
VERB-FRONTING IN FRENCH AND SINITIC VERNACULARS:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY INSPIRED BY CHRIS CORNE

Stephen Matthews, *Department of Linguistics, University of Hong Kong,*
Pokfulam Hong Kong < matthews@hku.hk >

Abstract

Verb-fronting phenomena were a recurrent topic of research on the Indian Ocean creoles by Chris Corne, whose work led him to reject the view of creoles as a distinct structural type. A comparison with Cantonese, as a representative of Sinitic vernaculars, with Mauritian creole as described by Corne, shows that most of the properties are shared. In particular, the structure with the verb copied in initial position is associated in both languages with the functions of concession and of emphasis, which may take the form of either topicalization or focusing. The comparison adds to the typological properties shared by creoles and the Sinitic languages and demonstrates that verb-fronting is not specific to creole grammars, adding to Corne's case that creoles do not constitute a unique structural type.

1. Introduction¹

From French to Creole (Corne 1999) distills many of the insights of Chris Corne's academic career. This paper aims to connect two major issues discussed there:

- (i) The assumption that "there exists a class of creole languages definable in linguistic terms" (Corne 1999:221);

- (ii) The functions and origins of verb-fronting constructions in French contact vernaculars and their antecedents.

On the first issue, Corne's forthright position, "assumption (i) is simply wrong" (1999:221) is borne of a wide range of experience dealing with both classical 'creoles' such as Seychellois (Corne 1987) and other French-based contact varieties.² Corne's work was instrumental in persuading the present writer of this viewpoint, and thus preempting further conceptual errors of the kind Corne (1999:232) envisaged: "It is safe to predict that there will be many more publications treating creoles as magic languages".³

With regard to the second issue, we shall argue that many of Corne's insights into verb-fronting in Isle de France Creole (IdeFC) are applicable to similar structures in Cantonese. This constitutes a further addition to the many typological parallels between Sinitic and creole grammar, supporting Corne's conclusion that the structural properties associated with creoles are not unique to this class of languages.

2. The creole prototype and the typology of Sinitic

A long-standing problem relevant to this debate is why Chinese (or Sinitic languages) should resemble creoles in so many respects (Smith 1994, Escure 1997). In Cantonese, for example, as in many creoles, serial verbs are used for dative, instrumental, comparative and other constructions; no copula is used with adjectival predicates; and bi-morphemic question words predominate. Or consider the three features making up the Creole Prototype (McWhorter 1998):

- (i) absence of inflectional morphology;
- (ii) semantically transparent derivational morphology;
- (iii) little or no use of tone to lexically contrast monosyllables or encode syntax.

The first two features, at least, apply as much to languages of the Sinitic family as they do to creoles (Ansaldò and Matthews 2001). Should Chinese be considered a creole (or, more realistically, a family of creoles)? If not, why does it share so many features associated with the Language Bioprogram (Bickerton 1981) and with the Creole Prototype (McWhorter 1998)? At least two possible answers might be given:

- (i) Chinese substrates have played a substantial role in the formation of creoles;
- (ii) Language contact has played a role in the history of Chinese comparable to that which it plays in the formation of creoles, resulting in similar restructuring.

2.1 *Chinese as substrate*

In certain cases it has indeed been argued that Cantonese (or other southern Chinese dialects with similar morphosyntactic properties) was among the substrate languages involved, and that specific features may reflect Cantonese input. Siegel (2000), for example, argues that a number of structures in Hawaiian Creole English (HCE) could be attributed in part to Cantonese influence:

- (i) the polyfunctionality of *get* which is used with both possessive and existential functions;
- (ii) the lack of copula with adjectives (which are arguably stative verbs);
- (iii) the specific/non-specific distinction (encoded by presence vs. absence of the classifier in Cantonese).

In addition, Roberts (1999) has argued that the particular types of serial construction attested in HCE, involving directional verbs, may be traceable to the Cantonese substrate:

- (1) bring the book come
- (2) take it go

Parallel structures indeed exist in Cantonese (cf. Matthews and Yip 1994: 147–8).⁴

- (3) *daai3 bun2 syu1 lai4*
bring CL book come
- (4) *ling1 di1 je5 heoi3*
take CL stuff go

While the case for Chinese influence on HCE is a strong one, it is less plausible in the case of the Indian Ocean and especially the Atlantic creoles. The bulk of the creole/Sinitic parallels must then be explained in other ways.

