

TENSE, ASPECT AND THE MYSTERIOUS *i* IN SEYCHELLES AND REUNION CREOLE

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1 In this paper¹ the semantic values and more particularly the syntactic behaviour of the temporal and aspectual pre-verbal particles of Seychelles Creole French (SC) are described, following the general approach used for my description of this area of Mauritian Creole (MC) syntax.² Then data concerning the element *i* in SC are presented. Finally, the temporal and aspectual system of Reunion Creole (RC) is briefly examined and a tentative analysis offered which suggests possibilities concerning Proto-Indian-Ocean Creole ("Bourbonnais", B) and the origin(s) of *i*.³

2.0 Tense and Aspect in SC

A close study of the pre-verbal markers of SC has been made by Bollée, by Papen, and by myself, and the results of our efforts do not always coincide. It is my opinion that the inconsistencies have at least two possible origins. Firstly, some of our informants are inconsistent in their acceptance or rejection of various strings. That is, one informant will reject a string accepted by another, or, what is even more confusing (although a familiar feature of linguistic field-work), will reject on one occasion a string which the day before was entirely acceptable in precisely the same context. Secondly, the socio-linguistic background of our informants is different. As far as I am aware, the bulk of research undertaken by Bollée and Papen was with bilingual informants who have (often, a very good) knowledge of French (i.e. the Seychelles regional variety thereof⁴). Furthermore, a great deal of Bollée's work is based on written texts, broadcast versions of these, and careful checking of them with the authors and with other informants.⁵ My own informants are, socio-linguistically, a mixed bag. Before

going to Seychelles, I had worked with informants resident in New Zealand, all of them speaking Creole, French, and English.⁶ In Seychelles, I worked to some extent with some of the same informants used by Bollée and Papen, but principally with two informants, neither of whom can be properly characterised as bilingual. The first is literate in English and French, but she never uses either of these languages outside of formal (mainly educational) situations, and her home language is Creole. The second is an old gentleman living on La Digue (a small outlying island of some 2,000 inhabitants) who knows only Creole. Much checking, of a more or less informal nature, was also carried out with other monolingual Digois informants and friends.⁷

Therefore, what follows concerning the preverbal markers in SC is, at least in part, a synthesis of our joint results. Doubtful cases are included (marked by a preceding "?") where the described combinations of markers occur also in MC. Various other anomalies are noted in passing. I am concerned here solely with the preverbal markers themselves, and do not consider in any great detail two sets of facts which may turn out to be rather important. One is the small subset of adverbs (*tultâ* 'all the time, always', *biê* 'well', *zis* 'only', etc) which may occur within a sequence of pre-verbal markers; however, in the case of, e.g. *âkor* 'still (and expected to terminate soon)' and *deza* 'already', these adverbs do affect the semantics and the occurrence of the Completive *n*, as will be shown. The second set of facts concerns the choice of preverbal marker(s) actually occurring with specific subcategories of the following verbal group. For example, when the verb is the (underlying) Copula, followed by AP, the result is semantically equivalent to a stative. In this context, (*a*)*pe*, usually Progressive, has often an Inchoative sense: cf. *mô pe mâze* 'I am eating' vs. *i pe malad* = *i (pe) komâs malad* 'he is beginning to get sick'. Similarly, *mô pe kôtâ li* = *mô (pe) komâs kôtâ li* 'I am beginning to love him'. Another example is the (apparently non-obligatory) use of *n* (Completive) in the same context. Thus, *i n mir* 'it is (= has become) ripe'.⁸ In my formulation, the selection of pre-verbal markers which may actually occur with various types of verb(al group) will need to be handled in the lexicon in the form of categorial lexical features (e.g. [\pm transitive], [\pm attributive], [\pm stative], etc) which will specify the aspectual compatibilities of any given verb.⁹

2.1 The SC Pre-verbal Markers¹⁰

These are, with their approximate glosses which will be

more closely defined below:

- ∅ (zero) 'Present' (abbrev. Pres)
- ti* 'Past' (Pas)
- a(va)* 'Future' (Fut)
- pu* 'Future' (Fut)
- n, fin* 'Completive' (Com)
- fek* 'Immediate Past' (PasIm)
- (a)pe* 'Progressive' (Prog)

In my surface transcriptions, Pres is not shown. The combinations that occur (although not all speakers will accept all combinations¹¹), are given in Table 1. Where both *a(va)* and *pu* may occur, I note Fut, where only one of them may occur, that item is noted. Note also that Prog, for example, says only that either *ape*, or *pe*, or both may occur, without specifying which.

TABLE 1

Combinations of Pre-Verbal Markers in SC

Pres + Fut	Pas + Fut
Pres + Prog	Pas + Prog
Pres + Fut + Prog	Pas + Fut + Prog
Pres + Com	Pas + Com
Pres + Fut + Com	Pas + Fut + Com
Pres + PasIm	Pas + PasIm
Pres + <i>pu</i> + PasIm	Pas + Fut + PasIm
? Pres + Prog + PasIm ¹²	? Pas + Prog + PasIm
Pres + PasIm + Prog	Pas + PasIm + Prog
Pres + <i>a(va)</i> + PasIm + Prog	—
? *Pres + <i>pu</i> + PasIm + Prog	—
Pres + Com + PasIm	Pas + Com + PasIm
Pres + Fut + Com + PasIm	Pas + Fut + Com + PasIm
? *Pres + Fut + Com + Prog	Pas + <i>a</i> + Com + Prog

These markers and their combinations may be analysed as constituents of the Auxiliary within a framework (simplified) such as the following:

$$\begin{aligned} S &\rightarrow NP + VP \\ VP &\rightarrow Aux + VG \\ VG &\rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} V + (NP) + (PP) \\ Copula + \{NP, AP, PP\} \end{array} \right\} \end{aligned}$$

Aux can then be rewritten thus:

$$\begin{aligned} Aux &\rightarrow T + (A) \\ T &\rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} Pres \\ Pas \end{array} \right\} + (Fut) \\ A &\rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} Com \\ Prog \\ PasIm \end{array} \right\} + \left(\left\{ \begin{array}{l} PasIm \\ Prog \end{array} \right\} \right) \end{aligned}$$

This is a considerable over-simplification of the facts, in that various constraints need to be specified. A general constraint is that the same constituent of A may be chosen only once. The choice of *a(va)* or *pu* for Fut is not entirely free, although I think the constraints there are (at least in part) semantic. When Pas is chosen, a sequence Fut + PasIm + Prog must be blocked in some way (unless, of course, there is a gap in my data). And so on.

Such a rewrite, however, makes a clear division between tense (T) and aspect (A), and it is not at all certain that such a dichotomy, if it is in fact an accurate representation of the semantics of SC preverbal markers, should be set up exactly along the lines indicated here. While *a(va)* and *pu* are frequently interchangeable, they are not always so, and evidence from MC and RC suggests that, originally (= in Bourbonnais?) *ava* and *pu* belonged in different categories (*ava* being Tense, *pu* Aspect). However, in SC, both items belong conceptually in the same category, which seems to me to be more temporal than aspectual in function.¹³

An alternative solution would be to eliminate entirely the constituent A of Aux, and to introduce Com, Prog, PasIm (and perhaps *pu*) as "higher" verbs (with an embedded sentential object and obligatory equi-NP deletion). While such a solution may ultimately turn out to be necessary for the purpose of describing the temporal and aspectual system of Indian Ocean creoles generally, the rewrite of Aux as above should suffice for an adequate description of SC.

3 The Temporal Pre-Verbal Markers

Given then the rewrite of T as above:

$$T \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Pres} \\ \text{Pas} \end{array} \right\} + (\text{Fut})$$

it is here postulated that the temporal system of SC includes the Present tense, the Past tense, the Future tense (Pres + Fut), and the Future-in-the-Past tense (Pas + Fut).

3.1 The Present tense

A zero particle generally marks the Present tense, which is usually the permanent (i.e. universal, habitual) present:

mô ana ê zoli masin 'I have a beautiful car'

larivier i kul dâ lamer 'the river flows into the sea'

but which may also be on-going:

Zâ i apran sâte 'John learns (is learning) to sing'

In such cases, the Progressive is also used:

Zâ pe apran sâte 'John is learning to sing'

3.2 The Past tense

ti marks the Past, both simple and habitual:

i ti telma gu ki mô ti riye ek lakôtâtma 'it was so pleasant that I laughed for joy'¹⁴

mô ti malad 'I was sick'

mô ti mâze 'I ate'

However, once past time has been established in a given situation, *ti* is frequently omitted. This is particularly true of narrative material, where, after an initial use (or uses) of *ti*, much of the remainder of the story may be told with verb forms unmarked for Past (i.e. a sort of "historical present"). It appears also to be true of subordinate clauses:

lôtâ, mô ti plere, ler mô pu al dormi 'in the past, I would (= used to) cry when I was going to sleep'

mô ti pe mâze ler mô uar lapli pe vini 'I was eating when I saw the rain (which was) coming'

mô ti kuar i pu al a-pie 'I thought he was going/would go on foot'

but the whole topic of "sequence of tenses" in subordinate clauses requires further investigation.

3.3 The Future

In my rewrite of Aux, the Future is obligatorily constructed of Pres + Fut. Until more data become available, I postulate that in SC Fut → {*a*, *ava*, *pu*}. (A form *va* occurs also, in written texts (v. Bollée, forthcoming), but most informants reject this, considering it to be French rather than Creole.)

Before considering the semantics of *a(va)* vs. *pu*, it is to be noted that *ava* rather than *a* tends to occur when the next item begins with *a-*: *zot ava aste* 'they will buy', although *a* may also occur here: *u a aste* 'you will buy'. There do not appear to be any other contextual constraints: *i a(va) la* 'he will be there', *pa nu a(va) uar li tâto?* 'won't we be seeing him this afternoon?' Note also that a contracted form of *mô* 'I' and *nu* 'we' occurs frequently before *a*: *m a(va) aste* 'I will buy', *n a kas tu pake dâ lakaz* 'we will smash all the furniture in the house'.

In MC, there is a certainty (*pu*) vs. uncertainty (*a(va)*) distinction (v. n.13), but this distinction, if it exists in SC, appears to be reversed, although not always. Nor are my informants completely consistent among themselves.

Bollée (forthcoming) estimates that in approximately 80% of cases, any distinction between *a(va)* and *pu* is neutralised, and either may be employed to indicate a "neutral" future. This agrees with my own data, where I have such non-contrasting sets as:

near	<i>i a/pu vini tâto</i> 'he will come this afternoon'
vs.	<i>i a/pu vini desuit</i> 'he will come right now'
distant	<i>i a/pu vini lane prosen</i> 'he will come next year'
certainty	<i>ketfua mô a/pu fer sa</i> 'perhaps I'll do that'
vs.	<i>mô biâ sir (ki) mô a/pu fer sa</i> 'I'm positive that I will do it'
uncertainty	<i>mô a/pu trur u deme</i> 'I'll see you tomorrow' (as just arranged)
	<i>i a/pu malad si i mâz sa</i> 'he'll be sick if he eats that' (it <i>is</i> poison, it <i>may</i> be poison)

However, there are some cases where a temporal distinction seems to be made (near vs. distant future). Thus:

m ava aste sa 'I'll buy it' (there is one there, I'll do it now)

mô pu aste sa 'I'll buy it' (there is one there, but I'll have to go home and get my money first)

mô a tieke 'I'll check' (right now)

mô pu tieke 'I'll check' (sometime later on)

An aspectual opposition of certainty vs. uncertainty also occurs. Thus:

i a gaŷ ê baba 'she will have a baby' (if she is not careful)
i pu gaŷ ê baba 'she will have a baby' (if she is not careful, OR: she is already pregnant)

Here, *pu* is indicating certainty, whereas the examples given by Bollée (forthcoming):

mò pu vin ris ê zur 'I'll be rich one day' (hopefully)
mò a vin ris ê zur 'I'll be rich one day' (no doubt about it, because my business is booming)

indicate that *a* denotes certainty, *pu* uncertainty.¹⁵ This corresponds to the almost invariable response of informants that *i a mâze* is "more definite" than *i pu mâze*:

u a mâze kamem u pa ule 'thou shalt eat, even though you don't want to' (almost equivalent to: 'you will have to eat it').

