a stative verb and
get is a dynamic verb. Bickerton claims that speakers who
alternate between get and gat are 'confused' since they are
'moving away from the basilect' and 'would find it progress-
ively harder to keep the two verbs apart' (p.480).
Bickerton cites no evidence to show that the speakers are
confused. On the basis of my intuitive knowledge the
speakers are not confused and the variation is common across
styles. Furthermore, there are syntactic and semantic con-
straints on when get can vary with gat, a fact which
Bickerton did not investigate[21].

3.10.2 Reanalysis of get and gat

To begin the reanalysis I will assume that gat and
get are copulas. Lyons (1967:390) defines the copula as a
'purely grammatical element which carries distinctions of
tense, mood and aspect in the surface structure of certain
classes of stative sentences'. I will look at three classes
of sentences that linguists describing the copula in various
languages define as copular constructions. The three
classes of sentences are existential, locative and possessive.

Existential

(c) i. de gat laiyanz (in afrika) - There are lions (in
                                                      Africa)

   ii. laiyanz de - Lions exist.

---

21. In his most recent publication, Bickerton (1981:250)
    claims that get is the form of 'possession' and
    'existence' in Guyanese Creole. There is no mention
    of the form gat.

Locative

(d) i. de <u>gat</u> a buk pan di teebl - There is a book on the
                                                             table

   ii. di buk de pan di teebl - The book is on the table.

Possessive

(e) i. jaan <u>gat</u> a buk - John has a book

   ii. di buk a jaan oon - The book is John's.

Lyons (1967; 1968b) claims that existential and possessive
constructions are derived (synchronically and diachronically)
from locatives.   In Guyanese Creole we can find evidence for
this if we look at the existential and locative sentences on
the basis of the morphological unity of the phrase <u>de gat</u>.
But we can see a clearer relationship between the three
classes of sentences from the example below:

(f)   de <u>gat</u> a shap a di kaarna - (a) There is a shop at
                                           the corner.
                                       (b) They have (own) a
                                           shop at the corner.

Only the context can indicate whether the sentence is
locative or possessive.   We can also have an existential
interpretation.

        In existential, locative and possessive sentences <u>gat</u>
can vary with <u>get</u> and there would be no meaning difference.
But there are sentences in which <u>get</u> can occur but not <u>gat</u>:

(g) i. shi <u>get</u> sik - she became ill

   ii.*shi <u>gat</u> sik

        (This is acceptable only if she has a particular

        illness known as <u>sik</u>.)

(h)   i. mi _get_ awee - I got away

     ii.*mi _gat_ awee

(i)   i. a _get_ into di 'Gʰ - I got into the groove

     ii.*a _gat_ into di 'G'

(j)   i. hii _get_ stab - he was stabbed

     ii.*hii _gat_ stab.

It is noticeable that all the sentences containing _get_ have

a dynamic meaning in that they are referring to situations

which have changed - _get_ is therefore a change of state

copula.   In the sentence below (k), we can have two

interpretations:

(k)   mi _get_ a buk - (a) I have (possess) a book

                      (b) I received a book

     (a) is stative, (b) is dynamic.

We should now note the relationship between the syntax and

the meanings.   When the construction is:

            NP + get + (verb   )
                       (adjective)
                       (adverb   )

get has a dynamic meaning - a change of state function.

But when the construction is:

            NP + _get_ + NP

get can have either a stative or dynamic meaning depending on

the linguistic and situational context.   The situational

context aids the interpretation of _get_ as stative in the

examples below:

(1) mi _get_ mi famili. mi _get_ ada relativz in tong

I have my family.   I have other relatives in town.
(18A/10-11/7)

(m) ii gat wan ada wan neem 'kapa-tin'. ii _get_ 'jaspa'

There is another one called 'Copper tin'.   There is
jasper. (18A/39-1/11-12)

(n) wii _get_ a nais biich hee tu, bot oonlii wii een gat
di waata

We have a nice beach here too, but we do not have the
water. (23B/14-15/7)

(Note that in examples (m) and (n) the speaker switches
between _get_ and _gat_.)

The punctual adverbial phrase, _three o'clock_, gives _get_ a
dynamic meaning in example (o):

(o) mi _get_ di buk at _trii a klak_

I received the book at three o'clock.

In _gat_ sentences it is always

$$NP + gat + NP$$

and it is always stative.

We can test the dynamic and stative nature of _get_
and _gat_ by looking at their co-occurrence with the progress-
ive and habitual aspect marker _a_.   When _a_ precedes _gat_ the
meaning is habitual; when _a_ precedes _get_ the meaning is
progressive or habitual - habitual if _get_ is referring to a
state, or to a dynamic situation which is characteristic over
a period of time.

(p) dem na _a_ _gat_ seen

They do not usually have seine nets. (62A/17/8)

(q)　yu na _a_ get dat kain a ting de

　　You do not usually have that sort of thing there.

<div align="right">(18A/1/3)</div>

(r)　ting _a_ get deer a shap

　　Things are becoming expensive in the shops.　(62B/31/6)

　　　Because _gat_ is a stative verb, Bickerton would claim
that it is not possible to say (p) above, just as he claims
it is not possible to say (29b) above.　He takes this
position since in _Dynamics_ (1975a:46) he points out that
states have by definition an extended duration.　Therefore
you cannot ask whether a stative verb is [+ punctual] or
[- punctual].　But for non-stative verbs [+ punctual] would
imply a single action and [- punctual] an extended or re-
peated one.　Comrie (1976) and Lyons (1977), however, point
out that there is a relationship between states and dynamic
situations in that they are both durative.　That is, the
situations last for a period of time.　They, therefore, both
have a beginning and an end, and between their beginning and
end they will have indefinitely many temporal phases.　But
states differ from dynamic situations in that states are homo-
geneous and unchanging throughout their successive phases,
whilst dynamic situations are not.　Thus, the conceptual
overlap between states and dynamic situations explains why it
is semantically possible for the habitual aspect marker _a_ to
occur before stative verbs.

　　　We can further substantiate that _a + gat_ gives an
habitual meaning by an example of the mesolectal habitual
aspect marker _doz_ co-occurring with _gat_.

(s) de <u>doz</u> <u>gat</u> a waata lefin dong biiloo

There is usually a liquid left under it. (54A/32-33/4)

There are no examples of *<u>gat + ing</u> - the mesolectal progress-
ive aspect marker.

Stative <u>gat</u> and stative <u>get</u> are in variation with
mesolectal <u>hav</u> and <u>had</u>. <u>had</u> is marked for past tense.

(t) yu <u>hav</u> ada pest de tu

There are other insects there too.

(u) hii bin in de tu, hii <u>had</u> plees de

He was in there too, he had (possessed) a place there.
(18A/14-15/9)

The possible explanation for <u>get</u> being able to vary
with <u>gat</u> when referring to states although <u>gat</u> is a stative
verb and <u>get</u> is non-stative, is given in the discussion on
<u>Aspect</u> in Chapter 4.

It should be noted that <u>gat</u> + <u>infinitival complement</u>
(<u>gat</u> + <u>fu</u> (- <u>tu</u>) can vary with <u>get</u>+<u>fu</u> (- <u>tu</u>) as a modal of
obligation, but only <u>get</u>+<u>fu</u> (- <u>tu</u>) can function as a modal
of requirement. For example:

(v) i. mi <u>gat</u> <u>fu</u> diil wid nof chilren

I have to deal with a lot of children. (16A/4/1)

ii. mi <u>get</u> <u>fu</u> diil wid nof chilren

(3) i. shi <u>get</u> <u>fu</u> gu picha

She was allowed to go/had to go to the cinema

ii. shi <u>gat</u> <u>fu</u> gu picha

She had to go to the cinema/*she was allowed to go
to the cinema.

gat+fu and get+fu are in variation with mesolectal hav tu

and had tu (marked for past tense) as a modal of obligation.

3.10.3 Summary of get and gat

When the structure is NP + get + (verb   )
                                (adjective)
                                (adverb   )

get has a dynamic meaning - it is referring to a change of

state.

In a structure NP + get + NP

get can be referring to a state, or a change of state with

the linguistic and situational context specifying the meaning.

gat can only occur in structures NP + gat + NP and it always

refers to a state.

gat + infinitival complement can vary with get + infinitival

complement as a modal of obligation, but only get +

infinitival complement can function as a modal of requirement.

3.10.4 Summary of formal renewal of the morphemes with the forms /gat/ and /get/, from basilect to mesolect

Basilect (Identification)   Mesolect (Differentiation)

Locative copula	gat	⟶	hav
	bin + gat	⟶	had
Possessive copula	gat	⟶	hav
	bin + gat	⟶	had
Existential copula	gat	⟶	hav
	bin + gat	⟶	had
Locative copula	get	⟶	hav
	bin + get	⟶	had

<u>Basilect (Identification)</u>   <u>Mesolect (Differentiation)</u>

Possessive copula   get ──────────→ hav
                  bin + get ──────────→ had

Existential copula   get ──────────→ hav
                  bin + get ──────────→ had

Change of state copula   get ──────────→ get

3.10.5 <u>Summary of variation due to overlap between</u>
        <u>morpheme classes</u>

              gat   get

              get   –

THE SYSTEMS OF ASPECT AND TENSE

IN GUYANESE CREOLE

4.1   Aspect[1]

I will postulate two primary aspectual oppositions

for Guyanese Creole: (i)   IMPERFECTIVE – PERFECTIVE

(ii)   DURATIVE – PUNCTUAL

The IMPERFECTIVE – PERFECTIVE opposition depends on the

syntactic classification of verbs; the DURATIVE – PUNCTUAL

opposition relies on the inherent aspectual properties of

the predicate phrase thus either prohibiting certain

combinations or restricting their meaning.

4.2   IMPERFECTIVE – PERFECTIVE

Imperfective aspect makes reference to the internal

temporal constituency of a situation without explicit

reference to beginning or end.   Perfective aspect lacks

explicit reference to the internal temporal constituency of

a situation, with beginning, middle and end rolled into one.

For example:

(1)   jaan bin a sing wen paal kom in di ruum

John was singing when Paul entered the room.

