

Negation and its bearing on creole genesis

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Workshop on Negation

Outline

The issue

French Creoles: Origin in the lexifier

Nature and Status

Creole genesis

Conclusion

'Creole 'exceptionalism'

- Creolistics has witnessed recurring debates on creole genesis and typology
 - *The pidgin-creole cycle*: Creole emergence is attributed to pidginization (simplification) following a 'break in transmission' (e.g. Bickerton, 1981; Thomason and Kaufman, 1988; McWhorter and Parkvall, 2002; Bakker, 2015; McWhorter, 2018)
 - These languages are identifiable insofar as they exhibit linguistic features not found in other languages (McWhorter, 2018)
 - Creole features: generalization of infinitives, absence of the copula and case distinctions in pronouns, **preposition of negation** (e.g. McWhorter and Parkvall, 2002; Parkvall, 2008; Bakker et al., 2011; McWhorter, 2018)

On preposing the negator

- Preverbal negation in French-related creoles reflects its distribution with in French (Chaudenson, 2003)
 - The source for those creoles are dialectal French(es), where inflectional periphrasis is commonplace (Chaudenson, 2003, 178)
 - (1)
 - a. je suis après (à) INF > PROG
 - b. étais à INF > PAST
 - c. j'ai fini de INF > PRF
 - d. je vais (vas) INF > IND.FUT
 - e. je suis pour INF > DEF.FUT
 - f. je ne fais que INF > IMM.PST
 - (2)
 - a. je (ne) suis **pas** après faire,
 - b. je (ne) suis **pas** à faire,
 - c. j(e n')ai **pas** fini de faire,
 - d. je (ne) suis **pas** pour faire.
 - Negation is always preposed to the main verb: NEG + TNS-ASP + V ((Chaudenson, 2003, 181)
- Not a strong argument for why the tense marker appear post negation.

Creole ‘exceptionalism’

McWhorter (2018), *The Creole Debate*:

1.2.4 Creole Creators Prepose the Lexifier’s Negator to the Verb

In English and Dutch, the predicate negator morpheme occurs after the verb; in French, the most phonetically salient of the two morphemes in the predicate negator construction, *pas*, occurs after the verb (*Je ne sais pas* “I don’t know”), and in colloquial varieties, preverbal *ne* is very often unpronounced. Yet in creoles with these lexifiers, the predicate negator occurs before the verb: “I don’t know” is *Mi no sabi* in Sranan, *Mwen pa konnen* in Haitian and was *Mie no weet* in Negerhollands (cf. Dutch *Ik weet niet*) (Van Diggelen 1978: 71, cited in Holm 1988: 171).

There is no vernacular European model for the negator placement in these lexifiers. It would be difficult to conceive of a process via which – or a reason why – these preposed negators emerged through stepwise grammar-internal change in so many creoles of assorted lexifier bases.

Rather, the preposed negators submit more gracefully to an analysis as results of the failure to acquire the lexifier negation strategy, and its replacement by a strategy typical of pidgins, a single negator external to the verb, usually (but not always) before it (cf. Mühlhäusler 1997: 146, Sebba 1997: 42).

Creole 'exceptionalism'

- Contra McWhorter (2018), there **IS** variation within the distribution of negation across pidgins and creoles (Holm, 1988)

- (3)
- bo sabé komo kusa ta-ba **nu** (Palenquero; Lipski 2018)
 you know how thing be-INF NEG
 'You don't know how things used to be'
 - O habu bwa **kanɛ**. (Berbice D.; Kouwenberg 2000)
 3SG have leg NEG
 'It doesn't have legs.'
 - Rui ê **ka** nos amigu so aparenti (. . .)
 Rui be NEG our=friend only seemingly 3SG be
 (Cape-Verdean; Baptista 2002)
 our=friend really
 'Rui not only seems to be our friend, he really is our friend.'
 - Miflal atu=nyanyi a(bi)s-tulis **tr-ada**. (SLM; Slomanson 2018)
 Miflal INDF=song ASP-write NEG.FIN-AUX

'Miflal has not written a song.'

Creole 'exceptionalism'

- More generally, negation in pidgins & creoles mostly follows patterns of distribution found in the contributing languages (Holm, 1988)
 - In fact, the common position for negation crosslinguistically is between the subject and the verb (Dryer, 1988)
- **Goal of this talk:**
 - Provide additional support to 'gradualists' by investigating Mauritian old texts (Baker et al., 2007)
 - Review the nature and status of negation in French-related creoles
 - What does the grammaticalization of the negative marker say about creolization?