It may (or may not) be significant that *a* may be given an emphatic stress to indicate certainty (of intention?): *nu a fer sa!* 'we will do it!'

When *pa* 'negation' precedes, some informants will not allow *a* at all, while others insist that *a* occurs. Examples: one informant gave

Bob pa a kôta 'Bob will not be happy (about that)'

as an equivalent of

Bob pa pu kôta

whereas another produced the following:

mò a don u mò nuvel 'I'll give you news of myself'

which was then transformed to

mò pa pu don u mò nuvel (**mò pa a...*)

while yet another (in a particular type of sentence which may be labelled Rhetorical Question, v. 7.5 (a) below) gave both

i pa i a(va)/pu mâze tâto? 'will he not eat tonight?',

professing a strong preference for the sentence with *pu*.

Further research may help to clear the picture up a little, but the fundamental fact is, I think, that there is only a vestigial opposition between the two forms of the future in SC (the precise conditions under which such an opposition is realised being subtle enough to have eluded three linguists in a row).

3.4 The Future in the Past (Conditional)

The underlying sequence Pas + Fut gives rise to *ti pu*, *ti a(va)*, which have both a temporal (Future in the Past) and "modal" (Conditional) value.

(a) Future in the Past:

mô ti a(va) fer li, me mô ti okipe 'I was going to do it, but I was busy'

*mô pa ti kuar si mô ti pu uar li*¹⁶ 'I didn't think I was going to/would see him'

*rakôt mua sa ki u ti pu dir mua ier*¹⁶ 'tell me what you were going to say to me yesterday'

(b) Conditional:

mô ti a(va) fer li, me mô okipe pur lêtâ 'I would do it, but I'm busy right now'

si u ti aste lavian, i ti a mâze 'if you bought some meat, he would eat it'

*pa ti a bô nu ti a vin ê lot zur?*¹⁶ 'would it not be good (i.e. better) (if) we were to come another day'

cf. also the examples at 3.2 above.

The following example¹⁶ illustrates the *a* vs. *pu* opposition (note that the main clause is negative):

kâtmem u ti a tap li ê ku-d-kuto, disâ pa ti pu kule 'even if you were to knife her, blood would not flow' (she is so white with shock)

but I do not know to what extent this is typical.

4 The Aspectual Pre-Verbal Markers

It is my contention that Aspect in SC, as in MC, can exist only as a modification of a temporal framework, and is therefore always a product of T (Tense) + A (Aspect). Note that either my rewrite of Aux, or the alternative solution involving higher verbs (mentioned briefly above, 2.1), both imply just that.

The rewrite of A:

$$A \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Com} \\ \text{Prog} \\ \text{PasIm} \end{array} \right\} + \left(\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{PasIm} \\ \text{Prog} \end{array} \right\} \right)$$

gives rise to several combinations, once the general constraint - any given constituent of A may occur only once - is taken into account.

I begin by examining combinations of T + one constituent of A, and then T + a combination of constituents of A are dealt with.

4.1 The Completive

An action may be marked as completed (*accompli*) with respect to a given time. SC uses basically *n* for the Completive.

mò mâze 'I eat' vs. *mò n mâze* 'I have eaten'

mò ti mâze 'I ate' vs. *mò ti n mâze* 'I had eaten'

n is thus opposed to *ti*:

mò n vin isi pur eksplik zot sa ki guvernma pu fer 'I have come here to explain to you what the Government will do' (I'm still here)

mò ti vin isi pur eksplik zot... 'I have come/I came (and then went away again) to explain to you what the Government would do'¹⁷

eski u n sorti avek li ier asuar? Ui, mò n sorti ek li. 'Did you go out with him last night? Yes, I went out with him'

mò ti sorti ek li ier asuar 'I went out with him last night' (implying that I do not know whether I will go out with him again)

The adverb *deza* is frequently used (with *n*, sometimes with *ti*) to emphasise the *accompli*

sa è loto ki zame mò n deza dray 'that is a (make of) car that I have never driven'

mò n deza sorti ek li 'I have been out with him'

larivier i n deza kul dà lamer 'the river flowed into the sea' (once upon a time)

u a dir mua si u n deza gut dimiel kum sa 'you'll let me know if you have ever tasted such honey'

u rapel è pe lotà u ti deza dir mua ki... 'you recall (that) a good while back you told me that...'

Statives (Copula + AP) may be divided into two categories: a state which is generally true, such as *lerua i bet* 'the king is stupid', or a state which has come to be so, e.g. *i n mir* 'it is (has become) ripe', *mâze i n pare* 'the food is ready', *sô vât ti n sitâ plê...* 'his stomach was so full...'

n has a variant *fin* (but not, in my view, a variant *in*, for reasons to be discussed later) which appears frequently in written SC texts; while most informants reject *fin* (as being a Mauritianism), some admit that some people do use it. One of my informants does in fact use *fin* occasionally, but has links with Mauritius, and in any case, uses it solely as an infrequent

variant of *n*. However, I have heard the following sentences, spontaneously produced by an 84 year old rural woman¹⁸:

kautsu prezâ fin detrir boku 'rubber (planting) nowadays has destroyed much'
sa, mô fin fer, mô n amas kanel 'what I did, I picked cinnamon'
mô fin bliye 'I have forgotten'
mô ti fin tôbe 'I had fallen'

The verb *fini* may also be used to emphasise the *accompli*:

i n fini mâz banan 'he has finished eating the bananas'
i a fini mâz sô banan taler 'he will finish eating his banana soon'

(v. also examples at (b) and (d) below)

The following combinations of T + Com occur.

(a) Pres + Com → \emptyset + *n*

Bom Sadek i n bez li! 'Old Sadec really gave/has really given it to him!
lapli i n tôbe 'it has rained'
i n gay puse 'he has been pushed'

(b) Pas + Com → *ti* + *n*. This corresponds to the pluperfect in English.

mô ti n tôbe 'I had fallen'
gramersi, mô ti n ariv a-tâ 'thank God, I had arrived in time'
letâ mô ti âtre dâ lasan, i ti n fini mâz sô banan 'when I entered the room, he had finished eating his banana(s)'

(c) Pres + Fut + Com → \emptyset + *a(va)/pu* + *n*

kâ i a/pu n gay sô piti, i pu don u li 'when she (will) have had her baby, she will give it to you'
ler u a(va) n repar u loto 'when you (will) have repaired your car'

(d) Pas + Fut + Com → *ti* + *a(va)/pu* + *n*

mô ti a n bez li, si i ti n dir mua kuyô 'I would have hit him, if he had called me an idiot'
si sô papa pa ti aret mua, mô ti pu n bez li 'if his father had not stopped me, I would have hit him'

With *ti pu n*, *fini* is frequently used:

..., *mô ti pu n fini bez li*.

There is some kind of restriction on *ti pu n* however, the exact nature of which is not clear, but which may be linked to

the certainty vs. uncertainty opposition of *a(va)* and *pu*. Cf.

mô ti a(va) n marie, si mô pa ti mizer 'I would have gotten married, if I were not poor'

pu may not occur here, nor in:

mô ti a n marie ek li, si sô papa pa ti kas mô laget 'I would have married her, if her father had not beaten me up'

In negative sentences (negation of predicate by *pa*), *pa* + *âkor* (→ *pâkor*) is used in just those cases where the semantic notion of Completive does not exist¹⁹:

lôtâ mô pâkor gut ketsoz kum sa 'it's ages since I have tasted something like that'

i ana set zur i pâkor beÿe 'he has not bathed for seven days'

zot pâkor uar li ziska ozordi 'they have not seen him since'

i pâkor mâze 'he has not eaten (yet)' (perhaps he will soon)

This contrasts with *pa n*:

i pa n mâze 'he has not eaten' (maybe he didn't want to)

One other comment needs to be made about Com. It is conceivable that *n* should be considered in SC as being a constituent of T, not of A. Firstly, as the postulated rewrite of Aux shows, Com always precedes Prog and PasIm (not in MC, however). Secondly, the small subset of Adverbs that follow tense markers (v. n.13) also follow *n* : *ti a n* + Adv + (*pe*)

Zâ ti a n deza fer sa 'John would have already done that'

i pa ti a n zame fer sa 'he would never have done that'

i n zis fek sorti 'he has only just (this second) gone out'

Note that if Com is set up as a constituent of T, the rewrite of T is

$$T \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Pres} \\ \text{Pas} \end{array} \right\} + (\text{Fut}) + (\text{Com}).$$

However, I have observed no cases where Com combines simultaneously with *both* Prog and PasIm, whereas constituents of T may do so (see 5.1 below).

4.2 The Progressive

The modification of tense marked by *ape* or *pe*, corresponds to (i) on-going action, (ii) habitual action, (iii) inchoative, depending on the context. With $VG \rightarrow V + (\text{NP}) + (\text{PP})$, (*a*)*pe* is progressive:

lapli pe tôbe 'it is raining'

i ape mâz lavian 'he is eating the meat'

When (a)pe co-occurs with, for example, *tultâ* 'always', *nek* 'only (= do nothing but)', the progressive sense is modified to habitual on-going action:

<i>i nek pe mâze</i>	}	'he is always eating/nibbling'
<i>i tultâ pe mâze</i>		
<i>tultâ i pe mâze mem</i>		

With VG + Copula + AP (cf. 2 above), (a)pe is inchoative:

i pe malad 'he is getting/becoming ill'

Both forms (ape, pe) may occur indifferently, and although there are undoubtedly preferences for one or the other variant in different contexts, a complete study of such variation remains to be done.²⁰

The following combinations of T + Prog occur.

(a) Pres + Prog → \emptyset + (a)pe. All the sentences cited above exemplify this combination.

(b) Pas + Prog → *ti* + (a)pe

i ti ape sâte 'he was singing'

i ti tultâ pe zue 'he always used to be playing'

This sequence does not appear to be used inchoatively with Copula + AP, *komâse* 'to begin' being used:

i ti ape komâs malad 'he was beginning to get sick'

(c) Pres + Fut + Prog → \emptyset + a/pu + (a)pe²¹

Zâ i a zame pe mâze 'John will never be eating'

Zâ pu âkor pe mâze 'John will still be eating'

Zâ pu pe mâz âkor 'John will be eating again'

ler mô pu âtre dâ lakaz, i pu (a)pe sâte 'when I will enter the house, he will be singing'

(d) Pas + Fut + Prog → *ti* + a(va)/pu + (a)pe²²

si sô labus pa ti plê, i ti pu (a)pe sâte 'if his mouth wasn't/hadn't been full, he would have been singing'

si mô ti al kot li a-lêprovis, petet i ti pu ape kaka 'if I had gone unexpectedly to his place, maybe he would have been defecating'

i ti ava pe mâze 'he would be eating'

4.3 The Immediate Past

The Immediate Past marker is *fek*. This constituent of A

(always assuming that my data are accurate and reasonably complete) has some curious gaps in its distribution.

The following combinations of T + PasIm occur.

(a) Pres + PasIm → \emptyset + *fek*

i fek al labutik, i pâkor returne 'he has just gone to the shop, he has not come back yet'

Now, it is useful to anticipate here, and to contrast this with Pres + Com + PasIm → \emptyset + *n* + *fek*:

i n fek al labutik, u âvi i al âkor? 'he has just been to the shop (and has since returned), do you want him to go again?'

This contrast (like the one between *pâkor* vs. *pa n*, 4.2 above), depends on the presence vs. the absence of the semantic notion of completive. For some informants (cf. Bollée, forthcoming), *fek* and *n fek* are completely interchangeable:

Bertrâ (i) fek mâze } 'Bertrand has just eaten'
Bertrâ i n fek mâze }
i (n) fek sorti âkor 'he has just gone out again'

Further checking will be necessary to elucidate this matter.²³ In all the other combinations of T + A that I have observed where one has *fek* and the other *n fek*, there does not appear to be any easily grasped distinction. I suspect however that closer observation will reveal that in at least some cases, there is a distinction similar to the one described above. In the rest of this section, combinations of T + (Com) + PasIm are dealt with together.