---

1. The terminological system used in this analysis is that
    established by Comrie (1976).

The first verbal construction, <u>a sing</u>, has 'imperfective' meaning in that it represents the background to some event. The second verb, <u>kom</u>, presents the totality of the situation referred to - Paul's entry - without reference to the internal temporal structure. The 'entry', therefore, has 'perfective' meaning.

4.2.1   <u>Realization of PERFECTIVE aspect in the basilect and mesolect</u>

<u>Uninflected non-stative verbs</u> are categorized aspectually as PERFECTIVE in the basilect and mesolect. Non-stative verbs view a situation as a whole entity. Thus, without contextual modification, non-stative verbs refer to situations which are completed:

(2)   shi <u>sing</u> - she sang

(3)   shi <u>staart</u> - she began

(4)   shi <u>waak</u> tu di shap - she walked to the shop

(5)   shi <u>get</u> di buk - she received the book.

Therefore, the morphological category PERFECTIVE is in the verb.

4.2.2   <u>IMPERFECTIVE</u>

The Imperfective category of Guyanese Creole is subdivided into four distinct categories: <u>HABITUAL</u>, <u>CONTINUOUS</u>, <u>PROGRESSIVE</u> and <u>NONPROGRESSIVE</u>. <u>Habitual</u> aspect describes a situation which is characteristic of an extended period of time, so extended in fact that the situation referred to is

viewed not as an incidental property of the moment, but, precisely, as a characteristic feature of a whole period. Continuous aspect is defined negatively as imperfectivity that is not habituality. Progressive aspect is a combination of continuousness with non-stativity. Nonprogressive aspect is a combination of continuousness with resultativity in the case of Guyanese.

4.2.2.1 Realization of IMPERFECTIVE aspect in the basilect

Uninflected stative verbs are aspectually CONTINUOUS. Stative verbs refer to situations which are undifferentiated and lacking in defined limits. Thus, without contextual modification, stative verbs refer to situations which are going on in time:

(6) shi noo (de aansa) - she knows (the answer)

(7) shi waant (di buk) - she wants (the book).

Non-stative verbs inflected by the imperfective aspectual a are aspectually PROGRESSIVE. Inflected non-stative verbs refer to situations which are going on in time, thus CONTINUOUSNESS is a part of the meaning of PROGRESSIVE. But PROGRESSIVE aspect differs from CONTINUOUS aspect in that it refers to situations which will only continue if subject to a new input of energy. This is a reflex of the non-stativity of the verb which views a situation as a whole entity. Therefore:

(8) shi a sing - she is singing

(9) shi a ron - she is running.

Uninflected stative-resultative verbs are aspectually NONPROGRESSIVE. CONTINUOUSNESS, resulting from the stativity of the verb, is a part of the meaning of NON-PROGRESSIVE aspect. But it differs from PROGRESSIVE aspect in that it is non-dynamic, and it differs from CONTINUOUS aspect since it refers to a situation which is complete. The completive meaning is a reflex of the lexical resultativity of the verb. Thus, without contextual modification NON-PROGRESSIVE aspect refers to situations which are complete, but still going on in time. Therefore

(10) shi gaan hoom - she has gone home
(11) di glaas brok - the glass has broken.

There is an HABITUAL aspect marker a in the basilect. HABITUAL aspect refers to a situation which is characteristic over an extended period of time. Consequently, it is possible for the HABITUAL to combine with the PERFECTIVE, CONTINUOUS, PROGRESSIVE and NONPROGRESSIVE aspects.

(12) HABITUAL a + PERFECTIVE aspect

      shi a sing - she usually sings.

The linguistic (use of a subordinate adverbial clause) or situational context specifies when a before non-stative verbs is functioning as a PROGRESSIVE or HABITUAL aspect marker. The meaning is PROGRESSIVE without contextual modification.

(13) HABITUAL a + CONTINUOUS aspect

      shi a biliiv - she usually believes

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(14)   HABITUAL a + NONPROGRESSIVE aspect

shi a gaan hoom – she has usually left for home.

(15)   HABITUAL a + PROGRESSIVE aspect

shi a de a sing – she is usually singing

4.2.2.2 Realization of IMPERFECTIVE aspect in the mesolect

In the mesolect there is a formal differentiation in the IMPERFECTIVE category: -ing is suffixed to non-stative verbs for PROGRESSIVE aspect; -s is suffixed to stative and non-stative verbs for HABITUAL aspect; doz and yuuz tu (yuuz tu can only have PAST reference) precede all classes of verbs for HABITUAL aspect.   Thus:

(16)   PROGRESSIVE aspect -ing

shi singing – she is singing

(17)   HABITUAL aspect -s

shi singz – she usually sings

shi biliivz – she usually believes

(18)   HABITUAL aspect doz

shi doz sing   – she usually sings

shi doz biliiv – she usually believes

shi doz gaan   – she has usually left

(19)   HABITUAL aspect yuuz tu

shi yuuz tu sing   – she used to sing

shi yuuz tu biliiv – she used to believe

shi yuuz tu gaan   – she used to have left.

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4.2.3   Diagram of IMPERFECTIVE – PERFECTIVE opposition

We can diagram the IMPERFECTIVE – PERFECTIVE

opposition and subdivisions thus:

```
        ┌───────────────┴───────────────┐
PERFECTIVE                      IMPERFECTIVE
(non-stative                         │
   verbs)                            │
                  ┌──────────────────┴──────────────────┐
              HABITUAL                          CONTINUOUS
             (a, -s, doz                       (stative verbs)
           yuuz tu + verbs)                          │
                              ┌──────────────────────┴──────────────────────┐
                        NONPROGRESSIVE                               PROGRESSIVE
                     (stative-resultative                            (a, -ing  +
                            verbs)                                non-stative verbs)
```
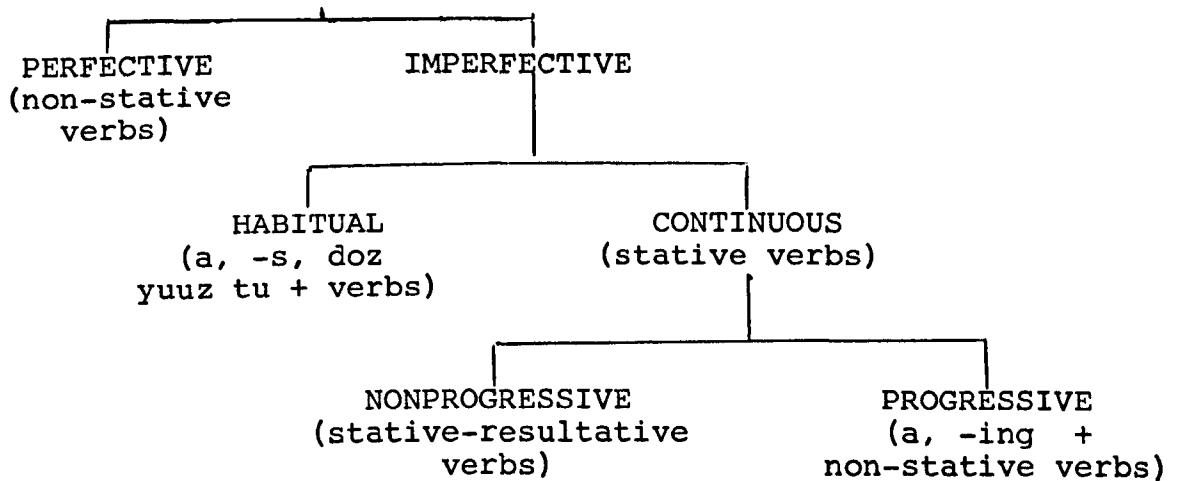
4.2.4   Aspect and adverbial co-occurrence

The aspectual categories exemplified above are the

basic aspects of verbs, or a combination of verb and an

auxiliary verb.   According to Friedrich (1974:54) aspect is

also always in part handled by adverbial elements with

variously linear or punctual meaning.   Such adverbial

elements are part of the underlying verb phrase.   He goes on:

> 'The possibility of coccurrence (or
> selectional combination) between verbal and
> adverbial subcategories is the underline
> criterion for aspect. In fact, the non-
> primary functions of aspect always depend on
> contexts of this sort in all languages, and
> in many cases, even the primary functions do...'

I will test the co-occurrence of the aspectual categories

exemplified above with some adverbs which are aspectually

± PUNCTUAL.   The co-occurrence possibilities will reinforce

the functions of the categories exemplified above, as well

as modify these basic aspects.   The adverbs are:

+ PUNCTUAL		- PUNCTUAL	
wans bifoor	'once before'	aalweez	'always'
at 3.00	'at 3.00'	neva	'never'
jos den	'just then'	oova an oova ageen	'over and over again'
yestudee	'yesterday'	dyuurin di paas yeer	'during the past year'

4.2.4.1 Punctual adverbs and PERFECTIVE aspect

```
(20)   (wans bifoor)
       (            ) shi sing di saang - she sang the song
       (at 3.00     )
       (            ) shi waak tu skuul - she walked to school
       (jos den     )
       (            ) shi get di buk    - she received the book
       (yestudee    )
```

Without contextual modification, PERFECTIVE verbs refer to

situations with the beginning, middle and end rolled into

one.   The possibility of their co-occurrence with punctual

adverbs without semantic change, supports this primary

function.

4.2.4.2 Nonpunctual adverbs and PERFECTIVE aspect

PERFECTIVE verbs can also have imperfective meaning

as illustrated by their co-occurrence with nonpunctual

adverbs.