2.2 *Language contact and typology*

Comparing the creole continuum in Belize with Putonghua spoken as a second

dialect in China, Escure (1997:19) suggests that “[c]reole situations may be structurally similar to other language variability situations, although they may vary in other respects, perhaps historical or political”. Ansaldo and Matthews (2001) draw a similar conclusion: that the typology of the Sinitic languages, like that of creoles, reflects restructuring under heavy contact conditions, so that no fundamental difference of kind need be posited.⁵

These comparisons point towards Corne’s conclusion that there can be no class of creoles defined in purely linguistic terms. Among the works cited by Corne in this regard is Manfredi’s (1993) study of verb-fronting constructions. Noting the similar behaviour of predicate clefts in Kru/Kwa languages and in Haitian, Manfredi (1993:42) observed:

It is widely asserted that ‘creoles’ form a typological class, although there is strong disagreement over why the supposedly defining features of this class are shared with ‘non-creoles’, e.g. in the Kru and Kwa families...

Pursuing this argument, we shall show that the structure and function of verb-fronting in Cantonese are comparable to the creole cases in general, and to the French-based Creoles discussed by Corne in particular. Indeed, the comparison helps to clarify a number of questions left open by Corne’s treatment.

3. Verb-fronting in Isle de France Creole and Cantonese

Verb-fronting phenomena were an enduring concern of Corne’s, as the appendix to *From French to Creole* makes clear (Corne 1999:189-96).⁶ Appropriately, the first of a series of studies on the subject (Corne 1981) appeared in this journal, while Corne (1987) provides the fullest treatment. When verb-fronting constructions feature (in various forms and under a variety of names) among the typical ‘creole’ features, it is typically Corne’s work which provides the empirical basis for the discussion (cf. Bickerton 1981:54, and Romaine 1988:104-6).

The term ‘verb-fronting’ (for which Corne originally used the term ‘double predication’) “designates sentences where the predicate head is copied in sentence-initial position. This is a focussing rule which copies without deletion, in contra-distinction to all other focussing rules of IdeFC which *do* delete” (Baker and Corne (1982:85), emphasis in the original). Typical examples from Baker and Corne (1982) are:

- (5) *Galupe li ti pe galupe, me zot ti resi trap li.* (Mauritian)
 ‘Although he was running like hell, they were able to catch him.’
- (6) *Mâze i a kapab mâze, me zame i pu grosi.* (Seychellois)
 ‘Eat as he might, he will never put on weight.’

In a preliminary characterisation of the function of verb-fronting, Corne observes: “In all such sentences that I have recorded to date, the basic meaning is invariably one of emphasis and concession” (Baker and Corne 1982:85).

All of Corne’s observations cited so far are applicable to a phenomenon in Cantonese described by Matthews and Yip (1994:75-6, 1998). In example (7), the predicate *gwai3* is fronted,⁷ its copy remains *in situ*, and the construction as a whole has a concessive character:

- (7) *Gwai3 zau6 gwai3, daan6hai6 hou2 leng3.*
 expensive then expensive but very pretty
 ‘Expensive it may be, but it’s really nice.’
 (Matthews and Yip 1998: 179)

In the following sections we elaborate on the formal and functional parallels between the IdeFC and Cantonese phenomena.

3.1 *The status of verb-fronting in Mauritian Creole*

Before embarking on questions of analysis, it is necessary to clarify the empirical status of the constructions at issue. Corne (1981:4-5, 1987:93) emphasises that these structures had often been overlooked in descriptive work, a point also applicable to Cantonese, for which Matthews and Yip (1994), to our knowledge, provide the first description of the phenomenon. Seuren (1993:59) queries Corne’s data by observing “[i]t is quite likely that the constructions exemplified... did once exist in all or most of the IdeFC varieties, but they are quite clearly obsolete now”. Seuren’s point is intended to apply to verb-fronting as a whole, but is at most applicable only to a subset of the data. One sub-type of verb-fronting involves a sentence-initial negator as in (8):

- (8) *Napa rode ki zot ti rode, ler li ti*
 neg search rel they pas search when she pas
perdi so lasen lor.
 lose her chain gold
 ‘They really searched diligently, when Jeanne lost her gold chain.’