(b) Pas + PasIm → *ti* + *fek*

i ti fek al labutik, mð pa kone kot i n ale apre 'he had just gone to the shop, I don't know where he went to afterwards'

Pas + Com + PasIm → *ti* + *n* + *fek*:

i ti n fek buar sð dite, letâ Zorz ti apel li 'he had just drunk, finished drinking, his tea, when George called him'

*e zur ti ana de zen dimun ki ti n fek marie*²⁴ 'one day there were two young people who had just got married'

(c) Pres + Fut + PasIm → \emptyset + *pu* + *fek*

The combination *ava fek* is rejected by my informants.²⁵

mð pu fek fini 'I will have just finished'

Pres + Fut + Com + PasIm $\rightarrow \emptyset + a(va)/pu + n + fek$

si u al uar li komela, i pu n fek ferm sô laport 'if you go
to see him now, he will have just closed his door'
mô a(va) n fek ale 'I will have just left'

(d) Pas + Fut + PasIm $\rightarrow ti + a(va)/pu + fek$

i ti a(va)/pu fek fini mâze, si laklos pa ti sone 'he would
have just finished eating, if the bell hadn't rung'

Pas + Fut + Com + PasIm $\rightarrow ti + a(va)/pu + n + fek$

i ti a(va)/pu n fek fini mâze, si laklos pa ti sone 'he
would have just finished eating, (etc)'

5.0 Combinations of two aspectual markers

There remain to be considered the sequences made up of a combination of T + two constituents of A, apart from T + Com + PasIm.

5.1 Progressive and Immediate Past

(a) Pres + Prog + PasIm $\rightarrow ?\emptyset + ape + fek$

nu ape fek koz u 'we have just been talking about you'

My informants disagree as to the acceptability of this sequence.

(b) Pres + PasIm + Prog $\rightarrow \emptyset + fek + (a)pe$

lor ki zot fek pe koze? 'who have you just been talking about?'
?nu fek ape koz lor Zorz 'we have just been talking about
George'

My informants disagree as to the acceptability of *ape* here, although *pe* seems uncontroversial.

(c) Pas + Prog + PasIm $\rightarrow ti + ape + fek$

lor ki zot ti ape fek koze? 'who were you talking about just
now?'

Informants disagree as to the acceptability of this sequence.

(d) Pas + PasIm + Prog $\rightarrow ti + fek + (a)pe$

nu ti fek (a)pe koz lor Zorz 'we were talking about George
just now'

Disagreement over *ape* (vs. *pe*).

- (e) Pres + Fut + PasIm + Prog → \emptyset + *a(va)/pu* + *fek* + *pe*
letâ u pu râtre, i a(va)/pu fek pe sorti 'when you (will)
 come in, he will have just been (?) going out'

Informants disagree as to acceptability of *pu* here.

- (f) Pas + Fut + PasIm + Prog → **ti* + *a(va)* + *fek* + *pe*

Non-acceptable. I have no information as to *ti pu fek pe*.²⁶

5.2 Completive and Progressive

- (a) Pres + Fut + Com + Prog → ?* \emptyset + *a/pu* + *n* + *ape*
i a/pu n ape mâze 'he will have been eating'

Informants disagree, and this sequence does not occur in MC.

- (b) Pas + Fut + Com + Prog → *ti* + *a* + *n* + *ape*

Zâ ti a n tultâ pe mâze 'John would have always been eating'

6 The preverbal markers of SC as described here have some peculiar gaps in their distribution. Some of these are perhaps due to incomplete observation on my part, and much further work is necessary to fill out the picture I have sketched here. Nonetheless, the essential features of Aux in SC may be assumed to be included in the foregoing.

This material, and that already available on MC,²⁷ is sufficient to establish the close parallels in syntax and semantics between the two dialects, and to show up the differences between them. The underlying rules for the preverbal markers differ mainly in two respects. The status of *a(va)* and *pu* is not quite the same, MC being more conservative than SC in this respect (cf. 8.3), in that *pu* is used in combinations of markers in SC that are unacceptable in MC (*pu fek pe*, for example). Secondly, the constituent Com is used more extensively in MC than in SC, and a variant *in* occurs in circumstances that I suggest indicate an innovation in MC as opposed to SC (but see below, 7.3). These differences (and other more minor ones) are relatively unimportant compared with the overwhelming identity between MC and SC. It seems reasonable to assert that the same base will generate either dialect, with the addition of some context-sensitive rules as required.

7.0 The mysterious *i*

There is in SC an element *i* (occurring in many of the examples above) which has been at the centre of an on-going debate amongst Bollée, Papen and myself. It has so far resisted all attempts at an adequate explanation, although there is little doubt about the facts of its occurrence.

7.1 *i* as Subject

The third person singular pronoun subject is *i* 'he, she, it'; *i* also occurs as a predicate marker, i.e. an "impersonal" subject.

i uar pur-dir i vre sa e sâgula 'he sees that it is true
(that) that is a Sounguoula'²⁸

7.2 *i* as "Reprise" of the subject

In sentences such as

ler dimun seselua i bat triang, zot dâse 'when the Seychelles
people play the triangle, they dance'

ban solda i larg sô lake 'the soldiers let go his tail'

marmay i koz ek li 'the children talk with him'

ê maladi i a tap ek mua 'a sickness will strike me'

Zâ i zis fek sorti 'John has only just gone out'

Zâ i a n deza komâs mâze 'John will have already begun to
eat'

mô al kot sa ban trip i ete 'I go to where those entrails
are'

dimiel i bô 'the honey is good'

and many others, *i* occurs as a repetition, or "reprise" of the subject.²⁹

The occurrence of *i* can be handled by an insertion rule along the following lines:

$$\text{NP} + \text{Pres} + (\text{Adv}) + \left\{ \begin{array}{l} a(va) \\ ape \\ n \\ fek \end{array} \right\} + (\text{X}) + \text{VG} \rightarrow \text{NP} + i + \text{Pres} \dots$$

(etc)

where X is variously null, a constituent of A, an Adverb or a combination of these; and where NP is \pm Singular, and may be a pronoun.³⁰ This rule is obligatory in some cases, optional in others, and must be considered as a tentative statement where pronoun subjects are concerned (*tu lezot, zot, sa, saken, ketsoz, betaki, ...*), until more data come to hand.

(a) With a plural subject

(i) Reprise appears to be obligatory with a plural noun subject. Plurality may be marked (*tu dimun, ban solda*) or simply contextually plural.

tu dimun i ape dase 'everyone is dancing'
ban zanimo i tan sa 'the animals hear that'

(ii) Reprise is blocked when the plural subject is *zot*, but it applies obligatorily to a surface string *zot + n + (item beginning with a) Consonant*, and optionally to *zot + n + Vowel*.

zot bezuê returne kot lerua 'they have to go back to the palace'

zot tap laport 'they knock on the door'

mô ti pâse, zot a kôtâ mua 'I thought they would like me'

deza zot (i) n arive 'already they have arrived'

zot i n ale, koma mô dir zot? 'did you go like I told you?'

zot i n bezuê arete 'they had to stop'

**zot tu i a vini* 'they will all come' (*zot tu, zot a vini*)

(iii) Apart from (i) and (ii) above, plural pronominalisations have obligatory reprise:

tu lezot i n vini 'all the others have come'

tu lezot i malad 'all the others are sick'

kot lezot i ete komela? 'where are the others now?'

tu i a n fini mir 'all will be (completely) ripe'

tu pur mua i n mir 'all mine are ripe'

tu i mem kuler 'all are the same colour'

en-de i lager 'one or two are fighting'

Generally then, with the (partial) exception of *zot*, plural subjects require reprise by *i*.³¹

(b) With a singular subject, the nature of VG seems to influence reprise.

(i) VG → V + (NP) + (X), i.e. non-Copula. Reprise is obligatory in all cases except where it would precede *fek, a(va)*, or *n* with a following vowel - in these cases its occurrence is optional.³²

sa i fer li boku plezir pur sâte 'it gives him great pleasure to sing'

setaki i dir... 'each one says...'

en i dir ... lot i repon... 'one says...the other replies...'

ki maÿer sa n arive? 'how did that happen?'

mô lakaz i vo plis ki pur u 'my house is worth more than yours'

ketsoz i n tōbe 'something has fallen'
gardie i akor pe dormi 'the guardian is still sleeping'
sō buldu i n ale 'his girlfriend has gone (away)'
Zā (i) a(va) zis māze 'John will only eat'
i dir mariaz a fer dā trua zur 'he says the marriage will
 take place in three days'
uit-er i sone 'it is eight-o'clock (i.e. 8-o'clock rings out)'
Bertrā (i) fek māze 'Bertrand has just eaten'

(ii) VG → Copula + PP. Reprise is obligatory.

be, sa i biē 'but/well, that's fine'
torti i koma ros 'Tortoise is like a rock'
sa lakaz i pur van 'that house is for sale'

This includes those contexts where Copula (*ete*) appears on the surface:

kot u fam i ete komela? 'where is your wife now/these days?'

(iii) VG → Copula + AP. Reprise is obligatory (although there are occasional, apparently random, exceptions).

sa ruz i tro kler 'that red is too light'
lerua i n kota 'the king is happy'
mō tutun i sal, mō pākōr lav li bomatē 'my vagina is dirty,
 I haven't washed it this morning'

(iv) VG → Copula + NP. Reprise is optional. While acceptable with *sa* (and *tu sa la*) as subject, it usually does not apply:

sa (i) ē sūgula 'that is a Sougoula'

otherwise, it usually does apply:

sa garsō i mō piti 'that boy is my child'

In the above, the pronoun subject *i* is never itself subject to reprise (although the focussed subject *li* requires reprise: *li, i n ale* 'he has gone').

(c) In SC there are sentences whose surface form is NP + Aux + V + NP + A + VG:

- (1) *mō ti uar Frāsua ape dāse* 'I saw François dancing'
- (2) *ti ana ē zoli bef pe dormi* 'there was a beautiful cow sleeping'
- (3) *i ana Bom Lulu i dāse deor* 'there is Old Wolf dancing outside'
- (4) *zot truuv sa pov drayver i akor pe atā mem* 'they see that poor driver still waiting' (written text)
- (5) *i uar bef i n mor* 'he sees Cow (who is) dead'

I suggest that such sentences may be analysed as special cases of (appositive) relative clauses, with an obligatory deletion of the subordinator *ki*. Thus: *mô ti uar Frâsua + Frâsua ti ape dâse* → *mô ti uar Frâsua ki (ti) ape dâse* → *mô ti uar Frâsua ape dâse*. Sentence (5)³³ appears to be evidence for the existence of a variant *in*, which Bollée (forthcoming, 5.1.4) contends is the "normal" form of *fin*. Similarly, sentences (3) and (4) appear to be evidence for Papen's suggestion that *i* is a tense marker. However, if reprise may apply in the underlying subordinate sentence, the surface forms are thereby accounted for. A problem is that the conditions under which *ki* must be deleted in such sentences are not entirely clear, but do not seem to be connected with reprise. In relative clauses where *ki* may not be deleted, reprise is blocked: *sa zom ki (a)pe mâze* 'that man who is eating'.

7.3 The form *in*

The data concerning reprise, and the above "rules" governing it, are sufficient to account for all cases of in that occur in SC. It is significant that only *n* occurs following *mô*, *u*, *nu*. Since **mô i fer sa* is incorrect, **mô i n fer sa* is equally incorrect, and it is not necessary to postulate an "elision" of *in* to account for this fact. Only *n* follows *pa*, *ti*, *a(va)* and *pu* for the simple reason that the form of the Completive is *n* (not *in*), and that reprise (which does not occur with *pa* and *ti* in any case) places/would place *i* before such morphemes, not after them: *Zâ i a n fer sa*, not **Zâ a i n fer sa*.

There remains one difficulty, the non-reprise of *i* by itself. A sentence such as *i n ale* 'he has gone' is invariably analysed by informants as being "the same as" *i i n ale*; this does not in my view prove the existence of *in*, it simply shows that reprise of *i* by itself *may* occur in an extreme situation (such as a linguistic field enquiry).