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Synchronic distribution in Mauritian Creole

- Negation is preposed to TAM and the main verb except with unmarked neg-raising verbs (Henri, 2018)

- (4)
- a. Nou **pa** ti ava pe diskite lor saki nou pe
 1PL NEG PST IND.IRR PROG discuss on what 1PL PROG
 diskite.
 discuss.LF.
 'We would not be discussing what we're discussing.'
- b. Mo pans **pa** zot ti pe asiz enn met
 1SG think.SF NEG 2/3PL PST PROG sit.SF one meter
 distans.
 distance
 I don't think they were sitting 1 meter apart.
- c. Mo **pa** ti pans zot pe asiz enn met distans.
- d. *Mo ti pans **pa** zot pe asiz enn met distans.

Synchronic distribution

- Similar pre-TAM position for the French-related creoles, with some creoles showing postverbal positioning.

(5) Louisiana Creole

TNS > MOOD > **NEG** > ASP > V or V > **NEG**

- a. Mo te **pe** e fe aryen.
 1SG PST NEG PROG do.LF nothing
 'I wasn't doing anything.' (Klingler, 2003)
- b. Jan lav pa son figi.
 John wash.SF NEG 3SG.POSS face
 'John doesn't wash his face.' (Henri & Klingler 2014)

Diachronic investigation

- DeGraff (2005) argues that wrt. negation, the following reanalysis by the language learner may be hypothesized:
 - (6) Fr. n'a(s) pas / n'es(t) pas → Early Creole (na) pa → Modern Creole pa
 - (7) DeGraff (2005, 323)
 - a. Il **n'a** **pas** parlé.
3SG.M NEG'has NEG spoken
'He has not spoken.'
 - b. Tout être qui peut parler **n'est pas** un cheval
all being that can speak is not a horse
'Any being that can speak is not a horse'

Reframing DeGraff 2005 hypothesis

- The tense markers **té/ti** stems from a form the verb to 'be' [**ete**] PST.IND.PFV or PST.PART (e.g. Chaudenson, 1979; DeGraff, 2005)

(8) DeGraff (2005, 321)

- a. Il **était** malade.
 3SG.M be.3SG.PST.IPFV sick
 'He was sick.'
- b. Il a **été** malade.
 3SG.M avoir.3SG.PRS be.PST.PART sick
 'He has been sick.'

- (8-b) exemplifies the often marginalized double compound tenses found in both standard and dialectal French, which I argue served as template

Formes surcomposées

- French features periphrases that are constructed using simple periphrases (Ayres-Bennett and Carruthers, 1992)
- (9)
- Il a fait > Il a eu fait
 - Elle est venue > elle **a été venue**
 - Il s'est lavé > il s'est eu lavé
- The 'passé surcomposé' appears around the XV century and serves to mark anteriority (Ayres-Bennett and Carruthers, 1992; Borel, 2018)
 - This semantics is seen in the French-based creoles in the Caribbean since the combination of the tense marker with dynamic verbs yields an anterior past.

Mauritian old texts

- The presence of negation within these double compounds notable, in particular due to the size of the old texts available
 - Around 60 texts (~100 000 words) — travel notes, court proceedings, folk tales, poems, newspaper, sirandanes, songs, proverbs — written between 1721 and 1929 (Baker et al., 2007)

- (10) a. Pardonne moy, Monsieur, moy **n'apa été** battu ça Blanc là. (1777_ Affaire La Douceur)
- b. Mon licaire dire moi qui mo **na pas été** sivré son Commandement (1828_Lambert)
- c. **N'a pas té** besoin dire chinois dix fois (. . .)
(1925_Soulsobontemps)

Mauritian old texts

- As in Haitian Creole, **[pa]** in Mauritian is the reduced form of **[napa]**, composed initially of **N'aux PAS**
- N'aux** disappears perhaps due to its bleached meaning and weak tense marking, the anterior being marked by the second auxiliary.

	type freq.	token freq.
napa	9	954
pa	3	13

Data extracted from Baker et al. (2007)

- Leaving aside postverbal **pa**, other French-based creoles seem to have followed a similar grammaticalization path leading to the pre- TAM + Verb structure negation.

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Further grammaticalization of **pa**

- In all French-related creoles, **pa** exhibit clitic properties

1. Phonological/prosodic dependence

- (11)
- Mwen **pap** jamn bliye (HC). **pa + ape**
 1SG NEG=PROG never forget.LF
 'I will never forget.'
 - An **pòkò** mangé. (GC) **pa + ankò**
 1SG NEG=YET eat.LF
 'I haven't eaten yet.'
 - li **pe e** dormi. (LC) **pa + e**
 3SG NEG PROG sleep.LF
 'He's not sleeping'
 - To konn Zan? ***pa**/non; pa ditou (MC)
 2sg know.sf John? *not/no; not at all
 'Do you know John. *not/no

- ▶ As (11-d) shows, **pa** cannot stand alone.

