

Diagnostic features of English-lexifier contact-languages: Grenada Creole English

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ABSTRACT

This paper draws on both diachronic and synchronic data and presents the attestations in Grenada Creole English of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles proposed by Baker & Huber (2001). This is followed by a comparison of the distribution of these features in Grenada Creole English and in the seven Atlantic English-lexifier contact languages considered by Baker & Huber (2001), and the quantification of the affinities of Grenada Creole English with several Eastern Caribbean varieties: Antigua, Bajan, Kittitian, the Creole of Trinidad and Tobago, and Vincentian. A number of selected diagnostic features recorded in Grenada Creole English are then discussed in terms of their provenance, their relevance to the Western – Eastern Caribbean creoles divide, and their classification.

Keywords: diagnostic features, Grenada Creole English, Atlantic, world-wide, Caribbean

1. Introduction

Previous comparative work on Atlantic English-lexifier pidgins and creoles has generally not considered data from Grenada Creole English. The very few exceptions are Hancock (1987) – an investigation of a number of syntactic features, on the basis of 50 sentences and phrases in 33 Atlantic English-lexifier creoles, Aceto's (2008a, 2008b) surveys of the phonology and morphosyntax of Eastern Caribbean English-lexifier creoles, and, more recently, Holbrook's (2012) attempt at comparing four Atlantic English-lexifier creoles. Like most other Eastern Caribbean English-lexifier varieties, Grenada Creole English therefore remains an under researched variety (Aceto 2008a: 290, 2008b: 658). Also, these previous studies focus exclusively on synchronic data. Finally, analyses of the distribution of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles attested at any time in their history (e.g. Baker 1999, Baker & Huber 2001, Avram 2014) do not include data from Grenada Creole English.

This paper presents the earliest attestations in Grenada Creole English of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier contact languages proposed by Baker & Huber (2001). It also addresses the issue of the relevance of the attestations from Grenada Creole English for establishing the existence of historical relationships with a number of English-lexifier Eastern Caribbean creoles, and for reassessing the classification of some diagnostic features in light of their distribution. Note that for the purposes of this paper the varieties spoken in Grenada and in Carriacou respectively are treated as a single entity.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the corpus and outlines the methodology. In section 3, I present the first attestations in Grenada Creole English of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier contact languages suggested by Baker & Huber (2001). Section 4 first compares the distribution of these features in Grenada Creole English and in the seven Atlantic English-lexifier pidgins and creoles considered by Baker & Huber (2001), and

then it proceeds to the quantification of the affinities of Grenada Creole English with the following Eastern Caribbean creoles: Antiguan, Bajan, Kittitian, the creoles of Trinidad and Tobago, and Vincentian. A number of selected diagnostic features found in Grenada Creole English are discussed in section 5. The findings are summarized in section 6.

2. Corpus and methodology

The corpus of Grenada Creole English consists of both published and unpublished sources. The published sources include: records illustrative of the earlier, formative stages of the language, such as 19th century travel accounts (Alexander 1833), memoirs (Bayley 1830, Bell 1893); a monograph on the variety spoken in Carriacou (Kephart 2000); dictionaries (Allsopp 1996, Chase & Chase 2011). The unpublished sources consist of two wordlists (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001, Wiwords the Caribbean Dictionary 2008).

Diagnostic features “represent significant phonological, lexical, or grammatical deviations from, or innovations to, varieties of British English – since British English was the major input in the restructuring process” (Baker & Huber 2001: 163). The 302 diagnostic features¹ suggested by Baker & Huber (2001: 165) are divided into three groups: Atlantic (173), world-wide (75), and Pacific (54). The classification is based on the following criteria (Baker & Huber 2001: 165): To qualify for the Atlantic group a feature must be attested in at least two Atlantic English-lexified pidgins and creoles. World-wide features are recorded in at least one Atlantic and one Pacific variety. Pacific features occur in Pacific varieties exclusively. The approach adopted here takes into account features recorded at any time in the history of Grenada Creole English, even though some of these may no longer be in use today. Such an approach can shed light on the historical relationships between Grenada Creole English and other English-lexified varieties. Last but not least, reference to Baker & Huber’s (2001) list of diagnostic features, already tested on a set of 13 English-lexified pidgins and creoles (seven Atlantic and six Pacific varieties), ensures comparability of the data.

For ease of reference, each diagnostic feature is numbered and labeled and/or defined as in Baker & Huber (2001: 197–204). The entry for each feature includes the date of the first attestation and the relevant reference. In the case of a number of items found in published works, there are discrepancies between the year of the first attestation and the year of publication of the source. The date of the first attestation of some of these items corresponds to the year when the author is known to have been in Grenada. For others, it corresponds to a year explicitly mentioned by the author. Further, in the case of some of the examples from Allsopp (1996), the date is the year indicated in the dictionary. Finally, when an exact year cannot be ascertained, the system used by Baker & Huber (2001: 164–65) has been adopted: thus, a year preceded by a hyphen reads ‘in or before’. Variants are also listed if they are suggestive of different pronunciations or if they illustrate different uses/meanings. Some entries also include later attestations to illustrate the use of particular features. The sources are mentioned between brackets. All examples appear in the orthography or system of transcription used in the sources. The length of quotations (if available) has been kept to a reasonable minimum. Relevant portions in the quotations appear in boldface. All quotations are accompanied by their translation.