The function of the negator here is metalinguistic: “[T]hey did not merely *search*, they went over the area with a fine-toothed comb” (Corne 1987:95-6). Many of Corne’s examples of this type are from nineteenth-century sources, and the construction may indeed be obsolescent. Our Mauritian consultant (an undergraduate around twenty years old who lived in Mauritius between ages 1 and 19) does not accept examples such as (8), but recognises the negative word *napa* as one used by older speakers. The more basic construction as in (5-6), however, appears to remain productive: our consultant is happy to produce further examples, such as (9), which she characterises as colloquial:

- (9) *Ser li ser, me li bien zoli.*
 dear 3sg dear but 3sg very pretty
 ‘Expensive it may be, but it’s really pretty.’

A methodological point is in order here. Seuren’s (1993:59) evidence for the obsolescence of verb-fronting is as follows: “When I sprang sentences of the type exemplified... on native speakers of MC, the result was invariably one of total perplexity”. This point would apply equally to Cantonese: springing such sentences on a speaker out of the blue is no way to test the productivity of a structure so dependent on discourse. As Matthews and Yip (1998:175) observe, “This construction belongs to colloquial register and its use is closely tied to the discourse context”. To motivate the use of the construction requires at least a minimal context, such as that in (10) from Matthews and Yip (1994:76):

- (10) A: *Lei5 gam2 m4 gam2 tai2 hung2bou3-pin2 aa3?*
 you dare not dare watch horror-movie PRT
 ‘Do you dare watch horror movies?’
 B: *Gam2 zau6 gam2, soeng2 zau6 m4 soeng2 laak3.*
 dare then dare want then not want PRT
 ‘I dare, but I don’t want to.’

Presenting the ‘B’ sentence in isolation to a lay Cantonese speaker produces exactly the puzzled reaction Seuren describes in his Mauritian consultants. While some aspects of the phenomenon can be discussed on the basis of single sentences, the need for such a discourse context should be borne in mind in the following discussion.

3.2 Structure and functions of verb-fronting

Corne (1999:189) describes the function of verb-fronting in general terms as “basically a focussing strategy: attention is drawn to the verb, which is thereby emphasised (in some sense)”. This characterisation is equally applicable to Cantonese, although we shall attempt to clarify Corne’s qualification “in some sense”. The equivocation here may reflect the critique of Seuren (1993:54) to the effect that a verb cannot undergo topicalisation since it represents comment rather than topic. While this may be valid for the Haitian predicate cleft constructions discussed by Seuren, Matthews and Yip (1998:180-1) give several arguments that verb topicalisation does occur in Cantonese. The sub-type of verb-fronting which they term verb topicalisation shows several parallels to topicalisation of NPs, including:

- (i) contrastive function;
- (ii) presence of the post-topic particle *zau6* ‘then’; and
- (iii) occurrence of the verb in both primary and secondary topic positions.

Contrastive function and the particle *zau6* are illustrated in the following instances of NP topicalisation (11) and verb topicalisation (12):

- (11) *Min6 zau6 sik6, faan6 zau6 m4 sik6 laa3.*
 noodle then eat rice then not eat PRT
 ‘Noodles (he) eats, but not rice.’

- (12) *Tai2 zau6 ho2ji5 tai2, maai5 zau6 m4hou2 maai5 laak3.*
 look then can look buy then don’t buy PRT
 ‘You can take a look, but don’t buy (it).’

In secondary topicalisation, the topicalised element follows a subject, which has presumably already been topicalised (Matthews and Yip 1994:75). This configuration appears productively with both nouns and verbs; note again the particle *zau6* following the topic, optionally in the case of NP topicalisation (13) and obligatorily in V topicalisation (14):

- (13) *Ngo5 Faat3gwok3 (zau6) mei6 heoi3-gwo3...*
 I France then not-yet go-ASP
 ‘France I haven’t yet been to...’