Further grammaticalization of **pa**

- In all French-related creoles, **pa** exhibit clitic properties
 - ▶ Fixed linear order within verb structure

- (12) a. Mo **pa** **tj'ava'nn** donn li mo kas si
 1SG NEG PST'IND.IRR'PRF give.SF 3SG 1SG.POSS money if
 mo ti kone. (MC)
 1SG PST know
 'I wouldn't have given him my money if I knew.'
- b. Mo te **pe** e fe aryen. (LC)
 1SG PST NEG PROG do.LF nothing
 'I wasn't doing anything.' (Klingler, 2003)

Further grammaticalization of **pa**

- In all French-related creoles, **pa** exhibit clitic properties
 - ▶ Stem selection: Some creoles feature an alternating position with sensitivity to the verb form

(13) Louisiana Creole (Henri & Klingler 2014)

- a. Jan **pa** lave son figi.
 John NEG wash.LF 3SG.POSS face
 'John didn't wash his face.'
- b. Jan lav **pa** son figi.
 John wash.SF NEG 3SG.POSS face
 'John doesn't wash his face.'

(14) Reunionese Creole (Chaudenson, 2003)

- a. Ma/mi sa manzé
 1SG.FUT/1SG FUT eat.LF
 'I will eat'
- b. Mi manzra **pa**
 1SG eat.FUT
 'I will not eat'

Further grammaticalization of **pa**

- In all French-related creoles, **pa** exhibit clitic properties
 - ▶ Stem selection: As in LC, postverbal **pa** in Mauritian attaches to a short verb form
 - ▶ The presence of any TAM will cause negation to appear in preverbal position
 - ▶ Postverbal **pa** is possible with neg-raising verbs e.g. *panse, espere, krwar, ve* and modals.

- (15) a. Mo **pa** pans li pou vini.
 1SG.WK NEG think.LF 3SG IND.FUT come.LF
 'I don't think he will come.'
- b. Mo pans **pa** li pou vini.
 1SG.WK think.SF NEG 3SG IND.FUT come.LF
 'I don't think he will come.'

Further grammaticalization of **pa**

- ▶ Syntactically, the negative marker can scope over conjuncts

(16) Mauritian Creole

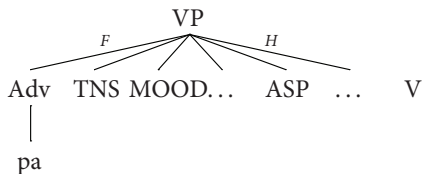
- Zan **pa** [kwi manze ni/ou bwar rom].
John neg cook.sf food nor/or drink rum
'John doesn't eat food or drink rum.'
- Zan **pa** [manze bwar].
John NEG eat.LF drink.LF
'John doesn't eat or drink.'

- ▶ Negation is not selective of its hosts' category and can be separated from other markers markers and/or the verb

(17) An **pòd** te mangé lè i rivé. (GC)
1SG.WF NEG.YET PST when SG arrive
'I hadn't eaten when he arrived.'

Formal analysis

- In Henri (2018), **pa** is analyzed on a par with TAM markers
 - ▶ They are functors (pre-head modifiers) that select a PRED+ head.



- ▶ Alternatively, an analysis as inflectional periphrasis with cliticization handled via inflectional rules is possible (Henri and Kihm, 2015).

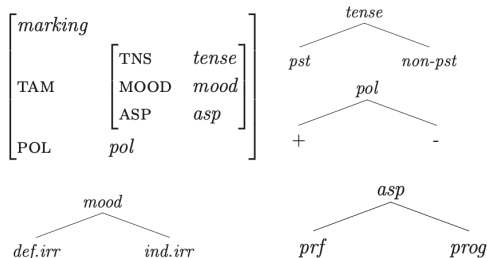
Formal analysis

- In Henri (2018), **pa** is analyzed on a par with TAM markers
 - ▶ Definition of the *head-functor phrase*

$$\text{hd-functor-phrase} \rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{MARKING } \boxed{0} \oplus \dots \oplus \boxed{n} \\ \text{HEAD-DTR} \mid \text{SYNSEM } \boxed{1} \left[\text{MARKING } \textit{unmarked} \right] \\ \text{FUN-DTRS} \left\langle \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} \left[\text{SELECT } \boxed{1} \right] \\ \text{MARKING } \boxed{0} \end{array} \right] \dots \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} \left[\text{SELECT } \boxed{1} \right] \\ \text{MARKING } \boxed{n} \end{array} \right] \right\rangle \end{array} \right]$$