¹ These include most of the initial 138 features in Baker (1999) as well as additional features suggested by Huber (1999).

The following abbreviations are used: ATG = Antiguan; BJJ = Bajan; GCE = Grenada Creole English; GUL = Gullah; JAM = Jamaican; KRI = Krio; SKI = Kittitian; SRN = Suriname; TT = the Creole of Trinidad and Tobago; VIN = Vincentian; WAF = West African Pidgin English.

3. First attestations in GCE

The following is the list of the first attestations in GCE of the diagnostic features proposed by Baker and Huber (2001):

2. *after* ‘given that’
After she walk all here wid it you have to give her some. ‘Given that she walked all the way with it you have to give her some.’ 1996 (Allsopp: 14)
3. *aki* (fruit/tree)
ackee (Crask 2009: 59)
4. *akra* (a savoury cake)
akara 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 20)
5. *all we* (1PL)
ahwe 1904 (Winer 1995: 134)
le’ we play tie ‘let us play the tying [each other] game’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 78)
All whay you got give ah we ‘Give us everything that you have’ 1973 (Allsopp 1996: 598)
6. *all you* ‘(2PL)’
Wat alyu duin in pipi gyadn? ‘what are you doing in people’s garden?’ 1979 (Kephart 1985: 326)
all yuh/ah yuh 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 21)
7. *Anancy* (folktale character)
nancy stories 1893 (Bell 1893: 156)
Anansi 1973 (Allsopp 1996: 598)
9. *bakra* ‘European, white person’
buckras 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
15. *big eye* ‘greed(y)’
You too big-eye, that’s why yo[u] snatch de biggest mango ‘You’re too greedy, that’s why you snatched the biggest mango’ 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 99)
22. *bra* ‘brother’
Do’ study me, brar ‘Never mind me, mate.’ 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
23. *bubby* ‘woman’s breast’
bubbies ‘young girl’s breasts’ 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 32)
26. *cacabelly* (fish sp.)
cacabelly 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 128)
27. *calaloo* ‘a rich soup or stew’
calalu 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 130)
29. *chigger* ‘chigoe’
jigger 1893 (Bell 1893: 73)
jiga ‘chigger’ 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 67)
31. *crapaud* ‘frog’
crapo 1966 (Hughes 1966: 51)
krapou -1984 (Kephart 2000: 183)
crapaud 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 175)
33. *cutacoo* ‘basket’
Cutacoo ’pon man back ‘A basket on a man’s back’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 459)
34. *da, de* (progressive)
we da do in Congo ‘we are doing [it] in Congo’ 1893 (Bell 1893: 30)
mi a-gó ‘I’m going’ -1983 (Kephart 1985: 45)
36. *day clean* ‘daybreak’

- day clean* 2004 (Hughes 2004)
38. *de* (locative copula)
when ah dey home ‘when I am at home’ 1953 (Allsopp 1996: 189)
40. *dem* (article, demonstrative)
and tief dem plantain ‘and they stole the plantains’ 1893 (Bell 1893: 4)
41. postposed *dem* (nominal plural)
Ah en no much bout Trinidad an de people dem ‘I don’t know much about Trinidad and the people’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
43. *dem* (3PL POSS)
foo watch dem face ‘to watch their faces’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
44. *do* (clause-initial entreaty)
Do, Brother, do/Don’t eat the figs sou (so) ‘Brother, don’t eat the bananas’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 91)
47. *done* VERB (completive)
wen ah done wuk ‘when I finished [my] work’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
A dɔn tees π ‘I have tasted it.’ 1987 (Hancock 1987: 297)
ši dɔn sɔŋ ‘She has (already) sung.’ 1987 (Hancock 1987: 303)
48. *doormouth* ‘threshold’
a man [...] sitting in his door-mouth ‘a man sitting in his doorway’ 1893 (Bell 1893: 157)
51. *duppy* ‘zombie’
Duppies 1893 (Bell 1893: 120)
53. *enty* (negative question marker)
Ent is here ah leave me bag of fish [...]? ‘Isn’t it here that I left my bag of fish [...]?’ 1974 (Allsopp 1996: 218)
58. *for* PRON NP (genitive)
fɛ ye’ mama ‘your mother’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 80)
60. *for true* ‘truly’
there is ‘diablesses’² for true ‘there are really ‘diablesses’’ 1893 (Bell 1893: 157)
61. *fufu* (starch food, boiled and pounded)
fufu/foofoo/fu fu/foufou 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 55)
62. *fullup* ‘fill, be-full’
a si di bót ful-op wit wata ‘I saw the boat was full of water’ -1983 (Kephart 1985: 340)
65. *goatmouth* ‘a Cassandra’
goat mouth 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
66. *gongosha* ‘deceit, gossip’
Conconsa better dan obeah. ‘Deceit is better than witchcraft.’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 459)
yu tu kôkosâ³ ‘you are too biased.’ -1983 (Kephart 1985: 67)
70. *how come* ‘why, etc.’
How come yuh do dat? ‘Why did you do that?’ 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 64)
72. *ina, na* (locative preposition)
De gals dem begins foo tumble in ah de doore ‘the girls began to tumble in the door’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
De fay na choo! ‘Fire in you[r] arse!’ 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
73. *Irish potato* ‘potato’
Irish potatos 1966 (Hughes 1966: 52)
75. *jackspaniard* ‘wasp’
jack spania 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 66)
76. *john crow* (bird sp.)
Cuss-cuss no kill John Crow. ‘Name calling does not kill the carrion crow.’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 459)
77. *jook* ‘pierce, stab, etc.’
Follow fashion chook [...] monkey tail. ‘Following the way [of people] pierced the monkey’s tail’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 460)