(21)　oova an oova ageen /shi <u>sing</u> di saang　　HABITUAL

　　　Over and over again/she sang the song

(22)　dyuurin di paas yeer/shi <u>waak</u> tu skuul　　HABITUAL

　　　During the past year/shi has walked to school

(23)　shi / aalweez / <u>waak</u> tu skuul　　　　　HABITUAL

　　　she / always / walked to school

(24)　shi / neva / <u>waak</u> tu skuul　　　　　CONTINUOUS

　　　She has never walked to school

(25)　dyuurin di paas yeer / shi <u>get</u> di buk　　CONTINUOUS

　　　During the past year / she has had the book

(26)　oova an oova ageen / shi <u>get</u> di buk　　HABITUAL

　　　Over and over again / shi received the book

It is possible for PERFECTIVE verbs to have imperfective
meaning, as Comrie (1976:21-22) points out, because perfect-
ivity involves lack of explicit reference to the internal
temporal constituency of a situation, rather than explicitly
implying the lack of such internal temporal constituency.
Therefore, it is possible for PERFECTIVE verbs to be used for
situations that are internally complex such as those that
last for a considerable period of time, or include a number
of distinct phases.　The internal structure of such situa-
tions cannot be referred to directly by the choice of a
PERFECTIVE verb, since this is what PERFECTIVE verbs cannot
indicate.　But such reference can be made explicit by the

linguistic and situational context.

The examples above (21-26), illustrate PERFECTIVE verbs having HABITUAL and CONTINUOUS meanings. It is also possible for PERFECTIVE verbs to have NONPROGRESSIVE meaning as noted in the variation between non-stative <u>gu</u> (PERFECTIVE) and stative-resultative <u>gaan</u> (NONPROGRESSIVE) - see section 3.9.3, or in the example below:

(27) shi <u>lef</u> tuu houwaz agoo)
) she left two hours ago
      shi <u>liiv</u> tuu houwaz agoo)

It is not possible, however, for PERFECTIVE verbs to have PROGRESSIVE meaning.

Since PERFECTIVE verbs rely on the linguistic and situational context for IMPERFECTIVE meaning, IMPERFECTIVE reference is a non-primary function of PERFECTIVE verbs.

4.2.4.3 Nonpunctual adverbs and IMPERFECTIVE aspect

4.2.4.3.1 HABITUAL aspect

(28) oova an oova ageen / shi (a) waak tu skuul
                                (<u>doz</u>)

      Over and over again / she usually walks to school

(29) dyuurin di paas yeer / shi (a) waak tu skuul
                                   (<u>doz</u>)

      During the past year / she has been walking to school

(30) shi (a) / aalweez / waak tu skuul
          (<u>doz</u>)

      She usually / always / walks to school

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Note that HABITUAL aspect not only co-occurs with adverbial phrases which are + HABITUAL (<u>aalweez, oova an oova ageen</u>), but also with phrases which are + CONTINUOUS (<u>neva, dyuurin di paas yeer</u>). This is possible since HABITUAL aspect refers to situations which are characteristic over an extended period of time.

4.2.4.3.2 CONTINUOUS aspect

(32) oova an oova ageen / shi <u>biliiv</u> di stoorii

Over and over again / she believed the story

(33) dyuurin di paas yeer / shi <u>biliiv</u> di stoorii

During the past year / she has believed the story

(34) shi / aalweez / <u>biliiv</u> di stoorii

She has / always / believed the story

(35) shi / neva / <u>biliiv</u> di stoorii

She has / never / believed the story.

CONTINUOUS aspect can have HABITUAL meaning as noted by its co-occurrence with the + HABITUAL (<u>aalweez, oova an oova ageen</u>) adverbs. Therefore, HABITUAL meaning is a non-primary function of CONTINUOUS aspect.

4.2.4.3.3 NONPROGRESSIVE aspect

(36) oova an oova ageen / shi <u>brok</u> di windoo

Over and over again / she has broken the window

(37) dyuurin di paas yeer / shi brok di windoo

      During the past year / she has broken the window

(38) shi / aalweez / brok di windoo

      She has / always / broken the window

(39) shi / neva / brok di windoo

      She has / never / broken the window.

The co-occurrence possibility of NONPROGRESSIVE aspect with

CONTINUOUS adverbs seems to support the position that NON-

PROGRESSIVE aspect has CONTINUOUSNESS as a part of its mean-

ing.   Its co-occurrence with HABITUAL adverbs, indicates

that HABITUAL meaning is a non-primary function of NON-

PROGRESSIVE aspect.

4.2.4.3.4 PROGRESSIVE aspect

(40) oova an oova ageen / shi $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ waak tu skuul

      Over and over again / she has been walking to school

(41) dyuurin di paas yeer / shi $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ waak tu skuul

      During the past year / she has been walking to school

(42) shi / aalweez / $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ waak tu skuul

      She is / always / walking to school

(43) shi / neva / $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ waak tu skuul

      She is / never / walking to school.

The co-occurrence possibility of PROGRESSIVE aspect with
CONTINUOUS adverbs supports the position that PROGRESSIVE
aspect has CONTINUOUSNESS as a part of its meaning.   Its co-
occurrence with HABITUAL adverbs indicates that HABITUAL
meaning is a non-primary function of PROGRESSIVE aspect.

The combination of IMPERFECTIVE aspect and non-
punctual adverbs supports the categorizations and hierarchy
posited in the diagram (section 4.2.3) above.

4.2.4.4 Punctual adverbs and IMPERFECTIVE aspect

4.2.4.4.1 HABITUAL aspect

(44) *(wans bifoor)
      (   )
      (at 3.00   ) shi ⎧ a   ⎫ waak tu skuul
      (   )   ⎨ yuuz tu ⎬
      (jos den   )   ⎩   ⎭
      (   )
      (yestudee   )

The inability of HABITUAL aspect to co-occur with punctual
adverbs is not surprising since HABITUAL aspect makes
reference to a situation which is characteristic over an ex-
tended period of time

4.2.4.4.2 CONTINUOUS aspect

(45) (wans bifoor)
      (   )
      (at 3.00   ) shi biliiv di stoorii
      (   )
      (jos den   )
      (   )
      (yestudee   )

```
(Once before)
(           )
(at 3.00    )    she believed the story
(           )
(just then  )
(           )
(yesterday  )
```

It is possible for the CONTINUOUS category to co-occur with

nonpunctual adverbs _and_ punctual adverbs, but there is an

aspectual meaning difference.   With nonpunctual adverbs we

are referring to the internal temporal constituency of a

situation without explicit reference to beginning or end,

therefore imperfective meaning.   But with the combination of

CONTINUOUS aspect and punctual adverbs, we are making

reference not only to a situation which is going on in time,

but also to its inception.   Therefore, the combination of

CONTINUOUS aspect and punctual adverbs gives an aspectual

meaning of + INCEPTIVE, - PUNCTUAL.

4.2.4.4.3 NONPROGRESSIVE aspect

```
(46)   (wans bifoor)
       (           )
       (at 3.00    ) shi brok di windoo
       (           )
       (jos den    )
       (           )
       (yestudee   )


       (Once before)
       (           )
       (at 3.00    ) she broke the window
       (           )
       (just then  )
       (           )
       (yesterday  )
```

Again there is a meaning difference when NONPROGRESSIVE

aspect combines with punctual adverbs. Stative-resultative

verbs are aspectually NONPROGRESSIVE. It was stated above,

that stative-resultative verbs refer not only to an ongoing

state, but also to the successful completion of an action.

When NONPROGRESSIVE aspect combines with punctual adverbs,

we have a + COMPLETIVE, - PUNCTUAL aspectual meaning.

4.2.4.4.4 PROGRESSIVE aspect

(47) *(wans bifoor)
       (   )
       (at 3.00   )
       (   )
       (jos den   ) shi (a) waak tu skuul
       (   )   (-ing)
       (yestudee)

It is possible, however, for PROGRESSIVE aspect to co-occur

with punctual adverbs, as long as the TIME of the occurrence

is explicit or implicit in the context.

(48) [wans bifoor [wen paal (a) riid di buk] meerii kom in
                            (-ing)   di ruum

      [Once before [when Paul was reading the book] Mary came
                                                        into the room

(49) [yestudee [wail meerii (a) sing di saang] paal drap
                            (-ing)   ii buk

      [Yesterday [while Mary was singing the song] Paul
                                                    dropped his book

Thus, Paul's reading, use of PROGRESSIVE aspect, provides the

background to Mary's entry into the room. Similarly, Mary's

singing provides the background to the time when Paul dropped

his book.   Therefore, the co-occurrence of PROGRESSIVE aspect with punctual adverbs, gives a - PUNCTUAL aspectual meaning.

The CONTINUOUS, NONPROGRESSIVE and PROGRESSIVE categories, but not the HABITUAL category, can combine with punctual adverbs.   This co-occurrence possibility supports the subdivision exemplified in the diagram (section 4.2.3) where the CONTINUOUS, NONPROGRESSIVE and PROGRESSIVE categories are marked CONTINUOUS.

4.2.5   Summary of the primary and non-primary functions of
         the IMPERFECTIVE and PERFECTIVE aspectual categories

CATEGORY	FUNCTION	
	PRIMARY	NONPRIMARY
PERFECTIVE	PERFECTIVE	HABITUAL CONTINUOUS NONPROGRESSIVE
HABITUAL	HABITUAL	-
CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS	HABITUAL + INCEPTIVE, - PUNCTUAL
NONPROGRESSIVE	NONPROGRESSIVE	HABITUAL + COMPLETIVE, -PUNCTUAL
PROGRESSIVE	PROGRESSIVE	HABITUAL - PUNCTUAL

Since the PERFECTIVE category can encompass that of the
IMPERFECTIVE category (except for PROGRESSIVE aspect), it
implies that the PERFECTIVE is the unmarked member of the
IMPERFECTIVE - PERFECTIVE opposition. We can therefore
posit an aspectual system of $\left[\pm \text{ IMPERFECTIVE} \right]$ for Guyanese
Creole.

4.3   DURATIVE - PUNCTUAL

A second grammatical aspectual opposition observed
in Guyanese Creole is the DURATIVE - PUNCTUAL opposition.
DURATIVE aspect refers to a situation that is <u>conceived of</u>
as lasting in time. PUNCTUAL aspect refers to a situation
that is <u>not conceived of</u> as lasting in time. Whereas the
IMPERFECTIVE - PERFECTIVE opposition relies on the syntactic
classification of verbs, the DURATIVE - PUNCTUAL opposition
relies on the inherent semantic aspectual properties of the
predicate phrase, either prohibiting certain combinations,
or restricting their meaning.