- (14) *Ngo5 tai2 zau6 mei6 tai2-gwo3...*
 I look then not-yet look-asp
 ‘I haven’t actually looked...’

Finally, note that the discourse function of verb topicalisation is compatible with that established for topicalisation as a whole, in which “[g]enerally, the fronted element is an already known discourse topic or refers to background information.” (Veenstra and den Besten 1994:304). As discussed in relation to (10), verb topicalisation requires a context in which the verb has already been mentioned. The ‘topicalised’ verb thus constitutes given information in the discourse.

In addition to verb topicalisation, Matthews and Yip (1998) argue that verb focussing occurs in Cantonese. The two patterns are distinguished by the particles involved, as well as by their discourse functions. While in topicalisation the particle *zau6* ‘then’ appears following the topic (as in 11-14), the particle *dou1* ‘even’ appears in both NP focussing (15) and V focussing (16):

- (15) *Keoi5 (aa4,) seoi2 dou1 mou5 jam2-gwo3.*
 s/he PRT water even not drink-ASP
 ‘He hasn’t even drunk water.’
- (16) *Keoi5 tai2 dou1 mou5 tai2 zau6 zau2-zo2.*
 s/he look even not look then leave-ASP
 ‘He left without even looking.’

A parallel instance from Rodrigues creole (Corne 1999:189) uses the particle *mem* (< Fr. *même* ‘even’) in a similar way:⁸

- (17) *Zape mem, to pa kon zape?*
 bark even you not know bark
 ‘Don’t you even know how to bark?’

Corne (1987:95) sees this as a subtype of verb-fronting in which “The meaning is purely emphasis of the fronted verb”, that is, focussing. Here, in contrast to verb topicalisation, the verb represents new rather than given information.

A related question raised by Corne is whether the characteristically concessive meaning of verb-fronting as in (5-6) derives from the context, or from the construction itself:

Semantically there is often the idea of ‘in spite of’, ‘although’, ‘to be in vain’, or other more or less concessive meanings, perhaps deriving from the concept (clause coordinated with *me* in the examples), perhaps inherent in the construction. (Corne 1999:191)

Addressing exactly the same question with respect to Cantonese, Matthews and Yip (1998:179) argue “[t]his concessive sense cannot be attributed entirely to the context, since it is implied even when there is no overt contrast provided”. They cite example (18):

- (18) A: *Gin6 saam1 leng3 m4 leng3 aa3?*
 cl clothing nice not nice PRT
 ‘Is this a nice blouse?’

B: *Leng3 zau6 leng3...*
 nice then nice
 ‘Sure it’s nice (but...)’

Here B’s reply implies some reservation about the blouse (such as its price) while conceding the point that it is nice. Evidence suggesting a similar conclusion comes from the Mauritian *séga* song *Content, mo ti content toi*, which begins with no less than three consecutive examples of verb-fronting:⁹

- (19) *Kontan mo ti kontan toi.*
 like I past like you
 ‘However much I liked you,’

Servi mo ti servi toi.
 serve I past serve you
 ‘However much I did for you,’

Gate mo ti gate toi, toi ale.
 spoil I past spoil you you go
 ‘However much I spoilt you, you (still) left (me).’

Here the concessive relationship between the clauses is crucial to the picture being built up in the song, but is not cued by *me* ‘but’ (as in Corne’s examples 5-6) or any such conjunction. At the same time as providing further evidence of the productivity of the verb-fronting, the examples in (19) suggest that the concessive semantics are associated with the construction itself. Such associations are a commonplace of the traditional notion of construction, and increasingly recognised in theoretical frameworks such as Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995).

This concessive function confirms the distinction made by Seuren (1993:59) between verb-fronting in IdeFC and predicate clefting as seen in Atlantic creoles such as Haitian. While the most productive IdeFC type has a

concessive function, predicate clefting in Atlantic creoles typically serves other functions, such as temporal sequence as in the Haitian example (20):

- (20) *Limê l limê lâp-lâ papiyô-lâ vole.* (Piou 1982)
 light he light lamp-the butterfly-the fly
 ‘As soon as he lit the lamp the butterfly flew away.’