However, in MC, *fin/in/n* are indeed variants, although they are not in free variation. The base form in MC is *fin*. *in* may optionally replace *fin* after ALL 3RD PERSON (singular or plural) SUBJECTS except *li* 'he, she, it'. However, my informants for MC hesitate to accept *in* following *a*, *va*, *ava*, *pu*, *ti*, and frequently reject such sentences categorically.³⁴ *n* may optionally replace *fin* (and does so frequently) following *pa*, *ti*, *a*, *li*, *mo*, *to* 'you (singular, informal)', *u*, *nu*, *ki*, and (less frequently?) *va*, *pu*, and *zo* (short form of *zot*). It seems reasonable to assume that *in* in MC has the same origins (i.e. reprise) as in in SC, but that the form *in* is now completely lexicalised, and has therefore expanded its domain to occur after *a*, *pu*, etc.

Old MC has traces of an element *i*: "Quand zaut y appelle moi

zane" (for this and other examples, see Chaudenson 1974: 967-8). Present-day MC also has traces of a subject *i* (although this could also be purely a later phonetic development), and I have recorded one instance of *i* in the now archaic form (Baker 1972: 61 n.2) *iena* of *ena* 'there is/are', used occasionally by one of my informants. Before any sequence of preverbal markers beginning with *a-*, *li* (subject) may be optionally replaced by *i : kâ i a n repar so loto* 'when he will have repaired his car', *si letâ bô, i a kapav vini* 'if the weather is fine, he will/might be able to come', *ki to piti ape fer? i ape mâze* 'what's your child doing? he's eating'. The sequence *li pa* 'he + negative' may be replaced by *i apa : i apa kapav vini* 'he is unable to come'.

To return to SC [in], it is not impossible that for some speakers (cf. the sentence quoted in n.33 above) there is an at least partial lexicalisation along lines similar to MC. The subject pronoun *li* would presumably favour such a development in MC, just as the subject pronoun *i* would hinder it in SC.³⁵

7.4 While the facts of reprise by *i* may be accounted for by the "rules" given, these rules do not do very much to explain the non-occurrence of *i* (as reprise; as subject, it does of course appear) before *ti, pa, pu, pe*³⁶ or the fact that reprise is optional in some cases. I do not propose to worry about the latter problem here, as the former is of considerably more interest. Synchronically, the distribution of *i* appears completely arbitrary.³⁷ A comparison with MC does not seem to throw much light on the matter. I shall suggest below (8.3, 8.4) that a possible answer is to be found in RC.

7.5 *i* in Negative Emphatic sentences

i occurs also in a quite different context, apparently unconnected with reprise.

The facts are broadly as follows.

(a) Negative Emphatic (Rhetorical) Questions occur in two forms:

(1) *pa* + Subject + Aux + VG

pa u ti ape mâze? 'weren't you (even, really) eating?' (I can hardly believe it!)

(2) Subject + *pa* + *i* + Aux + VG³⁸

u pa i ti ape mâze? 'id.'

The pattern (1) occurs only when the Subject is *mô, u, i, nu, zot*³⁹ (**pa Zâ pu vini asuar?*, but *Zâ pa i pu vini asuar?* 'won't

John come tonight?'), but a noun subject may be subject to a focussing transform (*Zâ, pa i pu vini asuar?*). Some speakers extend the use of *i* to pattern (1), as in

(3) *pa nu i ava uar li?* 'won't we see him?'

(cf. (2) *nu pa i ava uar li?*), while other speakers will allow only *pa nu ava uar li?*

(b) Negative Emphatic Statements occur in three forms:

(4) Subject + *pa* + *ni* + Aux + VG⁴⁰

mô pa ni ti kone si Bob pu vini! 'I didn't even know that Bob would come'

(5) Subject + *pa* + Aux + *ni* + VG⁴¹

mô n malad lopital, e u pa n ni vin uar mua! 'I was sick in hospital, and you didn't even come to see me'⁴²
u pa ti ni kone si Bob pu vini! 'you didn't even know that Bob would come'

(6) = (2) above:

kâ u kapab gay larzâ, u pa i kôprâ mizer! 'when you can earn money, you really don't understand poverty'

Pattern (6) is not very common in statements.

Synchronically, *i* and *ni* have a similar syntactic and semantic role. *Ni*, however, occurs in other structures as well (n.42), and appears to be subject to various constraints (n.41); there is no reason to suppose that there is any historical link between *ni* and *i*. A possible origin for this *i* is suggested below (8.5).

8.0 Tense and Aspect in RC

The term "Reunion Creole" covers a highly complex set of facts. Variations in usage arise from a multiplicity of factors (geographical, historical, social, educational, etc).⁴³

My sources for RC are Chaudenson 1974, data provided by T. Raymond from his files,⁴⁴ and a small body of data collected from various informants in Reunion. I have not attempted here systematically to distinguish different "levels" of usage. Firstly, my knowledge of RC is insufficient for me to do so with much confidence. Secondly, RC appears to be a product of at least two partially different syntactic systems interacting with each other and with both Standard and Reunion French.⁴⁵ Moreover, the present-day interplay of the various "levels" is not my primary concern here, and I simply present a body of facts which, while no doubt incomplete as a description of the linguistic variation of modern RC, are nonetheless sufficient for the purposes of this paper.

The semantics of tense and aspect in RC⁴⁶ appear to be very

TABLE 2

T/A in RC

V + NP

Copula + AP

	V + NP	Copula + AP
Present	<i>m i m̄az lavian</i> ⁴⁸	<i>muê le malad</i> ⁴⁹
Past	<i>muê (le)te i m̄az lavian</i> <i>m i m̄aze lavian</i> (French influenced) ⁵⁰	<i>muê (le)te malad</i>
Future	<i>m a m̄az lavian</i> (indefinite) ⁵¹ <i>m i sa(va) m̄az lavian</i> (definite)	<i>m i s(o)ra malad</i> (definite) ⁵²
Future-in- the-Past (Conditional, conditional perfect)	<i>muê te i sa m̄az lavian</i> <i>muê lore m̄az lavian</i> ⁵³	<i>muê nora/nore ete malad</i> <i>m i s(o)re malad</i>
Imminent Future	Pres + ImmFut <i>muê (le) pur m̄az lavian</i> 'be on the point of V-ing'	
	Past + ImmFut <i>muê (le)te pur m̄az lavian</i>	
Completive	Pres + Com <i>muê la m̄az lavian</i> <i>mua fin m̄az lavian</i> <i>muê la fin(i) m̄az lavian</i> <i>m i fini (mem) m̄az lavian</i>	<i>muê la fini et malad.</i> Since <i>malad</i> is a stative, and thus Completive already, the more usual form is <i>muê</i> <i>lete malad</i> .
	Past + Com <i>muê te (i) fin m̄az lavian</i> <i>muê te fini m̄az lavian</i> <i>muê lave m̄az lavian</i>	
	Future + Com <i>m i sa fin m̄az lavian</i>	
Progressive	Pres + Prog <i>muê l apre m̄az lavian</i> ⁵⁴	
	Past + Prog <i>muê (le)te apre m̄az lavian</i>	
	Future + Prog <i>m i sra apre m̄az lavian</i>	
Immediate Past	Pres + PasIm <i>m i sort/vien m̄az lavian</i>	<i>m i sort/vien et malad</i>
	Pas + PasIm <i>muê te i vien m̄az lavian</i>	<i>muê te i vien et malad</i>

similar to the SC and MC system(s) - for example, there are two Futures (one definite/immediate, the other indefinite), statives appear to behave similarly, and so on.

The basic facts of the T/A system are tabulated in Table 2.

8.1 In Table 2, *maz lavian*⁴⁷ 'eat meat' is used to illustrate V + NP (representing all VGs except those containing Copula), and *malad* '(be) sick' illustrates Copula + AP (representing all VGs containing Copula).

Note that the Copula 'to be' occurs in the table as *et(e)*, in what may be loosely characterised as an "infinitival" construction, as well as the Present *le*, Past *(le)te*, Future *s(o)ra*. Conditional *s(o)re*.

8.2 Without going into a detail which the limited data above does not authorise, it may be stated that RC is, as mentioned earlier, the product of at least two different systems. One of these (the closer of the two to French) is represented approximately by the "Petits Blancs" variety of RC: *kâ li lave fini mâze* 'when he had finished eating'.

In view of the known historical facts concerning the colonisation of Bourbon, and the subsequent implantation of colonies in Mauritius, Rodrigues and Seychelles,⁵⁵ and on the basis of the extensive comparative material presented by R. Chaudenson, it may be assumed that what is common to RC, MC, SC and Rodrigues Creole⁵⁶ must have existed in the Creole (Bourbonnais, B) spoken in Bourbon prior to 1720 (see Table 3). Further, phenomena existing in MC and SC, but absent from RC, constitute evidence (although not incontrovertible evidence) that these phenomena also existed in B, since MC and SC belong to different highest-order subgroups of this family of Creoles (v. Table 3). (A reservation here is the minor population movement from Mauritius to Seychelles.) This B system underlying modern RC is roughly represented by the "Caffre des Bas" variety of RC: *kâ li te fini mâze* 'when he had eaten, finished eating' (cf. "Petits Blancs" *kâ li lave fini mâze*, above). The "Petits Blancs" variety, then, is the product, at least in part, of the underlying non-B system.

There are also varieties of RC wherein both systems are represented simultaneously: *muê lore te fini* 'I would have finished'.

The T/A designations in the left-hand column of Table 2 are presented along the lines of the analysis of SC. However, the rewrite of Aux used for SC can manifestly not accommodate all the forms listed in Table 2.⁵⁷

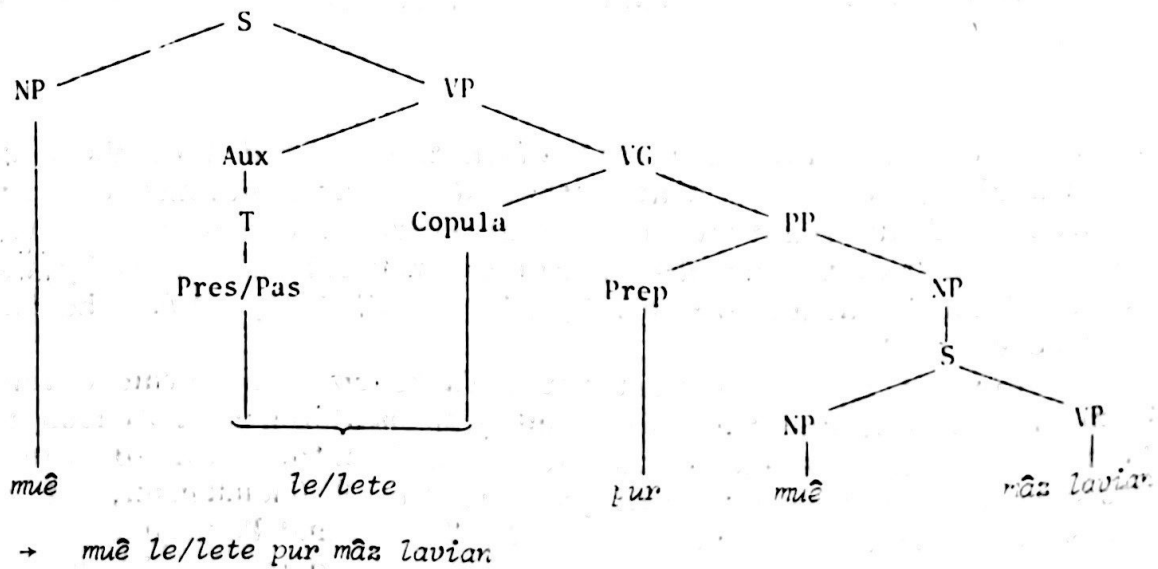
8.3 Given that *le* and *(le)te* are the Present and Past forms

respectively of the Copula, such that

$mu\hat{e} + Pres + Cop + malad \rightarrow mu\hat{e} le malad$
 $mu\hat{e} + Pas + Cop + malad \rightarrow mu\hat{e} lete malad$

with an optional *le*-deletion rule, $le \rightarrow \emptyset$, then the Imminent Future and the Progressive verbal forms of Table 2 may be simply accounted for⁵⁸ as sequences of Copula + PP (Prepositional Phrase), where PP dominates a sentence (with equi-NP deletion, etc., cf. Figure 1).