4.3.1.1 DURATIVE aspect in the basilect and mesolect

<u>de</u> is the DURATIVE aspect marker in the basilect. It
occurs before PROGRESSIVE (<u>a</u> or <u>-ing</u> + non-stative verbs)
predicates and CONTINUOUS (adjective) predicates.

(50)   shi <u>de a sing</u>   PROGRESSIVE

     She is singing

(51)   shi de gud   CONTINUOUS

She is getting on well.

In the mesolect there is a formal differentiation in
the DURATIVE category.   The form bii is used as a DURATIVE
aspect marker, but only in constructions that are marked for
HABITUAL aspect.   de, on the other hand, continues in
HABITUAL and NONHABITUAL constructions:

(52)   shi doz bii singing)
)   she is usually singing
       shi doz de singing)

(53)   shi de singing)
) she is singing
     *shi bii singing)

(54)   shi doz bii sarii)
) she usually has the appearance of
       shi doz de sarii)   being sorry

(55)   shi de sarii)
) she has the appearance of being sorry.
     *shi bii sarii)

When DURATIVE de and bii co-occur with PROGRESSIVE
and CONTINUOUS predicates, you are making reference to the
fact that the situation went on for a period of time, but you
are not specifying how much time.   Thus the combination of
de and PROGRESSIVE or CONTINUOUS predicate gives an aspectual
meaning of UNSPECIFIED QUANTITY.

de + PROGRESSIVE predicate

(56) i.   shi de $\left\{ \begin{matrix} a \\ \text{-ing} \end{matrix} \right\}$ sing$\left. \begin{matrix} \\ \\ \end{matrix} \right\}$
) she is singing
     ii. shi ∅ $\left\{ \begin{matrix} a \\ \text{- ing} \end{matrix} \right\}$ sing$\left. \right\}$

<u>de</u> + CONTINUOUS predicate

(57) i.   shi <u>de</u> aalrait)
) she is alright
     ii. shi ∅ aalrait)

Examples (56) i. and ii. make reference to someone who is in

the process of singing.   But example (56) i. with <u>de</u>, makes

explicit reference to the fact that you are unaware for how

long the singing was going on, and for how long it will

continue.   The utterance is therefore marked for an

UNSPECIFIED QUANTITY of time.   The same applies to examples

(57) i. and ii.

     But the meaning can change if the main clause combines

with a subordinate adverbial clause of TIME.

<u>de</u> + CONTINUOUS predicate

(58) i.   wen yu sii di blada, it gon <u>de</u> big) When you see the
) balloon, it will
     ii. wen yu sii di blada, it gon ∅ big) be big

<u>de</u> + PROGRESSIVE predicate

(59) i.   wen yu sii meerii, shi gon <u>de</u> singing)When you see
)Mary, she will
     *ii. wen yu sii meerii, shi gon ∅ singing)be singing.

Example (58) ii. without <u>de</u>, is referring to the fact that

when you see the balloon it will be 'big', and that size will

not change or is unlikely to change.   But by using <u>de</u> in

example (58) i., you are implying that the balloon will only

be 'big' for the period of time you are seeing it.   Thus the

length of time is <u>SPECIFIED</u>.   The length of time is also

SPECIFIED in example (59) i., but example (59) ii. is un-

grammatical.

It was noted in section 3.6.1 that DURATIVE aspect
cannot co-occur with predicate stative and stative-
resultative verbs (CONTINUOUS and NONPROGRESSIVE aspects
respectively) although both are marked for CONTINUOUS aspect,
but it can combine - as noted above - with predicate
adjectives which are aspectually CONTINUOUS.   It is quite
possible that stative and stative-resultative verbs are already in-
herently marked UNSPECIFIED QUANTITY.   This inherent
semantic meaning would indicate that adjectives belong to a
different sub-class to stative, stative-resultative (and non-
stative) verbs.   Examples such as:

(60)   shi gaan a shap   (stative-resultative verb)

       She has gone to the shop

(61)   shi noo di aansa (stative verb)

       She knows the answer

are not specific on how long the person has been at the shop,
or for how long the person has known the answer.   But the
time can be SPECIFIED by a subordinate adverbial clause of
TIME:

(62)   shi gaan a shap / sins tuu a klak

       She has gone to the shop / since two o'clock

(63)   laas yeer / shi noo di aansa

       Last year / she knew the answer.

DURATIVE aspect cannot co-occur with non-stative
verbs which are aspectually PERFECTIVE and thus lacking in
internal structure.

4.3.1.2 Nonpunctual adverbs and DURATIVE aspect

(64)   oova an oova ageen   )
) shi de $\left\{ \begin{matrix} a \\ -ing \end{matrix} \right\}$ sing
        dyuurin di paas yeer)

        Over and over again)
) she has been singing
        During the past year)

(65)   shi / aalweez / de $\left\{ \begin{matrix} a \\ -ing \end{matrix} \right\}$ sing
              neva /

        She is / always / singing
                never /

(66)   oova an oova ageen   )
) di blada de big
        dyuurin di paas yeer)

        Over and over again)
) the balloon has been big
        During the past year)

(67)   di blada / aalweez / de big
                   neva /

        The balloon is / always / big
                         never /

4.3.1.3 Punctual adverbs and DURATIVE aspect

(68)   (wans bifoor)
        (   )
        (at 3.00   ) shi de $\left\{ \begin{matrix} a \\ -ing \end{matrix} \right\}$ sing
        (   )
        (jos den   )
        (   )
        (yestudee   )

        (Once before)
        (   )
        (at 3.00   ) she was singing
        (   )
        (just then   )
        (   )
        (yesterday   )

(69)
$$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{(wans bifoor)}\\\text{(at 3.00)}\\\text{(jos den)}\\\text{(yestudee)}\end{array}\right\}\text{ di blada } \underline{\text{de}} \text{ big}$$

$$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{(Once before)}\\\text{(at 3.00)}\\\text{(just then)}\\\text{(yesterday)}\end{array}\right\}\text{ the balloon was big.}$$

<u>DURATIVE</u> aspect can combine with punctual adverbs, but the punctual reference indicates a point in time during which the action was taking place.

    <u>de</u> is optional in example (70) below, which is a combination of subordinate punctual adverbial phrase, and an adverbial phrase of time. The punctual adverbial phrase indicates the point in time during which the action was taking place, the use of the temporal phrase specifies the quantity of time.

(70)

$$\left[\text{wans bifoor}\left[\text{wen paal }(\underline{\text{de}})\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{a}\\\text{-ing}\end{array}\right\}\text{riid di buk}\right]\text{meerii kom in di ruum}\right]$$

$$\left[\text{Once before}\left[\text{when Paul was reading the book}\right]\text{Mary came into the room}\right]$$

The use of <u>de</u> emphasizes the action of 'reading'; without <u>de</u>, the focus is on Mary's entry into the room, exemplified in

the main clause[2].

4.3.2.1 PUNCTUAL aspect in the basilect and mesolect

Don is the PUNCTUAL aspect marker in the basilect and mesolect.   It occurs before PERFECTIVE (non-stative verbs) predicates, CONTINUOUS (stative verbs and adjectives) predicates, and NONPROGRESSIVE (stative-resultative verbs) predicates.

When don combines with PERFECTIVE verbs, the utterance is referring to a situation which has ended.   The utterance, therefore, has a COMPLETIVE aspectual meaning.

(71) i. shi don sing)
　　　　　　　　　　) she has sung
　　 ii. shi ∅ sing)

Whereas example (71)ii. implies completion, in example (71)i. completion is overtly marked.

When don combines with CONTINUOUS and NONPROGRESSIVE predicates the utterance is referring to a temporally restricted but nonpunctual situation.   The utterance therefore has a + COMPLETIVE, - PUNCTUAL meaning.

　　　 don + CONTINUOUS aspect

(72)　paal don noo di aansa

　　　 Paul already knows the answer.

(Paul found out the answer some time in the past,

+ COMPLETIVE, but at the moment of utterance he is still in

possession of that knowledge,　 - PUNCTUAL.)

2.　This example supports the point made by Friedrich (1974:
　　S 38) that aspect has certain emphatic or intensifying
　　functions. See also Scheffer (1975).

(73) paal <u>don</u> <u>taal</u>

Paul is already tall.

<u>don</u> + NONPROGRESSIVE aspect

(74) paal <u>don</u> <u>gaan</u> hoom

Paul has already left for home.

<u>don</u> cannot combine with predicates which are inflected for

HABITUAL and PROGRESSIVE aspects.   The predicates with which

<u>don</u> can combine are uninflected.

4.3.2.2 <u>Punctual adverbs and PUNCTUAL aspect</u>

(75) (wans bifoor)
     (   )
     (at 3.00   ) shi <u>don</u> <u>sing</u>
     (   )
     (jos den   )
     (   )
     (yestudee))

     (Once before)
     (   )
     (at 3.00   ) she had sung
     (   )
     (just then)
     (   )
     (yesterday)

(76) (wans bifoor)
     (   )
     (at 3.00   ) shi <u>don</u> <u>gat</u> di buk
     (   )
     (jos den   )
     (   )
     (yestudee)

     (Once before)
     (   )
     (at 3.00   ) shi already had the book
     (   )
     (just then)
     (   )
     (yesterday)

(77)
```
(wans bifoor)
(           )
(at 3.00    )  shi don gaan hoom
(           )
(jos den    )
(           )
(yestudee   )
```

```
(Once before)
(            )
(at 3.00     )  she had already left for home.
(            )
(just then   )
(            )
(yesterday   )
```

When PUNCTUAL aspect combines with punctual verbs, the utterance has a COMPLETIVE meaning, irrespective of whether the verb is PERFECTIVE or IMPERFECTIVE. The emphasis is on the completion of the action, rather than on whether it is still going on in time.