As Seuren (1993:60) observes, “[g]rammatically the construction seems identical, but the meanings differ: where IdeFC has a concessive meaning, Haitian has the temporal meaning ‘as soon as’”. This contrast has implications for the origins of verb-fronting as discussed below.

3.3 Sources of verb-fronting

The realism of Corne the grammarian is reflected in his survey of possible sources for verb-fronting (Corne 1999:193-5). Corne (1999:172) states: “Less clear, because of congruence with the superstrate and because of the widespread occurrence of similar structures in languages as diverse as Japanese, Hebrew or Russian, is the African inspiration of verb-fronting for focus.” As discussed in Corne (1987), possible factors include:

- (i) African substrate languages such as Haya (Bantu), and Yoruba (Kwa);
- (ii) French superstrate constructions;
- (iii) language universals.

The African analogues of verb-fronting are illustrated by the following (Corne 1999:193):

- (21) *Gíga l ó ga.* (Yoruba)
 tall id he tall
 ‘He’s tall.’
- (22) *Oku-lya tu-ka-lya.* (Haya: Bantu)
 inf-eat we-past-eat
 ‘We really ate!’

As Seuren (1993) has observed, such examples appear parallel in structure to the IdeFC cases, but have an emphatic rather than concessive function.

A possible role for the superstrate is suggested by a number of constructions in French, the antiquity of which is reflected in colloquial and Medieval examples (Corne 1999:194-5):

- (23) *Pour être chié, c'est chié.* (Colloquial French)
 for to-be crazy it's crazy
 'That's totally crazy!'
- (24) *Chanter, par Dieu je chanteray.* (Medieval French)
 sing-inf, by God I sing-fut.1sg
 'By God, I will sing.'

Wary of glib substrate explanations, Corne invoked a combination of substrate and universal factors: "IdeFC may have acquired this rule in one of two ways: a specific West African substrate influence, or an independently evolved rule... Alternatively, both factors may have reinforced each other." (Baker and Corne 1982:89). Later, Corne (1999:196) invokes congruence between French and the Bantu, Kru and Kwa substrate languages, leading to retention of the structure.

The possibility that a Cantonese substrate influenced verb-fronting in IdeFC should at least be considered. Chinese speakers constituted a small proportion of the population, most of whom arrived on the scene relatively late in the development of IdeFC.¹⁰ However, recall that Roberts attributed to Cantonese not verb serialisation as a whole, but a very specific form of a directional serialisation attested in HCE (as in 1-2). Similarly, the specific subtypes of verb-fronting in IdeFC, as opposed to the 'predicate cleft' in Atlantic Creoles and their West African substrates, are compatible with Cantonese substrate influence. Such influence can hardly have been the sole source of verb-fronting structures: the sub-type with negation (8), in particular, has no analogue in Cantonese. At most, Cantonese might have reinforced and influenced the development of a structure which was already present in early IdeFC. This would only have added to the congruence invoked by Corne (1999:196) as a factor favouring retention of verb-fronting.

Regarding universal factors, Corne (1987:107; also Baker and Corne 1982:89) entertains the possibility that verb-fronting may be "demanded by the structure of the language plus functional requirements" (Bickerton 1981:55). Bickerton's idea is that verb-fronting is possible if the language lacks a VP, as he suggests in the case of Guyanese Creole: movement is then free to apply to V rather than VP (Bickerton 1981:52-3). The motivation for repeating the verb in its *in situ* position is that otherwise any aspect markers or satellites accompanying it would be left 'stranded' as in (25):

- (25) **Galupe li ti pe*. (Mauritian, cf. ex.5)
run he past prog
'Running he was.'

In Cantonese, too, the fronted verb lacks aspect marking while the in situ verb retains it (Matthews and Yip 1998:176):

- (26) *Fan3 zau6 fan3-zo2 hou2 noi6 laa3*.
sleep then sleep-asp very long prt
'(As for sleeping) he went to sleep some time ago.'
- (27) **Fan3 zau6 zo2 hou2 noi6 laa3*.
sleep then asp very long prt

A remaining question is why the verb cannot be fronted complete with aspect marking, as in (28):

- (28) **Fan3-zo2 zau6 hou2 noi6 laa3*.
sleep-asp then very long prt

A possible answer is suggested by Corne's (1987:98) observation that "the nominal status of the fronted verbs is obvious" in cases such as Haitian (29):

- (29) *Tut dòmi m dòmi*. (Piou 1982)
all sleep I sleep
'Although I (have) slept a lot,...'