FIG. 1



Ignoring the question of the "levels" of usage in RC, *la*, *lave*, *nora*, *fin*, etc. may be considered as forms of "auxiliary verbs" (i.e. dominated by Aux), whose function is to mark the Completive.⁵⁹ (Note however that in *m i fini mât lavian*, *fini* is a full verb.) Cf. Figures 2, 3, 4.

FIG. 2

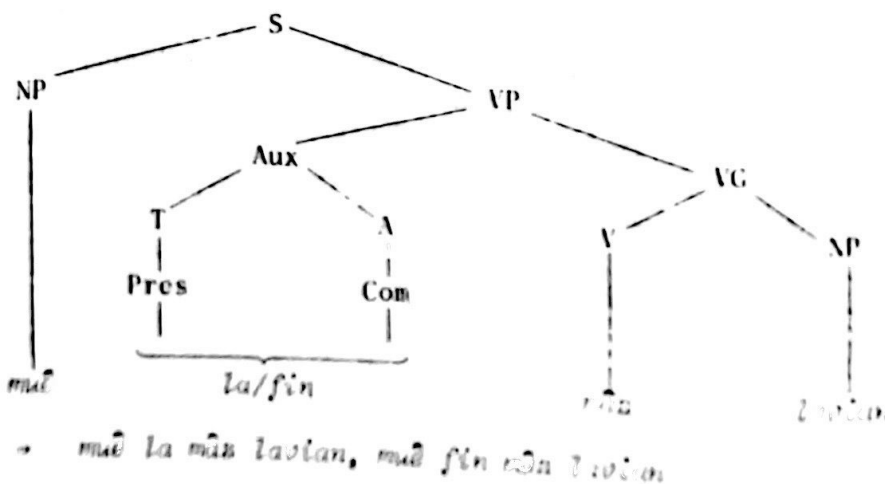


FIG. 3

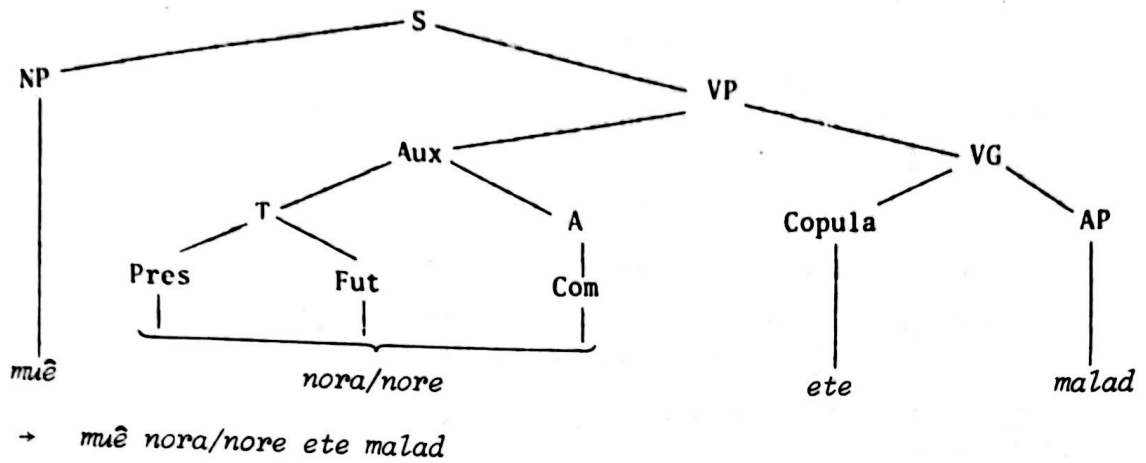
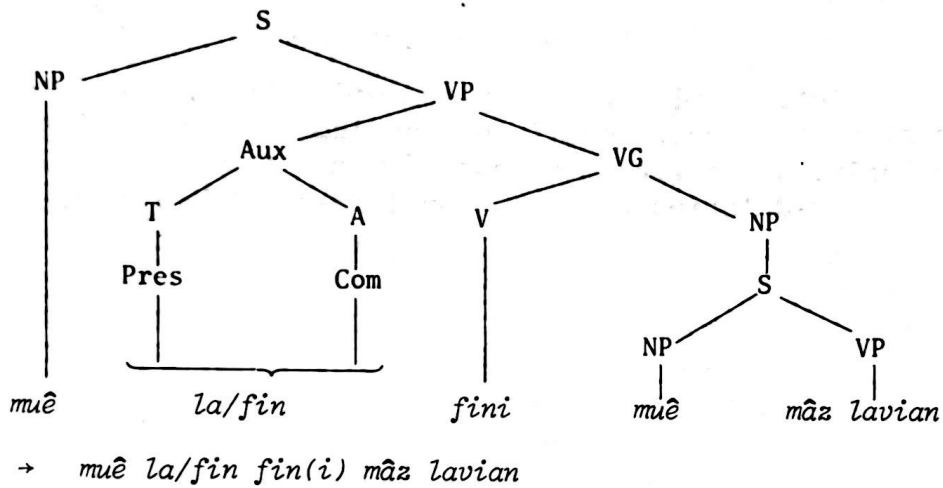
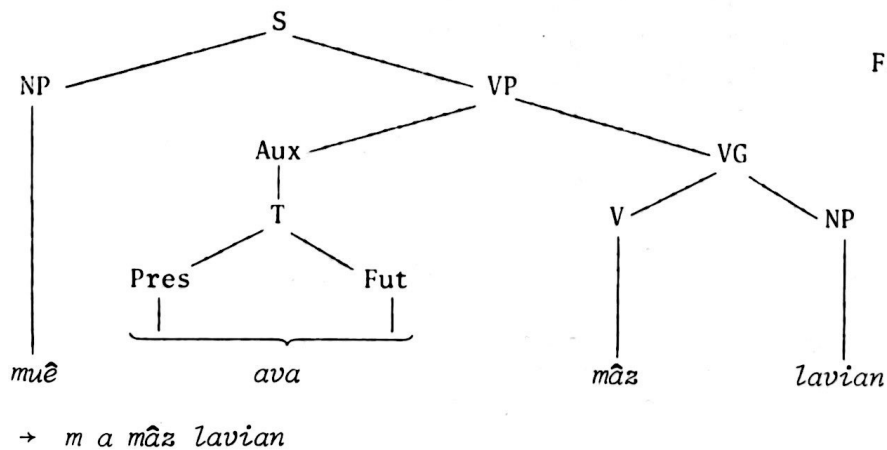


FIG. 4



Similarly, *ava* (v. n.51 for surface forms) is also a constituent of Aux, with however the restrictions that the sequence Pas + *ava* may not occur and that *ava* may not occur with Copula.⁶⁰ Cf. Figure 5.

FIG. 5



Thus far, the constituent Aux contains Present, Past, Future and Completive. To account for all other cases, it may be postulated that Aux also includes one other item, Copula itself, with all other verbs being embedded. Thus, a sentence such as the one noted by T. Raymond:

nu lete ki dās biē 'we had a great dance'

as well as the earliest recorded text for RC:⁶¹

"Moin la parti marron parcequ'Alexis l'homme de jardin l'était qui fait à moin trop l'amour"

reflect this fact, and provide an explanation for the distribution of *i* in RC.

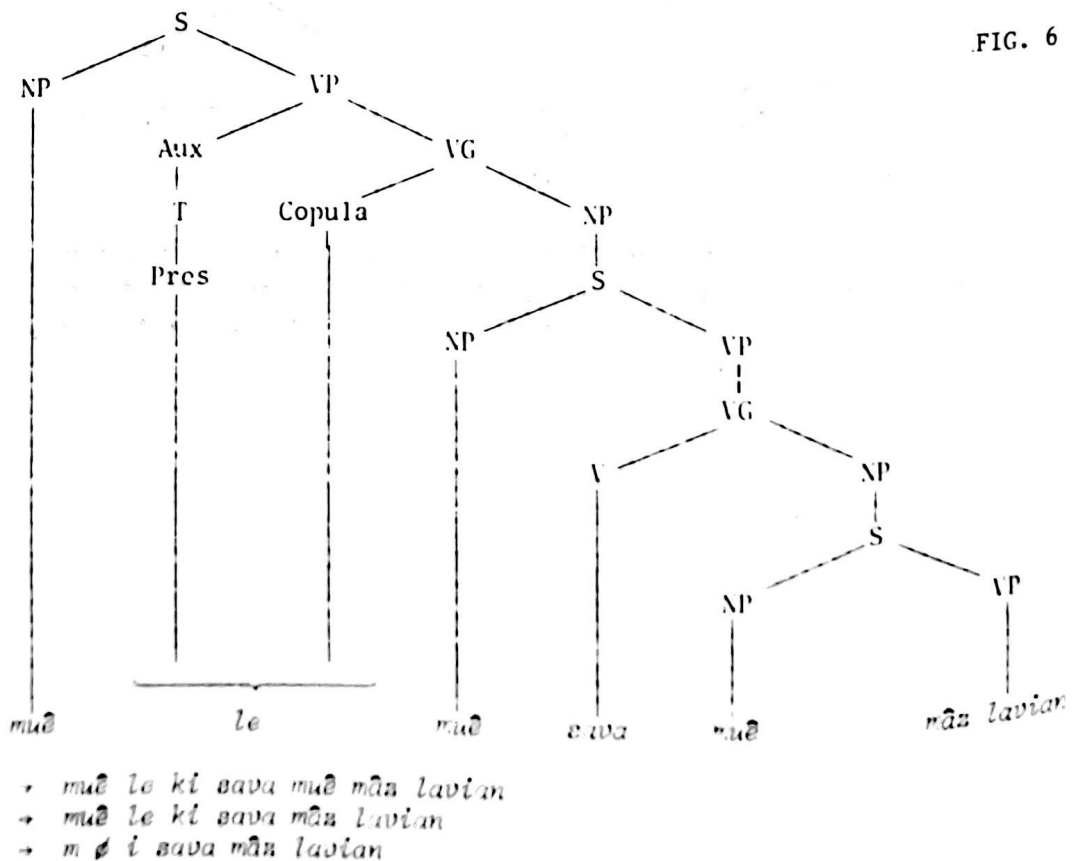
I claim then, that the sentence

m i mās lavian

derives from an underlying⁶²

muē le ki mās lavian 'I am (the one) who eats meat'.

The *le*-deletion rule above applies obligatorily, and the reduction of *ki* to *i* could easily be handled by a morphological rule. Similarly, underlying *muē lete ki mās lavian* → *muē (le)te i mās lavian* (*le*-deletion being optional here). Cf. Figure 6.



Thus, all the forms of Table 2 are accounted for, although there are some obvious objections. One is that the conditions under which equi-NP deletion will produce *ki* have to be specified. Another is that while *sava* is an embedded verb, *ava* is not, and there appears to be no obvious reason why this should be so. A third is that in this formulation *s(o)ra* must be considered as a verb glossed 'Future + Copula', thus posing difficulties in formulating the appropriate constraints, and leaving *nora/nore* out on a limb, so to speak. That is, *m i sra* (from *muè le ki sra*) occurs in just those contexts where *le*, (*le*)*te* (as Copula) occur:

muè le malad vs. m i sra malad.

Also, *sra/sre* and *nora/nore ete* compete (on different levels?):

muè nore ete malad vs. m i sre malad;

in such a case, an identical constituent (AP) allows two different ways of handling the temporal/aspectual features. Finally, the postulated reduction of *k* to zero appears completely unmotivated phonologically, and unsupported by any similar phonemic reduction in other lexical or grammatical items (the reduction of *fin* to *n* (mentioned above, n.35) is equally mysterious).

On the other hand, the erratic occurrence of *te* and *te i* with *fin(i)* is explained by the double status of the latter as both preverbal marker and verb, plus categorial confusions arising from the conflict of one system containing both categories (B system) and another tending to treat most markers as full verbs (non-B system):

muè te fin fini sâte 'I had finished singing' (*te fin*, markers)

muè te fin sâte 'I had sung' (*te fin*, markers)

muè te i fin(i) sâte 'I had sung' (*fin(i)*, verb; *te i*, markers).