4.3.2.3 Nonpunctual adverbs and PUNCTUAL aspect

(78)
```
*(oova an oova ageen   )shi don sing
 (                      )
 (dyuurin di paas yeer  )
 (                      )shi don gat di buk
 (aalweez               )
 (                      )
 (neva                  )shi don gaan hoom.
```

4.3.3 Summary of functions of the DURATIVE and PUNCTUAL aspectual categories

CATEGORY	FUNCTION
	UNSPECIFIED QUANTITY
DURATIVE	
	SPECIFIED QUANTITY

CATEGORY	FUNCTION
	COMPLETIVE
PUNCTUAL	
	+ COMPLETIVE, - PUNCTUAL

Since DURATIVE _de_ has wider contextual co-occurrence possibilities than PUNCTUAL _don_, I would posit _don_ as the marked member of the DURATIVE-PUNCTUAL opposition. Guyanese Creole, therefore, has a second aspectual opposition of [± PUNCTUAL].

4.4 Summary on Aspect

I have postulated two aspectual oppositions for Guyanese Creole: (i) [± IMPERFECTIVE]

(ii) [± PUNCTUAL]

The [± IMPERFECTIVE] opposition depends on the syntactic classification of verbs, the [± PUNCTUAL] opposition relies on the inherent aspectual properties of the predicate phrase, thus either prohibiting certain combinations or restricting their meaning.

This reanalysis highlights the inadequacy of the [± punctual] aspectual parameter that Bickerton set up for the Guyanese basilect: [+ punctual] implies a single action, [- punctual] an extended or repeated action. Unmarked non-stative verbs are [+ punctual], and marked non-stative verbs and stative verbs are [- punctual]. But as I have illustrated unmarked non-stative verbs can have habitual and continuous meanings, and there is also the class of stative-resultative

verbs to account for. Therefore, Bickerton's ± punctual

category is lacking in observational, descriptive and

explanatory adequacy. I have also illustrated that it is

possible to fit the form <u>don</u> into the grammar of Guyanese

without referring to it as a 'performance feature', appeal-

ing to decreolization, or equating it with the English

perfect. Furthermore, Bickerton failed to realize that <u>de</u>

is a durative aspect marker.

It also follows from this analysis that the series of

grammatical changes Bickerton posits as occurring in the

movement from basilect to acrolect cannot apply if his

basilectal system is inadequate. I think that I have quite

reasonably shown that the basilect and mesolect operate with

the same underlying categories, although there are some

formal differences between the two systems.

4.5   Tense

The tense system of Guyanese Creole relies not on the

directionality of time (as for example Standard English past-

nonpast), but on the relationship between a speaker and events

in the sense of whether it is 'now' or 'not now'. The

formally marked 'past' and 'future' are 'not now', and the

formally unmarked 'present', 'past' and 'future' denote things

in the deictic 'here-and-now'. The primary tense distinction

is therefore PRESENT-NONPRESENT, with NONPRESENT being sub-

divided into PAST and FUTURE.

4.6   FUTURE Time Reference in the Basilect and Mesolect

There is a future tense marker gu in the basilect. gon is the mesolect form.

(79)   su mi gu kyaan mek um

So I will not be able to make it.   (16A/14-15/7)

(80)   a gon tel yu from di staarting

I will tell you from the beginning.   (54A/4-5/1)

The future tense forms may only co-occur with adverbs which make reference to future time.

(81)   mi gu giv yu di buk/tumaroo

I will give you the book/tomorrow.

(82)   mi gon giv yu di buk/jos nau

I will give you the book /just now.

(83)   *mi gu giv yu di buk/a fyuu minits agoo

I will give you the book/a few minutes ago.

(84)   *mi gon giv yu di buk/at prezent

I will give you the book/at present.

Future time reference can also be made by the use of PROGRESSIVE aspect combined with a temporal adverbial clause marked for future time.

(85)   neks wiik/dem a staart di wok

Next week/they are going to start the work.

(86)   .we yu going/tumaroo

Where are you going/tomorrow?

PERFECTIVE aspect can also have future time
reference, but then as part of a subordinate temporal adverb-
ial clause, and not of the main clause.

(87)   wen yu gu hoom, yu gon sii jaan

       When you arrive home, you will see John.

4.7   PRESENT and PAST Time Reference in the Basilect
      and Mesolect

       There is no formally marked present tense grammatical
category in Guyanese Creole.   There is a formally marked
past tense category which is optional.   Guyanese Creole,
then, relies on the IMPERFECTIVE-PERFECTIVE aspectual
opposition for present and past time reference.

4.7.1   IMPERFECTIVE aspect and present meaning

       Where the rest of the sentence contains no overt
specification of time reference, the IMPERFECTIVE category
has present meaning in Guyanese Creole.   Non-stative verbs
are preceded by the progressive/habitual aspect marker a, the
habitual aspect marker doz, or habitual -s or progressive
-ing is suffixed to the verbs.   Stative verbs, being aspect-
ually CONTINUOUS and thus IMPERFECTIVE, are unmarked.

(88)   a mii a tel yu

       I am telling you.   (18A/35/2)

(89) mi tiiching nau

     I am teaching now. (17B/2/1)

(90) a doz duu tuu taip a jaab

     I do two types of jobs. (18A/2/1)

(91) ai selz meet

     I sell meat. (54A/2/1)

(92) az yu noo, op da said, yu gat plentii kuulii piipl

     As you know, up that side, there are a lot of Indians.
                            (16A/15/2)

4.7.2 PERFECTIVE aspect and past meaning

     PERFECTIVE aspect, without contextual support, gives

past meaning. Thus non-stative verbs are uninflected.

(93) yes, bond tel mi hii mek 14 kwaata

     Yes, Bond told me (that) he made 14 quarters.(18A/18/9)

(94) shi staart tel mi di stoorii

     She began to tell me the story.

4.7.3 IMPERFECTIVE aspect and past meaning

     Stative verbs, and non-stative verbs inflected for

PROGRESSIVE and HABITUAL aspect can also have past meaning.

Past reference, however, is dependent on the linguistic (i.e.

subordinate adverbial clauses of time, or co-occurrence with

PERFECTIVE verbs) and situational context.

(95) mi na tel mi granmuda notn bikaaz mi noo de na gu waant
      mi kom aaf di treed

      I did not tell my grandmother anything because I knew
      they would not have wanted me to leave the trade.
                                                (18A/16-18/8)

(96) dem waant tuu maan fu stitch di baag, an den ramjas kom
      an hii rekomend mii an a neks bai

      They wanted two men to stitch bags, and then Ramjass
      came, and he recommended me and another boy.
                                                (22B/8-10/1)

(97) da miin yu a luk out, yu matii a rool a kom

      That meant you were looking out, your friend was
      rolling coming. (62A/6-7/6)

(98) yu tel dem fu gu bai tikit, dem na a gu

      You told them to go and buy tickets, they would not
      usually go. (62A/14/3)

      Stative-resultative verbs are aspectually IMPERFECTIVE,
but since lexically they refer to the successful completion of
a situation, they can only have past meaning.   Thus:

(99) shi brok di glaas

      She has broken the glass.

(100) shi gaan hoom

      She has gone home.

(101) wel, wen dee gaan to work in di maarnings, ai aloon
      lef hoom deer

      Well, when they went to work in the mornings, I was
      left alone at home there. (4B/3-4/3)

4.7.4 IMPERFECTIVE and PERFECTIVE aspects and nonpast meaning

Both IMPERFECTIVE and PERFECTIVE categories are used in generalizations which have nonpast meaning.

IMPERFECTIVE

(102) dem na <u>a</u> <u>laarn</u>, mi na <u>a</u> <u>duu</u> notn, su in di end mi <u>a</u> achiiv notn

They do not usually learn, I do not usually do anything, so in the end I usually achieve nothing.
(16A/29-30/6)

(103) piipl na <u>a</u> <u>biliiv</u> mi

People do not usually believe me. (62B/32/6)

(104) evrii taim ai get de, shi <u>doz</u> <u>gaan</u>

Every time I get there, she has usually gone.

(105) shi <u>doz</u> de <u>singing</u>

She is usually singing.

(106) hii <u>laik</u> plee nof saal

He likes to play a lot of 'salt' (a game). (17B/30/8)

(107) evrii taim ai gu de, hii <u>gaan</u> hoom

Every time I go there, he has gone home.

(108) shi aalweez <u>riiding</u>

She is always reading.

(109)   an <u>help</u> dem dat de mos <u>get</u> somting fu duu wen dem lef skull

And help them that they must get something to do when they leave school.   (16A/5-6/1)

The use of IMPERFECTIVE aspect in nonpast construc-tions is natural if we see a relationship between 'present' and 'nonpast': they overlap in that the 'present' is any expanse of time the speaker wants it to be.   (See Russell 1915; Bull 1960; Sedey 1969.)   But why can PERFECTIVE aspect have nonpast meaning?   It can because it lacks explicit reference to the internal temporal constituency of a situation. We noted above in the discussion on <u>Aspect</u> that the PERFECTIVE can have habitual meaning, although habitual meaning is dependent on the linguistic and situational context.   In non-past constructions you are referring to situations which are characteristic over a period of time.

4.7.5   Summary of the IMPERFECTIVE-PERFECTIVE aspectual opposition and time reference

FUTURE time reference	: PROGRESSIVE aspect + context PERFECTIVE aspect + context

PRESENT time reference	: CONTINUOUS aspect
	  PROGRESSIVE aspect
	  HABITUAL + PERFECTIVE aspects

PAST time reference	: PERFECTIVE aspect NONPROGRESSIVE aspect

```
PAST   time reference      :  HABITUAL    aspect + context
                              CONTINUOUS   aspect + context
                              PROGRESSIVE  aspect + context


NONPAST  time reference    :  HABITUAL   aspect
                              CONTINUOUS        aspect + context
                              PROGRESSIVE       aspect + context
                              NONPROGRESSIVE aspect + context
                              PERFECTIVE        aspect + context
```

4.7.6   Syntactic evidence of present, nonpast and past neutralization

In sections 4.7.1 - 4.7.4 we observed the neutralization of present, nonpast and past meanings.   We can test the neutralization by adverbial co-occurrence.   As a preliminary we can postulate three classes of adverbs subcategorized for TIME:

+ Past	± Past
laang taim (long ago)	neva (never)
in dem deez (in those days)	aalweez (always)
wans bifoor (once before)	jos nau (just now)
yestudee (yesterday)	tudee (today)

- Past

soo faar (so far)

az yet (as yet)

fu di paas trii yeerz (for the past three years)

at prezent (at present)

4.7.6.1 + Past adverbs and PERFECTIVE aspect

(110)   laang taim / mi <u>fait</u> baad in skuul

       Long ago / I fought a lot in school

(111)   in dem deez / mi <u>fait</u> baad in skull

       In those days / I fought a lot in school.