The implication is that in undergoing topicalisation, the verb is treated as nominal, hence it can take the nominal specifier *tut* 'all' but not verbal markers.

4. Conclusions

Manfredi (1993:44) concludes his study of verb-focussing by observing: "[L]inguists are not professionally obliged to provide this antique term ['creole'] with a new, 'scientific' basis, and if none exists they should admit as much." Corne did admit as much, and enjoined fellow creolists to do so. We have shown that verb-fronting is one of many features which Cantonese (as a representative of the Sinitic vernaculars) shares with Corne's favourite Indian Ocean creoles. Whatever the role of Cantonese as substrate or adstrate, the Cantonese appears even closer to the IdeFC than are the Atlantic creoles, rendering the creole typological profile still more evasive.

Concerning verb-fronting, the comparison with Cantonese suggests some clarifications to Corne's account. Topicalisation and focussing of verbs can be distinguished, on both functional and structural grounds, as sub-types of verb-fronting. The concessive function of verb topicalisation appears in Cantonese, as in IdeFC, to be a property of the verb-fronting construction itself. This concessive function is one feature which distinguishes between verb-fronting as in IdeFC and Cantonese on the one hand, and typical predicate cleft constructions in Atlantic Creoles on the other. The relationship between these two phenomena remains to be clarified, however, especially given that they appear to coexist in Haitian (cf. the concessive example 29).

To give the last word to Chris Corne (1987:93): "I cannot hope to rectify here the descriptive inadequacy shrouding the subject, but I can at least draw attention to a much wider range of data, creole and other, than has been the case to date, and express the hope that the gaps and errors in my presentation will serve to promote some necessary and long overdue research."

Notes

- 1 For constructive comments on an earlier draft, thanks are due to Geoff Smith and to three reviewers for *Te Reo*. For judgements and discussion of data I am most grateful to Elaine Ng (Mauritian Creole) and Richard Wong Kwok Shing (Cantonese).
- 2 It would seem that encounters with Réunionnais were an early indication that a distinction between creole and non-creole would prove illusory: "Reunion Creole, in this perspective, is anomalous, with a foot in both camps" (Corne 1999:219-20).
- 3 This realisation evidently preceded McWhorter's (1998) Creole Prototype and the debate unleashed by McWhorter's paper which resulted in many commentators denying the unique status of creoles (see McWhorter 2001 and commentaries thereon).
- 4 Cantonese examples are given in the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong *JyutPing* romanisation system which supercedes the Yale system as used in Matthews and Yip (1994, 1998). Yale and IPA correspondences are given in Matthews and Yip (1994: 400-1).
- 5 Although the use of tone to distinguish monosyllables may set Chinese apart from the Creole Prototype, non-tonal Mon-Khmer languages such as Khmer, Chrau and Palaung arguably come even closer to it (DeGraff 2001: 82).
- 6 Corne's recurrent treatment of the subject reminds one of the way he cheerfully admitted (in *CreoLIST* postings, and in Corne (1999:233)) to being an 'empirical plodder' (cf. Bickerton 1981:45).