Also accounted for is the non-occurrence of *i* with adjectival predicates (ignoring *sra/sre*) and its occurrence elsewhere.⁶³

My claim as to this underlying structure in RC is perhaps less far-fetched than it looks, as at least one other (decreolised?) variety of French has the same structure. Valdman 1973: 512 n.7: "in Saint-Barts [Saint-Barthélemy] and Saint-Thomas, there are two white communities, one of which uses Creole...and the other a seemingly decreolized regional variety of French...in Saint-Thomas, Creole speakers reside in...North-side and the other (decreolized regional French) group in... Carénage." Valdman gives (p.529) the following data for Carénage: *j sui ki va* 'I go', *t ē ki va* 'you go', *il ē ki va* 'he goes', *ēl ē ki va* 'she goes', *on ē ki va* 'we go', *zõt ē ki va* 'you (pl.) go'. *eu zõt son ki va* 'they go'. Goodman (1964: 85) gives, for the same dialect (retranscribed here to conform with Valdman's

system): *je ki ri, je sui ki ri (ri)* 'I am laughing', *je tē ki ri, j ētē ki riē* 'I was laughing'.

This parallel between RC and the speech of Carénage in the Caribbean can hardly be ascribed to pure chance. It suggests that such a construction must have existed in some variety of French spoken in France in the 17th Century.⁶⁴

To this (admittedly slim) historical and geographical evidence, one may add the internal consistency that my analysis makes apparent in RC, accounting neatly as it does for the otherwise baffling array of facts concerning the distribution of *i*⁶⁵.

In the underlying B system, it seems at least possible that there is a close link between the *i* deriving from Copula + *ki* + V, and the *i* which may be assumed to have existed as genuine 3rd person (sing./pl. masc.) reprise (cf. French *l'homme i(l) vient, les hommes i(ls) viennent*). A sentence such as *lebug i mās* illustrates this: 'le bougre, il mange' on the one hand (reprise), and *lebug le ki mās* on the other. Such a link, if it in fact exists, would go some way towards explaining the restriction of *i* in SC to 3rd person as well as its non-occurrence before (for example) *pu*.

8.4 While I am the first to admit that the evidence is not conclusive, I feel that the foregoing provides a plausible explanation for the non-occurrence in SC of *i* before *pu*, and even more, before *ti* (from *te*). The optional use of *i* with *fin* in SC texts requires no comment, in view of the double status of *fin* noted above.

Although **i pe* is not acceptable in SC (cf. RC *l apre*), the sequence *i ape* is; similarly, I have already mentioned the optionality of *i* with *a(va)* (7.2, (b), (i) above), and as Table 2 shows, RC *ava* is not embedded by *le ki*; we may also note (*i*) *fek* (loc. cit.), *fek* being presumably derived from an analogous form in B. To "explain" these facts, I can at the moment invoke only analogical extension based on *i* as subject reprise.

8.5 The other use of *i* in SC, in Negative Emphatic Sentences (7.5 above), is undoubtedly connected with the *i* deriving from the underlying RC string Copula + *ki* (there may also be a link with *i* reprise, if the partial double origin of this latter suggested above is admitted).

Consider the following RC data, where predicate negation is marked by *pa*:

muē te i kone pa sa 'I didn't know that'
muē la pa fin(i) mās lavian 'I haven't eaten the meat'
muē (le) pa pur mās lavian 'I'm not about to eat the meat'
muē (le) p apre mās lavian 'I'm not eating the meat'

muê te i sa pa mât lavian 'I was not going to eat the meat,
 I wouldn't have eaten the meat'
m i sa pa buar 'I will not drink'
m i mât ra pa 'I shall not eat' (**m a pa mât lavian*)
m i mât pa 'I don't eat'
m i vien pa mât lavian 'I haven't just eaten the meat'
m i sora pa fini mât lavian } 'I will not have eaten the
muê nora pa mât lavian } meat'
muê (le)te pa malad 'I was not sick'
muê le pa malad 'I am not sick'

All of these occurrences of *pa* can be handled by a rule placing *pa* after the first verb encountered in a given derivation.⁶⁶ Synchronically, this implies that *te i* has a different status from *te* - pre-verbal marker in the former, verb (Copula) in the latter.

The position of *pa* in SC and MC shows that this could not have been the case in B. For B, after *le*-deletion, \emptyset and *te* undergo the same categorial change from Copula to marker as do *le ki* and *lete ki* alone in RC. There appear to be two distinct processes involved, perhaps at different (historical) times, since MC does not have the Negative Emphatic Sentences of SC. These processes are:

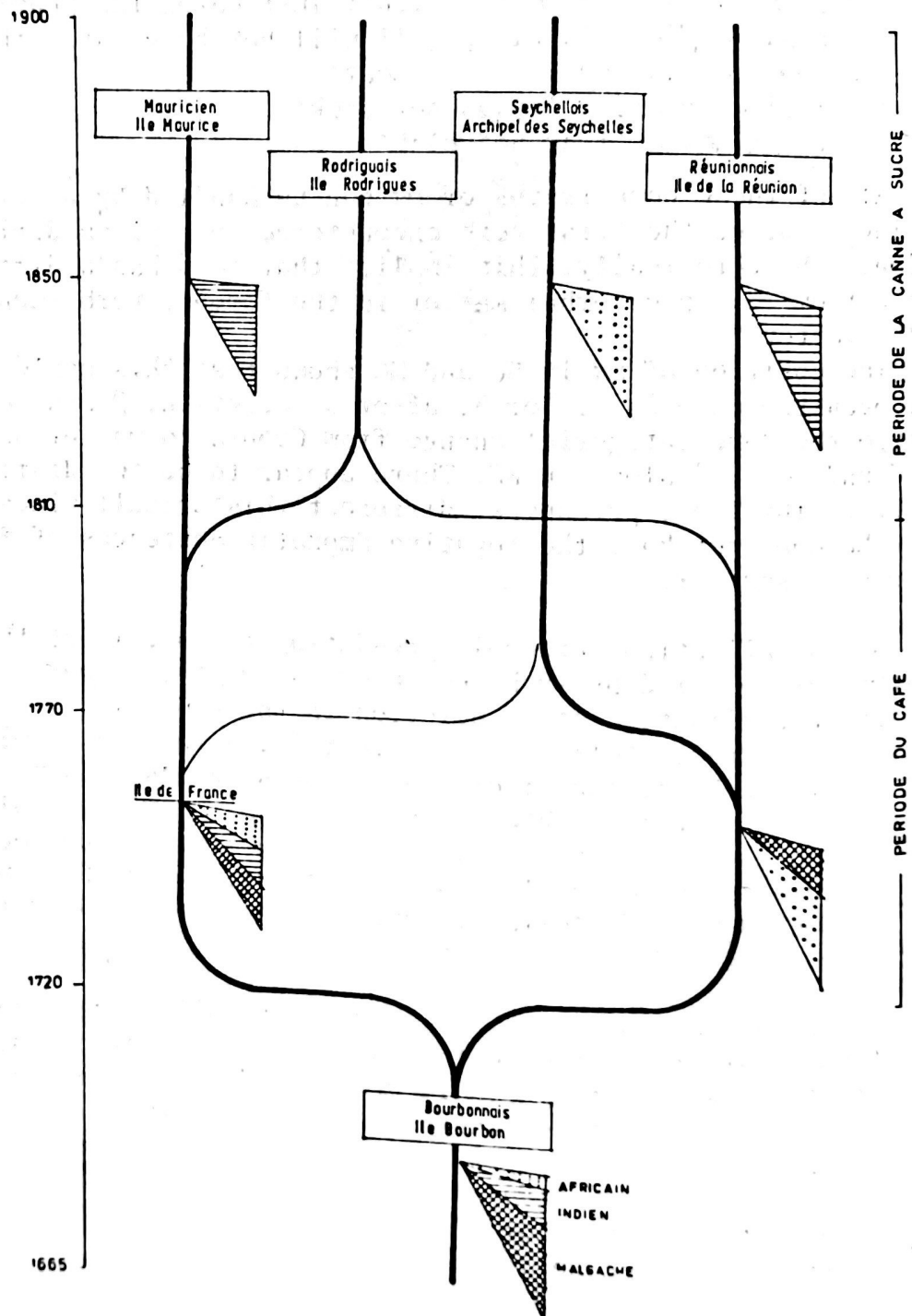
(a) A generalisation (probably pre-dating (b) below) of the patterns exemplified by such sequences as *pa fin*, *pa pur*, *p apre* and (by generalisation of *le*-deletion in the - minimal - context 'Negation of Predicate') *pa malad*. That is, a rule of *pa*-placement before markers, thus including *te* in such cases as *muê pa te malad* (postulated B sentence, cf. SC *mô pa ti malad*). Since there is no longer any reason to maintain a distinction such as the RC one between *te* Copula and *te i* marker, these forms merge and *te* is used with following verbs: *muê pa te mât lavian* (postulated for B, cf. SC *mô pa ti mât lavian*).

(b) A generalisation of *muê le ki* such that all tenses other than Present are relegated to the following verb (along the same lines that put RC Future + Copula *sra* on a different hierarchical level from *le*, *lete*), this generalisation occurring (minimally) in the context 'Emphatic Negative'. This would produce something like *muê le pa ki mât lavian*, *muê le pa ki te mât lavian*, whence, by *le*-deletion, reduction of *ki*, and appropriate morphological rules, the SC Emphatic Negatives *mô pa i mât lavian?*, *mô pa i ti mât lavian?*

8.6 The connection between *i* in SC and *i* in RC, while not proved beyond doubt by the above comments and analyses, is at least shown to be a highly likely possibility. The SC Emphatic Negative

TABLE 3

Indian Ocean Creoles: Population, Language



(Reproduced from Chaudenson 1974: 1119, by kind permission of the author.)

i has undoubtedly the same origin as the RC *i*, although their respective roles are synchronically quite different. The RC data suggests a possible (although partial) explanation of the distribution of *i* reprise in SC

9 The masses of lexical data given in Chaudenson 1974 establish beyond any doubt the genetic affiliation of RC to a variety or varieties of 17th Century French. Chaudenson is also undoubtedly correct in ascribing lexical items common to RC, SC and MC to a "fonds bourbonnais". It seems clear, on the basis of the material presented in this paper, that there is a syntactic as well as a lexical "fonds bourbonnais". The genetic affiliation of RC to SC and MC on the lexical level is however a lot more obvious than the syntactic links between them. The putative Bourbonnais temporal/aspectual system as sketched here (n.57) suggests roughly what part of the syntactic "fonds bourbonnais" might have looked like, but it does no more than that: the role of this syntactic system in the evolution of the Indian Ocean Creole dialects remains to be determined.

The same base can generate the temporal/aspectual system of both MC and SC, with the appropriate constraints. Some of these constraints reflect historical variation in the proto-language (others will reflect later evolutionary changes in MC and SC after 1770, cf. Table 3; the status of *pu* is perhaps an example). The element *i* is a pointer to such variation: prior to the colonisation of Mauritius, the B system does not appear to have *i* as a fully integrated element (cf. the evidence of Old MC which shows a partial use of *i*). By 1770, however, B does have this element, as shown by the evidence of reprise and the Emphatic Negatives in SC.

That is, in the interim, the non-B system underlying modern RC has been influencing the B system (although the interplay of the various factors - geographic, demographic, social, historical - which we may assume to have been involved in this evolution, remains relatively obscure). The base common to MC and SC will not therefore generate RC, but only a part (the B part) of RC. The optimism of the statement in Corne 1973: 58 to the effect that RC, MC and SC should turn out to have the same underlying structures appears now to have been somewhat over-enthusiastic, in that the exact nature of the links between the various varieties of RC on the one hand, and the variety or varieties of 17th Century French and B on the other, remains to be fully explained (it is not impossible that the key lies, at least in some small part, elsewhere, in perhaps the slave trade and the plantation economies of the New World).

This paper covers only a tiny area of Indian Ocean Creole

syntax, and does not therefore justify any excursions into the question of the origins of French Creole dialects in general. A syntactic link in the form of Bourbonnais has been shown between RC on the one hand, and SC and MC on the other.⁶⁷ The next step is to examine other areas of syntax in these three dialects (cf. Papen 1975) in order to show further similarities and differences between them and to gain a clearer idea of the proto-language(s).