(112)   wans bifoor / mi <u>riid</u> di buk

       Once before / I read the book.

(113)   yestudee / mi <u>get</u> di buk

       Yesterday / I got the book.

4.7.6.2 ± Past adverbs and PERFECTIVE aspect

(114)   shi / neva / <u>hit</u> di bai

       She / never / hit the boy

       She / never / hits the boy.

(115)   shi / alweez / <u>hit</u> di bai

       She / always / hit the boy

       She / always / hits the boy

(116)   shi <u>waak</u> tu tong / jos nau

       She walked to town / just now

(117)   shi <u>waak</u> tu tong / tudee

       She walked to town / today

Examples (116) and (117) reject an habitual and thus nonpast reading because the adverbs are aspectually + PUNCTUAL. Furthermore, the combination can only refer to situations which occurred before the moment of utterance.

4.7.6.3 - Past adverbs and PERFECTIVE aspect

The PERFECTIVE rejects adverbs which indicate a background contemporaneous with the speaker at the moment of utterance.

(118) *at prezent/soo faar/az yet/shi <u>sen</u> di bai fu di buk

At present/so far / as yet/she has sent the boy for
the book

The adverbs are acceptable, however, if the verb is negated:

(119) at prezent/soo faar/az yet/shi <u>na</u> <u>sen</u> di bai fu di buk

At present/ so far /as yet/shi has not sent the boy
for the book

Thus the boy's presence is not a background contemporaneous with the speaker at the moment of utterance.

But the PERFECTIVE can combine with - Past adverbs in a positive and a negative sense, if the adverbial phrase is also - PUNCTUAL.

(120) fu di paas trii yeerz / shi <u>sen</u> di bai fu di buk

For the past three years/she has sent the boy for the
book

(121) fu di paas trii yeerz / shi <u>na</u> <u>sen</u> di bai fu di buk

For the past three years/she has not sent the boy for
the book

4.7.6.4 + Past adverbs and CONTINUOUS (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(122) laang taim / in dem deez / mi <u>waant</u> di buk

Long ago / in those days / I wanted the book

(123) wans bifoor / yestudee / mi <u>waant</u> di buk

Once before/yesterday/ I wanted the book

4.7.6.5 ± Past adverbs and CONTINUOUS (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(124)   shi /neva /biliiv di stoorii

She/never/believed the story

She/never/believes the story

(125)   shi/aalweez/biliiv di stoorii

She/ always /believed the story

She/ always /believes the story

(126)   shi waant di buk / jos nau / tudee

She wanted the book/just now/today

She wants the book/just now/today

4.7.6.6 - Past adverbs and CONTINUOUS (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(127)   at prezent/soo faar/mi biliiv di stoorii

At present/ so far /I believe the story

(128)   fu di paas trii yeerz / mi noo shi

For the past three years/I have known her

The punctual adverbial phrase az yet can only combine with

CONTINUOUS aspect if the verb is negated:

(129) *az yet / mi noo shi

As yet / I know her

(130)   az yet / mi na noo shi

As yet / I do not know her

4.7.6.7 + Past adverbs and PROGRESSIVE (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(131)   laang taim / in dem deez / mi $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>waak</u> tu di shap

Long ago / in those days / I was walking to the shop

(132)   wans bifoor / yestudee / mi $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>sing</u> di saang

Once before /yesterday/ I was singing the song

4.7.6.8 ± Past adverbs and PROGRESSIVE (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(133)   shi / neva / $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>sing</u>

She was never singing

She is never singing

(134)   shi /aalweez/ $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>sing</u>

She was always singing

She is always singing

The co-occurrence of PROGRESSIVE aspect with the punctual adverbs <u>tudee</u> and <u>jos nau</u> gives the utterance an 'after now' meaning. This is in contrast with PERFECTIVE aspect which only gives a 'before now' reading. (See section 4.7.6.2.)

(135)   shi $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>gu</u> hoom / tudee / jos nau

She is going home / today / just now

4.7.6.9 − Past adverbs and PROGRESSIVE (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(136)   soo faar / az yet / shi $\begin{Bmatrix} a \\ \underline{-ing} \end{Bmatrix}$ <u>riid</u> plentii

So far / as yet / she has been reading a lot

(137)   at prezent / fu· di paas trii yeerz / shi $\left\{\begin{matrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{-ing} \end{matrix}\right\}$ riid plentii

At present/for the past three years/she has been read-
ing a lot

4.7.6.10 <u>+ Past adverbs and NONPROGRESSIVE (IMPERFECTIVE)</u>
<u>aspect</u>

(138)   laang taim / in dem deez / shi du shi wok an shi <u>gaan</u>
                                                              hoom

Long ago / in those days / she did her work and (then)
she went home

(139)   shi <u>lef</u> hoom / wans bifoor / yestudee

She left home/once before/yesterday

4.7.6.11 <u>± Past adverbs and NONPROGRESSIVE (IMPERFECTIVE)</u>
<u>aspect</u>

(140)   weneva a gu de, shi / neva / <u>gaan</u>

Whenever I went there, she had not yet gone

Whenever I go there, she has not yet gone

(141)   weneva a gu de, shi / aalweez / <u>gaan</u>

Whenever I went there, she had / always / gone

Whenever I go there, she has / always / gone

The co-occurrence of NONPROGRESSIVE aspect and the punctual

adverbs <u>tudee</u> and <u>jos nau</u> gives the utterance a 'before now'

meaning. This is similar to the co-occurrence of PERFECTIVE

aspect and these adverbs.

(142) hii <u>brok</u> di windoo / tudee / jos nau

He broke the window / today / just now

4.7.6.12 – Past adverbs and NONPROGRESSIVE (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(143) soo faar / at prezent / fu di paas trii yeerz / shi <u>gaan</u>
                                                          de

So far / at present / for the past three years / she has

gone there

The NONPROGRESSIVE can only combine with the adverb <u>az yet</u> if

the verb is negated. In this respect the NONPROGRESSIVE

category is like the CONTINUOUS category. (See section

4.7.6.6.)

(144) *az yet / shi <u>brok</u> di glaas

az yet / shi <u>na brok</u> di glaas

As yet / she has not broken the glass.

4.7.6.13 ±Past adverbs and HABITUAL (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(145) laang taim / in dem deez / mi $\left\{ \begin{matrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \\ \underline{yuuz\ tu} \end{matrix} \right\}$ <u>fait</u> baad in
                                                                skuul

Long ago / in those days / I used to fight a lot in
                                                    school

The HABITUAL category rejects punctual adverbs

(146) *wans bifoor / yestudee / mi $\left\{ \begin{matrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \\ \underline{yuuz\ tu} \end{matrix} \right\}$ <u>sing</u>

4.7.6.14 ± Past adverbs and HABITUAL (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect

(147) shi $\left\{ \begin{matrix} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \\ \underline{yuuz\ tu} \end{matrix} \right\}$ / neva / <u>ron</u> tu di shap

She /never/ used to run to the shop

She /never/ runs to the shop

(yuuz tu can only have past meaning.)

(148)   shi / neva / ron<u>z</u> tu di shop

She / never / used to run to the shop

She / never / runs to the shop

(149)   shi $\left\{\begin{array}{c} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \\ \underline{yuuz\ tu} \end{array}\right\}$ / aalweez / <u>ron</u> tu di shap

She /always/ used to run to the shop

She /always/ runs to the shop

The HABITUAL category rejects the punctual adverbs <u>jos nau</u> and <u>tudee</u>

(150)   *jos nau / tudee / shi $\left\{\begin{array}{c} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \\ \underline{yuuz\ tu} \end{array}\right\}$ <u>waant</u> di buk

4.7.6.15   <u>- Past adverbs and HABITUAL (IMPERFECTIVE) aspect</u>

(151)   soo faar/at prezent/fu di paaz trii yearz/mi $\left\{\begin{array}{c} \underline{a} \\ \underline{doz} \\ \underline{-s} \end{array}\right\}$
<u>biliiv</u> di stoorii

So far / at present / for the past three years/I usually
believe the story

The HABITUAL category can only combine with the adverb <u>az yet</u>
if the verb is negated.

(152)   az yet / mi <u>na a ron</u> tu di shap

/ mi <u>dozn ron</u> tu di shap

As yet / I do not usually run to the shop

(153)   *az yet / mi <u>ron z</u> tu di shap.

4.7.7 Summary on adverbial co-occurrence with aspectual categories for time reference

This section, illustrating the co-occurrence of the IMPERFECTIVE-PERFECTIVE aspect categories with three semantic classes of adverbs supports the present, nonpast and past neutralization exemplified in the data. It also reveals the close interaction between inherent meaning of adverbs, aspect categories, negation and the meaning of the utterance.

4.8 PAST Tense Category in the Basilect and Mesolect

The basilect past tense form is bin, and the mesolect form is did. The two forms are in variation with the mesolectal use of inflected verbs for past meaning.

(154) 'maan, wen mi bin a liv, yu shud a heer mi, yu mait a did daans'

'Man, when I was alive, you should have heard me, you may have danced.' (A ghost is speaking) (21A/12-13/9)

(155) di ribz boon hee bin plat

The ribs here were plaited. (62B/12/7)

(156) bot mii miself, a did waant lef bikaaz maneejment did baad at di taim

But I myself, I had wanted to leave because (the) management was bad at the time. (54A/16-17/1)

(157) bot a went op, an a baara mi broda kyaas net

But I went up, and I borrowed my brother's fishing net. (20A/9-10/6)

(158) shi <u>weetid</u> ontil ai <u>keem</u> hoom, an shi staart kukin

She waited until I came home, and (then) she began
to cook.   (20A/33-34/5)

4.8.1 <u>PAST tense category and adverbial co-occurrence</u>

Constructions with past tense forms can only combine
with adverbs which are semantically + Past.