- 7 With respect to verb topicalisation, as in most other respects, property-denoting predicates such as *leng3* ‘pretty’ behave like verbs in Cantonese, as do their Mauritian counterparts (cf. *ser* in 9). This constitutes a further typological parallel between Sinitic and IdeFC.
- 8 Our consultant points out that *zape* ‘bark’ idiomatically means ‘talk’, so that this much-discussed example can be read as ‘aren’t you even capable of talking?’ It was however originally recorded in a conversation between a dog and a king (Corne 1987:108, n.3).
- 9 Sung by J. Cantin in a recording made in the 1970s, the song appears on the compact disc *Les Ségatiers de l’Île Maurice*, produced in France by Playasound (ref. PS 65126). The title is given in quasi-French orthography as *Content, mo ti content toi*, while our transcription aims to follow Corne’s orthography.
- 10 According to Corne (1999:165), “The Mascarenes [Reunion, Mauritius and Rodrigues] and the Seychelles received Chinese immigrants mainly in the latter part of the 19th Century and more recently; their descendants make up around 3% of the islands’ present population.” Examining early 18th Century records, Baker finds mention of only two ‘Macaos’, noting this was a pejorative term for people of Chinese descent (Baker and Corne 1982). As in Hawaii, the majority of Chinese immigrants would have been speakers of Cantonese or related southern dialects.

References

- Ansaldo, Umberto and Stephen Matthews. 2001. ‘Typical creoles and simple languages: the case of Sinitic’. *Linguistic Typology* 5(2): 311-325.
- Baker, Philip and Chris Corne. 1982. *Isle de France Creole: Affinities and Origins*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Karoma.
- Bickerton, Derek. 1981. *Roots of Language*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Karoma.
- Corne, Chris. 1981. ‘Verb fronting in Isle de France Creole’. *Te Reo* 24: 3-12.
- Corne, Chris. 1987. ‘Verb fronting in Creole: transmission or bioprogram?’ In Glenn Gilbert (ed) *Pidgin and Creole Languages: Essays in Memory of John E. Reinecke*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. 93-112.
- Corne, Chris. 1999. *From French to Creole: The Development of New Vernaculars in the French Colonial World*. London: University of Westminster Press.
- DeGraff, Michel. 2001. ‘Morphology in creole genesis: linguistics and ideology.’ In Michael Kenstowicz (ed) *Ken Hale: A Life in Language*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. 53-121.
- Escure, Genevieve. 1997. *Creole and Dialect Continua: Standard Acquisition Processes in Belize and China (PRC)*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Goldberg, Adele. 1995. *Constructions: A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Manfredi, Victor. 1993. 'Verb focus in Kwa/Kru and Haitian.' In Francis Byrne and Donald Winford (eds) *Focus and Grammatical Relations in Creole Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 3-51.
- Matthews, Stephen and Virginia Yip. 1994. *Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar*. London: Routledge.
- Matthews, Stephen and Virginia Yip. 1998. 'Verb-copying constructions in Cantonese'. In Benjamin K. T'sou (ed) *Studia Linguistica Serica: Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Chinese Linguistics*. Hong Kong: Language Information Sciences Research Center, City University of Hong Kong. 175-89.
- McWhorter, John. 1998. 'Identifying the creole prototype: vindicating a typological class'. *Language* 74(4): 788-818.
- McWhorter, John. 2001. 'The simplest grammars are creole grammars'. *Linguistic Typology* 5(3/4): 125-56.
- Piou, Nanie. 1982. 'Le redoublement verbal'. In Claire Lefebvre, Hélène Magloire-Holly and Nanie Piou (eds) *Syntaxe de l'haïtien*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Karoma. 152-166.
- Roberts, Sarah Julianne. 1999. 'Serial verb distribution'. Creolist posting, 5 August 1999. <http://listserv.linguist.org/archives/creolist.html>
- Romaine, Suzanne. 1988. *Pidgin and Creole Languages: An Introduction*. London: Longman.
- Seuren, Pieter. 1993. 'The question of predicate clefting in the Indian Ocean creoles'. In Francis Byrne and Donald Winford (eds) *Focus and Grammatical Relations in Creole Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 53-64.
- Siegel, Jeff. 2000. 'Substrate influence in Hawaii creole English'. *Language in Society* 29(2): 197-236.
- Smith, Geoffrey P. S. 1994. 'Tok Pisin and Cantonese: Why the similarity?' Paper presented at the Papua New Guinea Linguistics Society Conference, Lae, April 1994.
- Veenstra, Tonjes and Hans den Besten. 1994. 'Fronting'. In Jacques Arends, Pieter Muysken and Norval Smith (eds) *Pidgins and Creoles: An Introduction*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 303-315.

Copyright of Te Reo is the property of Linguistic Society of New Zealand and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.