Formal analysis

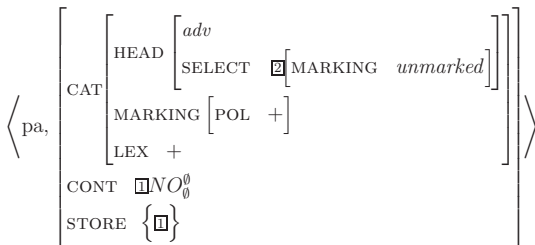
- In Henri (2018), **pa** is analyzed on a par with TAM markers
 - MARKING and features



- Linear precedence rule : POL < TNS < ASP < MOOD < V

Formal analysis

- In Henri (2018), **pa** is analyzed on a par with TAM markers
 - ▶ Lexical entry for **pa**



- ▶ The value for the feature LEX signals its preverbal position similar to adverbs that can appear pre- and postverbally.

Formal analysis

- In Henri (2018), **pa** is analyzed on a par with TAM markers
 - ▶ In the postverbal position, **pa** is marked as LEX- and is analyzed as a complement
 - ▶ The fact that the short form of the verb is selected supports the analysis

$$\left[\text{HEAD} \left[\text{VFORM} \textit{short} \right] \right] \Rightarrow \left[\text{VAL} \left[\text{COMPS} \textit{nelist} \right] \right]$$

- ▶ Epistemic verbs can optionally add **pa** to their COMPS list

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{epistemic-}v_b \\ \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD} \text{ 2} \\ \text{CAT} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{VAL} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{COMPS} \textit{elist} \\ \text{EXTRA} \langle S \rangle \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right] \\ \text{CONT} \text{ 1} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right] \Rightarrow \left[\text{VAL} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SUBJ} \textit{non-nci} \\ \text{COMPS} \left\langle \begin{array}{l} \textit{neg} \\ \text{LID} \\ \text{SEL} \\ \text{MARKING} \left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{pa} \\ \text{ 1} \\ \text{POL} \text{ +} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right\rangle \end{array} \right] \right]$$

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Grammaticalization

- 'Creole Exceptionalism': creoles (and pidgins) have a genetic and typological imprint that differ from other languages because they do not arise via regular processes of language change (e.g. Thomason and Kaufman, 1988; McWhorter, 1998)
- The data show that this hypothesis is not borne out
 - ▶ Jespersen cycle? Cyclic weakening and strengthening of negative expression.
 - ▶ The grammaticalization process is accelerated in the French-based creoles, with **pa** cliticizing to its host.
 - ▶ For proponents of transformational grammar, this would support the idea that creoles do not show verb movement although an account within this line would be problematic given the pre-TAM negator.

Grammaticalization

- The process of grammaticalization extends to aspectual verbs which no longer lead a double life in the creoles and only serve to mark TAM
 - Given the initial template(s), we can understand how the TAM system evolved in the creoles
- e.g. preposition of the negative marker to the IND.IRR **va** and the PRF **finn**

- (18) a. Mo **pa va** dormi. (MC)
 1SG.WK NEG IND.IRR sleep.LF
 'I won't sleep'
- b. Mo **pa'nn** dormi. (MC)
 1SG.WK NEG'PRF sleep.LF
 'I haven't slept.'

Creolization

- While not addressed here, there is a need to evaluate the extent to which other contributing stratas influenced the shaping of the system
 - ▶ The different contact situations lead to different outcomes (Louisiana vs Mauritian Creole)
 - ▶ The pre-TAM negator in Bantu languages patterns like its Mauritian 'offspring'

Bantu Syntax

Table 1 Slots in the Bantu verb

NEG	subject	NEG	TAM	object	root	APPL, PASS, CAUS, etc.	final suf- fix	post-final
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Meeussen, 1967

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Concluding remarks

- Claims about the emergence of creole languages should be substantiated by empirical diachronic data (See also Sessarego, 2020)
- These languages not only show lexical inheritance from their contributing languages but also structural contribution
- Although, there is more research to be done on the raw frequency of these constructions in spoken French (and frequency of collocation among the members involved in the constructions), the scenario provided is consistent with both their syntax and semantics
- The data also supports the idea that speakers are sensitive to different kinds of contrasts (morphemes, words, constructions) when learning languages as long as these serve to discriminate between outcomes.
- Negation provides in fact a clear example of the genetic and typological relationship between creoles and their linguistic contributors

Mersi pou zot linvitation!

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