(159) laang taim / mi <u>bin</u> sii shi

Long ago / I saw her

(160) yestudee / mi <u>did</u> riid di buk

Yesterday/I read the book

(161) wans bifoor /mi <u>keem</u> hoom

Once before / I came home

(162) mi <u>bin</u> / neva / biliiv di stoorii

I / never / believed the story

(163) shi <u>did</u> / aalweez / gaan bai taim ai get de

She had / always / gone by the time I got there

(164) shi <u>tuk</u> di buk / tudee

She took the book / tudee

(165) *at prezent / mi <u>bin</u> sii shi

(166) *soo faar / mi <u>did</u> sing di saang

(167) *neks wiik / mi <u>keem</u> hoom

It was explained in Chapter I that the 'present' can
represent not only the moment from which relations are
inferred, it can also represent the time interval between the
recalled event A and the anticipated event B.   The former
concept is referred to as 'point present' and the latter
concept as 'extended present'.   The possibility of a 'point
present' and an 'extended present' is related to the
semantics of the 'now' moment of utterance.   Sedey (1969:
75-6) explains that the term 'now' is used by a speaker to
state a relation he has to an object.   Consequently, 'now'
can be classified as subjective since it stands for a rela-
tion between a subject (the speaker) and an object rather
than a relation between two objects.   Standing in a relation
of simultaneity does not provide a sufficient condition for
saying of any event that it is occurring 'now'.   What makes
the difference as pointed out by Russell (1915), is the
introduction of a subject, not in the trivial sense that
there must be a subject (a language user) in order to say
that events are occurring 'now', but in the essential sense
that the semantics of 'now' are such that the word is used
correctly if an event instituted by the subject is one of the
terms in the simultaneity relations connoted by 'now'.

I described above the neutralization of present, non-
past and past meaning.   We can therefore say that the
neutralization exemplifies a PRESENT ('now') conceptual frame-
work.   The use of future tense forms and past tense forms
indicate a conceptual division between the moment of utterance

and the event, thus a NONPRESENT ('not now') framework.

Although Edwards (1975) makes the same error as
Bickerton in believing that bin is obligatory before statives
for simple-past meaning, and that bin with non-statives yields
a past-before-past meaning, his semantic explanation for the
optional use of bin before non-statives in simple-past con-
structions seems to support my conceptual analysis for the
use of the tense forms.   He says:

> 'When the speaker wants to draw attention to
> the pastness of a non-stative action he uses
> bin but if the time dimension is not
> focussed the verb stem alone indicates past
> reference with non-stative verbs..'(1975:244).

We can diagram the tense system of Guyanese Creole:

```
                            |
       ┌────────────────────┴──────────────────┐
       |                                        |
  PRESENT                                   NONPRESENT
                                                |
                                   ┌────────────┴────────────┐
                                   |                         |
                                 PAST                     FUTURE
                             (bin, did, -ed)             (gu, gon)
```
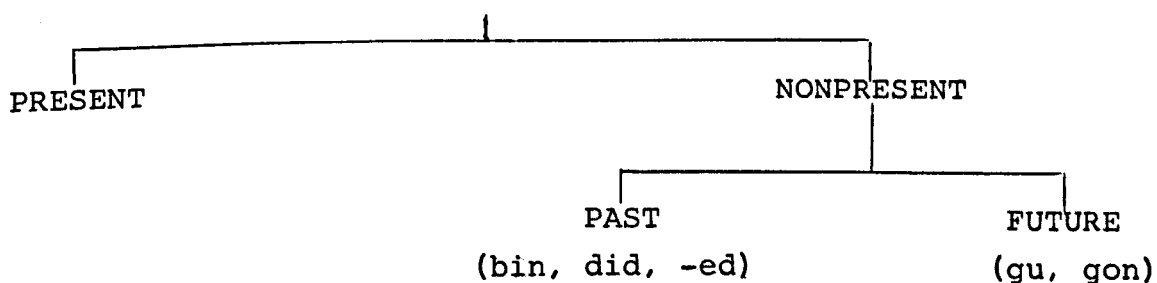
Since the PRESENT is not formally marked, and it can have
present, past, non-past and future meanings depending on the
context, the PRESENT is therefore the unmarked member of the
PRESENT - NONPRESENT opposition.   We can therefore postulate
a tense system of [± NONPRESENT] for Guyanese Creole.

4.10   Relative Time Reference

The tense system described above relates the time of
the situation to the moment of utterance.   Such time

reference is referred to as 'absolute time reference'. It

forms the core of any tense system and serves to establish

the formal and semantic contrasts involved. (See Ultan 1978).

In discourse it is possible for Guyanese speakers to set up

a relative time frame in that the situation is being located

relative to the time of some other situation rather than to

the moment of utterance. The relative framework accounts

for the use of IMPERFECTIVE aspect and thus 'present' mean-

ings in the examples below:

Describing an incident during a past occupation:

(168)   mi _de_ _a_ _laarn_ fu raid _dis_ haars

        I was learning to ride that horse. (31B/7/3)

Lit.:   I learning to ride this horse

Talking about plans the Government had for a pig-rearing

Co-op.:

(169)   wen taim kom fu slaata yu _doz_ _ga_ fu kyerii it rait de,
        an den dem _a_ _dedokt_ fu dem, an den yu_a_ _get_ wan smaal
        ting

        When the time came for slaughtering, you would have
        had to carry it right there, and then they would have
        deducted for themselves, and then you would have got
        a small payment. (54A/1-4/3)

Lit.:   When the time comes for slaughtering, you usually have
        to carry it right there, and then they deduct for them-
        selves, and then you get a small payment.

The interviewer (using more standard forms) asks the inter-

viewee about a job which the latter had finished four years

previous to the interview:

(170) hau laang hav yuu biin duuwing dis kaind a wok

How long had you been doing this kind of work?

Lit.: How long have you been doing this kind of work?

4.11   Sequencing

Sequencing involves the anchoring of events with respect to each other and not to the speaker.   In Guyanese Creole, verbs are uninflected for tense or aspect if the events are sequenced.

An informant describing the catching of wild pigs in the canefield:

(171)   wii jes chap dem wid di kotlas, an wii pik op som keen liif, an jes roos dem kliin, an wii divaid am bitwiin wii paatna, tek a piis, iit, and kom hoom

We just chop them with our cutlasses, and we collect some (sugar)-cane leaves, and just roast them cleanly. And we divide it with our partner, take a piece, eat, and return home.   (31B/9-13/2)

(172)   nau di chap push an ai push, an hii hool a piis a mangoo an ai hool a piis a di mangoo. wel, at a sudn, ai get straanga dan di maan.   su wen ai pul di ting, di chap let goo di mangoo.   an wen hii let goo di mangoo ai faal aan di kotlas an mi hool said oopn

Now the chap pushed and I pushed, and he held a piece of the mango and I held a piece of the mango.   Well, suddenly, I got stronger than the man.   So when I pulled the thing, the chap let go of the mango.   And when he let go of the mango I fell on the cutlass and split my side. (12A/21-26/9)

4.12 Summary of Tense

I have posited a primary tense opposition of
[± NONPRESENT] for Guyanese Creole. The fact that the
PRESENT is not formally marked, its use for present, past,
nonpast and future meanings, and its use for relative time
reference and sequencing, indicates that the PRESENT is the
unmarked member of the PRESENT – NONPRESENT opposition.

Unlike Bickerton's [± Anterior] tense system, my
system accommodates the future and it adequately explains
the data.

THE CREOLE CONTINUUM REVISITED

In evolving his dynamic model to describe the Guyanese creole continuum, Bickerton (1973a) refers to Le Page's (1966: vi - vii) call for a model in which there is no sharp dividing line between synchronic and diachronic studies. He quotes Le Page:

> 'The descriptive analyst freezes for a moment
> what is in fact a highly dynamic system, and
> describes it in static terms ... Until we
> have evolved descriptive techniques somewhat
> analogous to those of quantum mechanics, how-
> ever, the best we can do is to describe the
> two ends of the linguistic spectrum in a
> country like Jamaica and give some indication
> of the nature of the continuum in between.'

Bickerton (1973a) claims that he has found the answer to this demand. He marries the Neo-grammarian 'Wave theory'[1] resuscitated by C-J. Bailey (1973), and the Implicational Scale relationships of DeCamp (1971), and arrives at a new metatheory. The new metatheory takes linguistic variation as the centre rather than the periphery of language study, and seeks consistency between theoretical abstractions and data. To achieve the stated ends, the metatheory breaks

---

1. The 'wave theory' is based on the assumption that changes in language spread outwards from centres of innovation in much the same way that a wave spreads from the place where a stone is dropped into a pool. See Hudson (1980:41-43) for a neat characterization and criticism of wave theory.

down the Saussurean dichotomy between synchronic and dia-
chronic studies:

> 'Language is then seen as a dynamic process
> evolving through space and time; 'leaky'
> grammars, variants that fit no system,
> conflicting native-speaker intuitions - all
> the problems that vexed previous formulations
> are now seen as the inevitable consequences
> of spatial or temporal segmentation of what
> is really a seamless whole.' (1973a:643)

It therefore follows, Bickerton goes on, that to speak of
'dialects' or even perhaps 'languages' may be misleading as
these terms merely seek to freeze at an arbitrary moment,
and to coalesce into an arbitrary whole, phenomena which in
nature are ongoing and heterogeneous. A more appropriate
unit to work with, he claims, is the ISOLECT which may be
defined as 'any possible set of rules such that it will
differ from adjacent sets of rules on a panlectal
(implicational) grid by only a single rule-conflict or
resolution of such conflict'. A PANLECTAL grid may be
defined as 'the totality of possible sets of rules for an
(arbitrarily limited) area in space and/or time, which in
turn constitutes a selection from the totality of possible
sets of rules for human language'. A RULE CONFLICT may be
defined as 'a situation where, between an isolect A which
contains a rule x and an isolect C which contains a rule y,
there is a lect B wherein application of rule x alternates
with the application of rule y '. Thus, 'inherent variabil-
ity', as Labov calls variation, 'is indeed none other than
the locomotive of linguistic change' (1973a:643).