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NOTES

- 1 This research was supported in part by a grant from the University of Auckland Research Committee.
- 2 Corne 1973.
- 3 To a very large extent, this paper is a collective effort. Data for SC were supplied by Anna Bollée, Bob Papen, and material I collected during a short stay in Seychelles. Tim Raymond supplied much of the data on RC, and further material came from Chaudenson 1974. R. Chaudenson and M. Carayol provided helpful information and suggestions. Many of the ideas embodied here were born during a series of discussions held in June 1974 at the Centre universitaire de la Réunion involving Tim Raymond, myself and Pierre Moorghen, who at the time was preparing his paper for the 1975 Honolulu conference (Moorghen 1975). Papen, Moorghen and Bollée have all produced helpful comments and cogent criticisms in letters, and there has been an ongoing exchange of information and opinions. I wish to thank in particular Robert Chaudenson for putting the C.U.R. facilities at my disposal,

Gabrielle Hoareau in Seychelles for her help and patience, and K.J. Hollyman and Ross Clark for their comments on earlier versions of this paper. It is hardly necessary to add that I am solely responsible for any inadequacies of observation or analysis in what you are about to read.

- 4 Cf. Chaudenson (in press), and the (somewhat inadequate) statement(s) by Burgess and Madden 1961.
- 5 To take one very obvious example of the language variation between written and spoken SC, written texts use *fin* far more than the spoken language, and, as will be seen below, *i* occurs in written texts in contexts where it never does in spoken SC.
- 6 Details are given in Corne, in press.
- 7 A third possibility, of course, is that we have all overlooked some important fact, or facts. Moorghen, à propos of my paper on MC preverbal markers, points out that my statement (Corne 1973: 50, §4.2(c)) is, for him, inaccurate, in that both *a + ape* and *va + ape* may occur, [a^ape] and [va^ape] respectively.
- 8 This distinction of stative vs. non-stative appears to be a fundamental feature of the verbal system in at least some other French Creoles. Taylor 1963 discusses this (pp804-8 in particular) for Martinique and Haitian Creoles.
- 9 Research in this area is not as yet far enough advanced for me to be able to do more than make this rather bald statement.
- 10 The transcription used here is basically identical to that used for MC in Corne 1973, but with the following modifications: *j*, *ñ*, *ɲ* are replaced here by *y*, *ÿ*, *ny* respectively; after a nasal consonant, word-final *e* and *a* are nasalised (contextually conditioned nasalisation, the oral vowel vs. nasal vowel contrast being neutralised). Cf. Corne (ms.).
- 11 I have omitted from the list one or two combinations, such as *zâ i n fek pe mâze* 'John has just been eating', for reasons to be discussed below (PasIm, 4.3).
- 12 A string preceded by "?" indicates that informants disagree as to acceptability for SC, but that the string concerned occurs in MC. "?*" indicates that the string occurs only in SC, but that informants disagree.
- 13 In my 1973 analysis of MC preverbal markers, I put *va* and *pu* into an aspectual category, although for the wrong reasons. My rules allowed for an incorrect **apu*, alongside the correct *a*, *ava*, *va* and *pu*. These rules were:

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \text{Fut} \rightarrow \{a, \emptyset\} \\
 \text{A} \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{FutAsp} \\ \text{Asp} \end{array} \right\} + (\text{Asp}) \\
 \text{FutAsp} \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{FutDef} \\ \text{FutInd} \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} pu \\ va \end{array} \right\}, \text{whence } *apu.
 \end{array}$$

I remain unconvinced that these rules are totally erroneous. They can be amended by the addition of a deletion rule:

$$a + pu \rightarrow \emptyset + pu$$

Alternatively, and less satisfactorily, Fut could be rewritten as *ava*, with FutDef then being the sole constituent of FutAsp, and a deletion rule $ava + pu \rightarrow \emptyset + pu$. Such a solution would be unsatisfactory, in that there is in MC a clear-cut aspectual opposition between *pu* (certainty) and *a, va, ava* (uncertainty). However, a categorial distinction between the two does make sense, in that the following sequences occur:

Pres + { <i>a, va, ava</i> } + PasIm + Prog	Pas + <i>a</i> + PasIm + Prog
Pres + { <i>a, va, ava</i> } + Com + PasIm	Pas + <i>a</i> + Com + PasIm
Pres + <i>pu</i> + Com + PasIm	Pas + <i>a</i> + Com + Prog

where Fut is manifestly $\rightarrow a, va, ava$. Here, the sole example of *pu* could well be simply an example of (erroneous?) analogical extension, whereby *pu* has been transferred categorially, from FutAsp to Fut. Unless such a transfer is admitted, this gives a sequence of three aspect markers, which are extremely rare (and which when they do occur, always include *pu*, and always lead to disagreement between informants). Furthermore, just such a transfer can be postulated for SC. In RC, *ava* and *pur* are indeed in different categories (v.8.3 below).

A further piece of rather weak evidence for allocating *a(va)* and *pu* to Tense rather than to Aspect in SC is that a small group of adverbs tends to follow tense markers, but precede aspect markers (cf. 4.1):

{ \emptyset, ti, pu, a } + Adv + {*fek, pe*}

- 14 Irrelevant here, but of interest, is the use of *la-* as an emphatic prefix. E.g. *i ti plere ek lasagrinasid* 'he cried with great regret/hurt'. I do not know to what extent this derivational procedure is productive.
- 15 Not that any of the examples given here are completely convincing.
- 16 These examples are taken from written texts collected by Anna Bollée. Papen and Bollée (personal communication) note that the temporal value of Pas + Fut is usually marked by *ti pu*. The example with *ti a(va)* given here suggests that further research is required. In MC, either *ti pu* or *ti a(va)* may be used with the temporal value.
- 17 Similarly in MC. Here, the action is over-and-done-with, in the past. Cf. Moorghen 1975. Moorghen and I are indebted to Denis Solomon (University of the West Indies at St Augustine) for providing the idea for this particular pair of sentences; cf. Solomon 1972.
- 18 During a conversation between her and Mrs Danielle d'Offay, who taped the discussion. Interestingly, this same 84 year-old also produced one sentence with *va* (3.3 above): *mô va gaye baba* 'I was going to have a baby' (the context is Past). Mrs d'Offay claims that *fîn* is used frequently by people over 50 - 60 years old. I thank Mrs d'Offay here for her help and hospitality during my stay on Mahé, and for making her tapes available to me.
- 19 Some informants insist that *mô pa n mâze* is identical to, and should be replaced by, *mô pâkor mâze*. That this is so, appears to me to be on account of the first-person subject.
- 20 Bollée (forthcoming) claims that *pe* is more frequent (in her texts?). This goes counter to my impression, in that *ape* is far more frequent in SC than in MC (thus affecting my subjective feelings about it),

but I have no figures to hand. In any case, I suspect that the frequency will vary according to the specific context. The subject pronoun *i* 'he, she, it', and the personal nouns *mô* 'I', *u* 'you (sing)', *nu* 'we', seem to prefer *ape* rather than *pe*, for example, and *ti ape* seems to be preferred to *ti pe*.

21 This combination is not very common in practice, and can often be avoided. For example, while a sentence like *Zâ pu deza pe mâze* 'John will already be eating', is quite possible, this would more usually be rephrased as something like *Zâ i a n deza komâs mâze* 'John will have (already) begun eating'.

22 Again, this combination is often avoidable: e.g. in the second example, ...*i ti a kaka* would suffice in this context.

23 Baker 1972: 110 n.4 notes that in MC, *in fek* is more usual than *fek*. My own informants for MC (cf. Corne 1973: 54) contrast *fin/in/n fek* with *fek* (but the distinction is the opposite way around from SC), and also with *fek fin* (which does not occur in SC). The exact interpretation for both MC and SC remains open to debate.

24 Example from Bollée, forthcoming. Written text.

25 This parallels MC, v. Corne 1973: 52.

26 Bob Papen, personal communication, reports "a hesitant: *Zâ ti pu n fek pe mâze* 'John had probably just been eating'". Ignoring the *n*, this fits here.

27 Moorghen 1972; Corne 1973 (as modified according to remarks made here).

28 Note here the use of *pur-dir* as a subordinating conjunction. Cf. French Guiana Creole *a krer di i faše* 'it is as if (to be believed that) he is angry' (Corne 1971: 98) and the "he sez, sez he" formula of the Br'er Rabbit stories. Pan-Creole? (Cf. also in New Hebridean Bichelamar *mi no save se i kat nawimba long ples ya* 'I don't know if there are pigeons there'.) *Sûgula* is the hero or villain of numerous folk-tales, and is usually reputed to be a type of monkey (he has a long tail in many stories). Some informants consider him to be a hare or a rabbit.

29 That it is felt to be such by informants is beyond question. Bollée, forthcoming, 5.2.2 notes: "Un témoin nous a dit: 'I prefer *i*, it *zot* pour la reprise d'un sujet animé, un autre a proposé la règle: inanimé, mais ceci n'est pas corroboré par nos textes". It is not confirmed by my data, either, but that an informant can even attempt to formulate such a rule is evidence that *i* is felt to be a repetition of the preceding subject. (But v. below, n.31).

In what follows, the data presented do not conflict significantly with those in Bollée, forthcoming, or in Papen, in press. Any differences would appear to be due to the differing backgrounds of our informants. However, my interpretation of the data is slightly different from Bollée's (I am concerned principally with sentences with un-broken intonation contours, i.e. sentences in which *i* occurs AS IF IT WERE - intonationally - A PREVERBAL MARKER), and at variance with Papen's (in his *Short Grammar* he considers *i* as a (present) tense marker, although this may not represent his current thinking on

the subject. In Papen 1975, he mentions (n.41) only an 'i-insertion' rule).

30 *mô, u, nu* are Personal Nouns, not pronouns, and are excluded from the reprise rule as stated here. Since *zot* is both 2 plural and 3 plural, the occurrences of reprise (as in (a) (ii) below) when *zot* is 2 plural (a personal noun) are presumably due to analogy. However, personal nouns and pronouns do occur as reprise of the subject. Compare:

li ek mua, nu pu fer sa 'he and I, we'll do that'
nu de Gabriel, nu ava ale 'Gabrielle and I (=us two G.), we will go'
mô n uar li ozordi, zot de Ema, (zot) pu pu vini kot nu asuar 'I saw him today, he and Emma won't be at our place tonight'
nu tu, nu... 'all of us'; *zot tu le de, zot...* 'both of you/them'

In all such cases, the item occurring in reprise initiates a new intonation contour. Cf. Tesnière 1951; all the cases of the "duel sylleptique" in French that are listed by Tesnière have reprise: *nous deux Jean, nous avons...*, *vous deux Pierre, vous avez...*. There is also a reduplication of all personal noun or pronoun subjects. I have noted this only in what I call restrictive sentences: *mô mô tu sel ki n fer sa*, equivalent to *mua tu sel ki n fer sa* (*mua* given emphatic stress) 'I alone did it'. Similarly, *nu nu tu sel, u u tu sel, zot zot tu sel*; but: *i li tu sel*.

Note that the reprise rule as stated says nothing about reprise in those cases where other transformations have applied that produce either a focussing on NP Subject, or a pause (or its intonation-contour equivalent). Examples:

lerua, i napa e basê, li 'the King, he does not have a pond'
sa bonom ki u n dir mua, i ti malad ier 'that man you spoke of to me, he was sick yesterday'

I exclude *fin* from the formulation. Bollée notes occasional occurrences of *i fin* in her texts.

31 Often, *a(va)* occurs without *i*; and even more frequently *fek* occurs without *i* (cf. 7.4 below). Bollée notes the possibility of *zot* occurring as reprise of a plural subject: *nenen ek msie zot al...* 'the maid and Monsieur go...'. My feeling is that in such cases, there is either a pause or an intonational equivalent thereof, and that such sentences should be written "NP, *zot...*". This is important as far as the concept of reprise is concerned. A sentence NP1 + $\left\{ \begin{matrix} (i) \\ ti \end{matrix} \right\}$ + Cop +

NP2 (see (iv) below also), may be transformed (interrogation bearing on NP2) to *ki* + NP1 + $\left\{ \begin{matrix} i \\ ti \end{matrix} \right\}$ + Cop, NP1 being singular or plural, but

not to *ki* + NP1 + **zot* + Cop, when NP1 is plural. Examples:

sô papa (i) ê met lekol 'his father is a school-master → *ki sô papa i ete?* 'what is his father?'; *Zâ ti sarpâtie* 'John used to be a carpenter' → *ki Zâ ti ete?* 'what did John used to be?'; *sa ban zom i travayer* 'those men are workers' → *ki sa ban zom i ete?* 'what are those men?' (**ki sa ban zom zot ete?*).

32 *ki sa vedir?* 'what does that mean?', and perhaps other more or less fixed formulae, do not appear to allow reprise.

- 33 Along with one sentence in a written text: *u bizuê in tan sa zafer* 'you must have heard of this business', which I shall ignore until such time as many more such sentences are shown to be acceptable to SC monolinguals. Note also that in the case of (4) and (5), an alternative analysis is equally possible: *i uar* NP + *bef i n mor* → *i uar (ki) bef i n mor*.
- 34 All are acceptable to Moorghen (personal communication), and there is a sequence *ti a va in* in Corne 1970: 15. Baker 1972: 108 lists *in* as a free variant of *fin*. One of my informants allows *ti a va fin*, *ti a va in*, *ti a va n*; *ti a fin*, *ti a n*; but hesitates to accept *ti a in*.
- 35 While *fin* undoubtedly derives from the French periphrastic *finir de* + infinitive (Chaudenson 1974: 965-6), marking completed action, the origin of *n* is less certain. The development of *in* and *n* may be explainable on purely phonetic grounds, but this appears unlikely if it is admitted that *in* comes from *reprise* + *n*, since this implies a one step reduction of *fin* to *n*. There is, for the moment, no obvious and satisfactory explanation of this problem.
- 36 Bollée notes a few cases in her texts of *i* occurring rarely before *ti*, *pa*; occasionally before *fin*, *pe*, *fek*. My informants reject such sequences, except with *fek*, as already noted.
- 37 A phonetic/phonemic rule (no *i* before stops, in the context Aux) is even less enlightening than my *reprise* rule.
- 38 In Seychellois, *pa* + Aux + *ana* has two possible surface forms: *pa Aux ana* (although *ava* and *fek* appear to be excluded), or Aux *napa*. Example:

mô pu napa, mô pa pu ana 'I will not have'

However, in the context of Negative Emphatic Questions, the *napa* forms do not occur:

pa i ana ê karo banan la âler? 'isn't that a banana plantation up there?'

Compare the following sets of sentences:

i cna (dimun) ki kon koz frâse da sa pei (?) 'there is/is there someone who knows how to speak French in this country (?)'
napa dimun ki kon koz frâse ... (?) 'there is/is there no-one who ... (?)'
i pa ana (dimun) ki kon koz frâse ... (?) 'isn't there anyone who ... (?)'

vs.

(i) *pa i ana (dimun) ki kon koz frâse...?* 'isn't there anyone who ...?' (speaker is pretty sure, but can hardly believe it).

Note also that

Zâ pa n mâze (?) 'John has not eaten; has John not eaten?' may be a statement or a question, whereas

Zâ pa i n mâze?

can be *only* a Rhetorical Question.

- 39 I have no examples of *sa* or other pronouns.

- 40 Adverb placement in this context? In one of Bollée's texts, I note: *nu pâkor ni komâs travay* 'we haven't even begun to work'.

- 41 Neither (4) nor (5) appear to allow *a* directly to follow *ni*: **u pa ni a kone* **u pa ti ni a kone*, *u pa (ti) a ni kone*, *u pa ni ti a kone*, *u pa ni ava/pu kone*, *u pa ava/pu ni kone*.
- 42 Example from Papen (in press). *ni* may also precede a focussed NP: *napa ê su ladâ* → *ni ê su napa ladâ* 'there's not even a cent inside'; ...*ni lerua zot pa ti kôprâ* 'they didn't understand even the king'. (Both examples from Papen).
- 43 Chaudenson, in press. See also Chaudenson 1974: ix-xxx (especially xxiv-xxx), 441-65.
- 44 *La syntaxe du parler créole réunionnais - Etude transformationnelle* (Thèse de 3^e cycle, C.U.R.). In preparation.
- 45 This is returned to below, 8.2. Note however that even if it should turn out to be the case that my hypothesis as to the existence of a variety of "Bourbonnais" (=the more-or-less direct ancestor of SC and MC) is wrong, any other theory will have to take account of the extreme variation characteristic of modern RC.
- 46 Moorghen 1975.
- 47 The transcription used here is for convenience only and should not be taken as making any claims about RC phonology. It is simply my SC notation transferred *in toto*.
- 48 Pronoun morphology here is as follows: *m i* 'I'; *t i* 'you'; *u*, *u i*, *v i* 'you'; *li* 'he, she, it'; *nu*, *n i* 'we'; *zot i* 'you (pl.), they'. With NP subject: *lebug i mâz* 'the chap eats'.
- 49 Pronoun morphology in this context: *muê* 'I'; *u*, and sometimes *tue* 'you'; *li* 'he, she, it'; *nu* 'we' (rarely *n i* occurs also, Chaudenson 1974: 345); *zot* 'you (pl.), they'. For further details, see now Chaudenson 1974: 333-4.
- 50 These are the usual forms, but alongside *nu lete i dâs biê*, T. Raymond has noted a spontaneous semantically equivalent utterance (cf. n.65 below): *nu lete ki dâs biê*. Occasionally, *ti* occurs also (Chaudenson 1974: 347).
- 51 Pronoun morphology: *m a*; *tue va*, *t a*; *li va*, *li a*; *nu va*, *n a*; *u va*, *u a*, *u a va*; *zot va*, *zot a*.
- 52 The indefinite seems to require other structures: *m a tom malad* 'I shall (might) fall sick'. Another form of the definite here uses *et* 'to be': *m i sa(va) et malad*. Moorghen (1975: 12) notes *sava* (n.8) and an opposition *sa* vs. *saa*, the latter being emphatic.
- 53 Morphologically complex forms of the verb 'to have' compete with other markers, this variation being at least in part socio-linguistic. The Present of 'to have' is *la* (especially as an "auxiliary verb"; in its "full" sense, *na*, *nana*, *ena* are more usual); the Past is *lave* (in the "full" sense, *ti ana*, *te i ana*, and also *nave*); the Future is *nora*, *lora*; the Conditional (and Conditional Perfect) is *nore*, *lore*. The distinction *nora* vs. *nore* is unstable: *nu nora/nore buar sa* 'we would have drunk it'. This *e/a* instability occurs also in the "synthetic" future forms that occur in negative sentences: *m a mâz lavian* → *m i mâzra/mâzre pa lavian* 'I won't eat the meat'.
- 54 Another quite frequent Progressive is *âtren*: *muê l âtren mâz lavian*. My informants consider *l apre* as "more Creole". Chaudenson 1974: 335,

- 977 notes a form *po*. Raymond and Moorghen (personal communication; cf. also Moorghen 1975: n.10) have noted *le apo*, *l a: o*, *a: o*.
- 55 This topic is dealt with succinctly and clearly in Chaudenson 1974: xi-xiv, xxx-xxxi, 441-65, and especially 1106-26.
- 56 I exclude Rodrigues Creole henceforth, as the only data I have are the elements in Chaudenson 1974 (pp. 1115, 1124 for the preverbal markers). The sole future marker in Rodrigues Creole appears to be *pu*.
- 57 It can, however, be used to account for RC *le*, (*le*)*te*, *a(va)*, *pur*, *fin* and *apre*. Such a rewrite would be a crude representation of the B system. Very briefly, the rules would "work" something like this:
 (1) Pres → $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \emptyset \\ le / \text{---} \{ \text{Copula, A} \} \end{array} \right\}$ In fact, Old RC (1799) has *i* in some cases: "nous autres y l'est plus que les blancs" (Chaudenson 1974: 972). Rule (1) also accounts for the traces of *lc* in Old MC (about 1830): "moi choisir ça qu lē plis zoli" (Chaudenson 1974: 972).
 (2) Pas → *lete*. (3) Fut → *ava*. (4) A → {*pur*, *apre*, *fin*}. (5) a *le*-deletion rule along the lines of

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} le / \text{---} +A \\ lete \end{array} \right\} \text{ optional } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \emptyset \\ te \end{array} \right\} \text{ (obligatory with } fin)$$
 (cf. the vastly simpler *le*-deletion rule in 8.3 below, where *le* → \emptyset).
 (6) *ava* + *pur* → *pur* (since the string Pres + Fut + FutDef does not occur in RC, SC or MC). Note that *ava* and *pur* are in different categories (cf. RC, and also MC).
- 58 In fact, *le* is optional with *pur*, obligatory with *apre* except in the negative: *muê (le) pa apre* + V.
- 59 Such forms obviously derive from forms of *avoir* and *finir (de)* in French. Cf. the rewrite of "Parfait" (equivalent to Completive here) in Dubois and Dubois-Charlier 1970: 101-3.
- 60 The existence of *ti ava* in SC and MC suggests that the first restriction did not apply in B, while a sentence such as *u ava malad* (SC, MC) suggests that the second did not apply either.
- 61 Chaudenson 1974: 444, 1147.
- 62 It seems more likely that RC *m i*, *t i* imply personal noun forms *mo* (+ *i*), *to* (+ *i*), rather than *muê*, *tue* (cf. MC *mo*, *to* subject, *mua*, *tua* non-subject; SC *mô*, *mua*).
- 63 *n i le* replacing the more usual *nu le* (n.49 above) 'we are' would result from the conflict of the two systems.
- 64 Cf. Hull's (1968, 1975) concept of Maritime French, Valdman 1975, and in particular Chaudenson 1974: 1080-143.
- 65 While R. Chaudenson (1974: 336, 981) may be correct in his assertion that, in RC, "*te ki*, *teki* apparaît surtout dans les formes écrites du créole et témoigne d'un effort de normalisation dans le cadre du système français ("était qui") du tour *te i* de la langue parlée" (p. 336), this may be because present-day RC speakers appear to attach no "meaning" to *i* (cf. the position in SC, where *i* "means" subject reprise and may therefore be replaced by *not* by some speakers when the subject is plural), or it may simply be a survival of the original variety of French brought to Bourbon (cf. Chaudenson 1974: 592-632 "Le vocabulaire des 'Isles'"). It is interesting to note that Hull 1975 maintains that the Carénage *je tē ki ri* is "derivabile by back-forma-

tion" from the (Northside) Creole *muê te ka ri*, and that he agrees with Chaudenson that RC (*le*)*te ki* results from "an attempt to 'make (*te i*). In the *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* (Tobler-Lommatzsch), under *qui*, "without an antecedent but where a definite person is referred to", there are two sentences quoted from *De Venus la deesse d'amor*, edited by W. Foerster (Bonn, 1880, pp. 137c, 138b).

Je suis qui les amans vraiment amer fais...;
Je sui qui les amans fait avoir joie et plor,...

These two sentences are Foerster's additions to the text (noted by [.] in the *Wörterbuch*). A cursory survey of the material available to me on the French of the 16th and 17th Centuries has not revealed any other examples of this structure.

- 66 Chaudenson 1974: 344, n.8: "Il est donc clair que si, synchroniquement, la place de la négation se définit ainsi [*pa* follows immediately the verb], tous les cas où *pa* est placé avant le thème verbal s'expliquent par le fait que ce dernier est, en fait, précédé d'un ancien 'verbe' auquel *pa* se trouve naturellement postposé." Chaudenson also notes (p. 344) a sequence *va pa: lemun i va pa vol...* 'no-one will steal' (note the use of *i* which suggests a categorial change for *va*), but adds (p. 344, n.7) that the future negative "often" involves the verbal forms in *-ra*, as in the example above, *m i mârza pa*.
- 67 Hitherto, the term "Bourbonnais" has been used to designate "le créole de l'île Bourbon avant 1721, date du début du peuplement de l'île de France" (Aldorf-Bollée & Chaudenson 1973: 80, n.18). As used here, the term designates, more narrowly, the semantico-syntactic system which may be postulated as the proto-language from which derive MC, SC and RC.