For a speech community that is not unequivocally bi-

or multilingual, that is where there is a speech continuum with no clearly defined breaks between 'languages' or 'language varieties', Bickerton writes a 'polylectal' grammar. The grammar consists of a series of rules which should be capable of generating all varieties of language in communal use. The rules are similar in form to existing types of generative rules, but some which are in effect re-writings and re-rewritings of 'earlier rules'. In addition, a polylectal grammar will contain a 'rule-shift' component which will specify the selection from the overall series to generate each successive isolect. It will therefore contain no 'switching-rules' since a grammar based on implicational scaling 'must generate theoretically-equal isolects sequentially, and presumably in the order in which they first occurred in time'. (1973b:21).

How well does Bickerton manage to apply such a view of a 'grammar'? In <u>Dynamics of a creole system</u> (1975a) he states his goal: 'The present study ... is solely concerned with the ways in which grammars of individuals relate to the polylectal grammar of the community' (p.15). He chose to describe three stages along the continuum, the basilect, mesolect and acrolect with a series of rules which set out the transition from basilect to mesolect and from mesolect to acrolect. He is now faced with the problem of the competence of speakers who command more than one 'lect' - and this means, most Guyanese. In the case of his 'single-range' speakers, their lects are contiguous. But speakers may command lects which are not contiguous - for example, acrolect speakers who

also have a command of the basilect.   These are 'split-
range' speakers and are somewhat like bilinguals, (see
p. 187 ff).   Once Bickerton has abstracted his lects from
the data, it is difficult to write grammars of the competence
of individual informants.   He could write two grammars for
each bilingual - but this of course carries him counter to
the concept of Guyanese language.

        But even more important, the full scale of synchronic
variation is a hearer competence model.   The grammar of the
hearer's competence that results must however, still be
neutral between speaker and hearer since to suppose differ-
ently would be to complicate linguistic theory unduly (p.19).

        Bickerton feels that he has successfully dealt with
the problem of synchronic and diachronic linguistics (and
with it the fact that people can code-switch) by relegating
'System' to the faculte de langage alone.   He says:

> 'Acceptance of the fact that there are no
> systems but only System, and that any
> arbitrary interpretation of that system (i.e.
> any so-called 'natural language') has the
> potential of merging into any other in a
> principled way, will enable us to reconcile
> the apparent paradoxes which arise from the
> four best-attested facts about human
> language: that all languages seem different,
> but that all are somehow alike, and that all
> languages are systematic, and yet that all
> are subject to continuous change.' (1975a:180).

But even in the faculte de langage there is no order, for
speakers may have rules for negation that are different from
the rules they may have for the tense and aspect systems; or
they may have rules for the noun-phrase that belong to a
different lect from those they may have for the verb-phrase.

I will now compare and contrast my analysis (as exemplified in Chapters 3 and 4) with Bickerton's analysis to see whether we can account for synchronic variation in a consistent manner without banishing everything into the unknown _faculte de langage_.

(a) i.   Bickerton has described a basilect, mesolect and an acrolect.

   ii.   I have described a basilect, mesolect, but not an acrolect.

(b) i.   Bickerton claims there is a surface difference _and_ underlying difference between the basilect, mesolect and acrolect - the acrolect having the same underlying categories as English.

   ii.   I postulate a surface difference (though not total) between the basilect and mesolect, but underlying _sameness_.   I assume that the acrolect has the same underlying categories as English, but probably some surface difference from English.   I therefore agree with Bickerton that some lexical variants are indicative of change, but for me these are only lexical, and not lexical-grammatical.

(c) i.   Bickerton claims that the acrolect results from a gradual grammatical transition from the basilect.   He was able to support his grammatical changes and acrolect development by claiming, first, that all variation implies change; secondly that basilect

speakers were sometimes making errors, some were
therefore deviant and not to be included in the
grammar. Thirdly, he put forward a number of ad hoc
and contradictory arguments. (See Chapter 2.)

ii. By positing an underlying sameness for the basilect/
mesolect, I cannot account for the acrolect in the
same manner as Bickerton. There is no linguistic
evidence to support such a transition - evidence such
as the disappearance of forms and categories which
also entails a parallel transition in the conceptual
categories of grammar. By taking the view that the
basilect/mesolect (Creole) operate with the same
grammar, and the grammar of the acrolect (Guyanese
English) is different, I can only account for the
variation between 'English' and 'Creole' as 'code-
switching'. The acrolect 'English' system is
acquired through education. But, depending on extra-
linguistic factors such as who is speaking to whom,
when, where, speaker motivation etc., and depending
on their knowledge of the superstrate variety, speak-
ers can speak more 'English' or more 'Creole' as they
desire. Some speakers are in control of the super-
strate variety, but all speakers have at least a
passive control of the Creole vernacular, and thus
communication is no difficulty. Furthermore, the
acrolect 'English' system can generate 'progressive',
'habitual', 'continuous', 'past' and 'future'
categories similar to the Creole system, although the

categories are generated by different grammars. Thus
the overlap between the varieties, combining with
other facets of the linguistic and situational context
would also ease any communicative difficulties there
may be. Thus it is possible to account for some of
the variation in a simple and consistent manner, with-
out saying that the variation constitutes an observ-
able transition between conceptually different
grammars, and then having to discard data that does
not fit the theory.

(d) i. After placing speakers along the continuum depending
on the forms they were using, Bickerton still had to
account for the fact that speakers were obviously
code-switching. He eased himself out of the dilemma
by appealing to the abstract nature of his analysis,
and therefore circumventing the problem of account-
ability of a theory to data. But since his theory
is based on data, and his analysis has been shown to
be contradictory, 'abstractness' is not the source
of his difficulty. The source of his difficulty is
a faulty analysis, his view that variation necessar-
ily implies change, and his view that the Creole is
necessarily moving towards English.

ii. My analysis is also 'abstract', but it accounts for
all of my available data. I have achieved account-
ability without using such notions as 'performance
errors', 'performance features', 'confused speakers',

'deviant speakers' or appealing to the _faculte de_
langage, but by paying close attention to data and
real world phenomena. Consequently, I have achieved
a positive feedback between theory and data. Then
again, I do not take the view that all variation
implies change, and neither am I constrained by the
opinion that the Creole must eventually become
English. Maybe, in a few generations the Creole may
be replaced by 'English', but at this point in time
there is no evidence to support such a view.

(e) i. Bickerton's description is based on the concept that
speakers must say A and only A. If the speaker says
A as well as B, the use of B is indicative of a
different grammar, the variation being indicative of
change, or, at worse, the speaker is being 'deviant'.

ii. But I have shown that speakers can say A or B and it
can be predicted by the same grammar. For example,
the use of inflected and uninflected verbs for past
meaning, or the use of PERFECTIVE aspect for
perfective and habitual meanings. Therefore, I do
not have to appeal to change, claim that all varia-
tion is indicative of change, or seek order in the
unknown _faculte de langage_ when a speaker operates
with more than one variant.

(f) i. In Bickerton's description there is often a great deal
of dependence between the lexical item and the under-

lying grammar, so that the use of item A entails one grammar, and the use of item B entails another grammar. This is in keeping with his principle that the lexical changes are accompanied by a change in the underlying grammar. But not only are his arguments supporting the grammatical changes inconsistent, there is also the added problem that a speaker can operate with several grammars and still communicate with another speaker who may not be in control of the same grammar. Of course, the explanation is in the <u>faculte de langage</u>.

ii.   In my description I use Kuryłowicz's principles of Identification and Differentation whereby the lexical changes are not accompanied by a change in the underlying grammar. Consequently, my description is simpler, unified, and consistent. If it is the case that speakers are operating with the same underlying grammar, not only do we have a simple explanation for communicative ease, but we also do not have to seek linguistic explanations for why some speakers may be operating with different forms in different social contexts. This implies that social and linguistic explanations are separate on one level, but in use, there is interaction between the two factors. Social factors may trigger the use of the acrolect, rather than the mesolect or basilect; or they may explain why a speaker is more basilect than mesolect or acrolect. Social factors are instrumental in

motivating linguistic change - (see, for example,
Labov 1963; Antilla 1972; Samuels 1972) - and
probably explains why basilect progressive a was re-
placed by the English form -ing; or the basilect past
tense form bin was replaced by the English forms did
and -ed. But social factors won't explain why the
changes were only formal and not formal and grammat-
ical; or the variation between marked and unmarked
verbs for past reference, or the variation between
marked and unmarked verbs for habitual aspect. Those
explanations are linguistic. They could be termed
'social' in that language is a form of social
behaviour.

(g) i. Bickerton claims he has successfully dealt with the
problem of the distinction between synchronic and
diachronic linguistics in relegating 'System' to the
faculté de langage alone. He was forced to do this,
since according to his description, speakers were
operating with several grammars.

ii. I do not profess to solve the problem of the
synchronic-diachronic distinction. I doubt whether
I regard it as a problem. But I have managed to
combine the two concepts, and at the same time kept
them separate. The synchronic aspect is maintained
by having a unitary grammar for the basilect and the
mesolect. The diachronic aspect is expressed in
having a basilect variety which in some respects

differs lexically from the mesolect. The lexical
differences are indicative of diachronic change.
The synchronic grammar explains communicative case,
and the diachronic changes explain why some speakers
are more in control of the basilect variety, and
others are more in control of the mesolect variety.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, my position differs from that of
Bickerton in that I do not take the view that all variation
is indicative of change. Some of the variation is in-
dicative of change, but some can be classified as 'inherent
variability'. Also, my view of the continuum is not one
whereby the Creole is merging with the superstrate variety
by a series of lexical and grammatical changes. There is
some lexical merger, but the lexical changes are not
accompanied by a change in the grammar – at least, not with
respect to the tense and aspect systems.

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