² The current form is *lajables*; it designates “a beautiful woman always dressed in a long dress to hide the fact that she has one human foot and one cow’s foot” who “plays many tricks on people” (Kephart 1985: 61, n. 4).

³ Where <ô.> stands for [O~], and <â> for [ã] (Kephart 2003: 239).

- jook* 1966 (Hughes 1966: 51)
I will juke it 'I will pierce it' 1977 (Allsopp 1996: 316)
djuck/jook 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 48)
79. *jumbee* 'malevolent spirit, zombie'
Jumbies 1893 (Bell 1893: 120)
jombi -1984 (Kephart 2000: 23)
81. k/g palatalized before /a/
cyarry 'carry' 1925 (Parsons 1933: 75)
gyarden 'garden' 1925 (Parsons 1933: 79)
82. *kaanki* (corn dish)
conkie 2009 (Crask 2009: 16)
kongky 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 69)
84. *kaka* 'shit, excrement'
caca 1966 (Allsopp 1996: 128)
87. *kata* 'head pad'
cata 'circular pad of straw or cloth' 1966 (Hughes 1966: 49)
91. *kokobe* 'leper, leprosy'
leprosy and cocoobay are synonymous 1966 (Hughes 1966: 49)
If yuh ha cocoobay yuh kyann ketch yaws. 'If you have leprosy you can catch yaws.' 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 41)
94. *kunumunu* 'stupid person'
cunumoonu 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
cunumunu 2008 (Wiwords the West Indian Dictionary 2008)
kounoumounou 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 70)
98. *maga* 'thin'
maga 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
magga 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 74)
100. *married* 'marry'
what make him want to married you 'why did he want to marry you' 1966 (Allsopp 1996: 347)
marrid 2011 Chase & Chase 2011: 77)
102. *mauby* 'drink from potatoes, etc.'
mauby 2009 (Crask 2009: 60)
108. *mumu* 'dumb'
moumou 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 80)
111. *nose hole* 'nostril'
nose-hole 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 408)
112. NP1 for NP2 (possessive N2's N1)
Jan fo Meiri 'Mary's [son] John' -1984 (Kephart 2000: 175)
115. *(n)yam* 'eat; food'
Dog no nyam dog. 'Dogs won't eat dogs.' 1925 (Parsons 1943: 459)
nyam up 'eat' 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 83)
yam down food 'eat hurriedly/greedily' 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 119)
116. *(n)yampi* 'dirt in the eye'
yampee / yampie 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
120. *obeah* 'kind of magic'
Obeah 1893 (Bell 1893: 5)
127. *pikni* 'small; child, offspring'
Cry-cry pickny neber hab him right. 'A crying child never obtains what he wants.' 1925 (Parsons 1943: 459)
133. *rata* 'rat'
When puss belly full him say ratta bitter. 'When a cat's belly is full it says rats are bitter.' 1925 (Parsons 1943: 464)
134. *rockstone* 'stone'
Rockstone a' ribber bottom 'A stone on the bottom of the river' 1925 (Parsons 1943: 462)
135. *(for) sake (of)* 'because'
for the sake of the figs 'because of the bananas' 1925 (Parsons 1933: 91)

137. *santapi* ‘centipede’
santopi -1984 (Kephart 2000: 198)
santopee 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
138. *sapata* ‘footwear’
chapat ‘leather-soled slipper with a woven-twine top’ 1966 (Hughes 1966: 49)
140. *self* ‘even; (emphasis)’
He’n giving people chance to say no self ‘He doesn’t even give people the chance to say no’ 1966 (Allsopp 1996: 497)
Ah woulda’ pick it up self ‘I would have picked it up myself’ 1974 (Allsopp 1996: 417)
143. *soso* ‘only’
him hab “so-so” feader ‘it has only feathers’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 461)
144. *so te(l)* ‘until; a long time’
so tell ‘until’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 135)
so tey he retch big buckra ear ‘until it reaches the big white man’s ear’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 460)
146. *strong ears/hard ears* ‘stubbornness’
*Hard-eye*⁴ (willful) *pickny never go good.* ‘A stubborn child will never be good.’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 460)
148. *sweetmouth* ‘flattery’
She only givin[g] them a lot of sweet-mout[h] to make them buy ticket ‘She’s only flattering them to make them buy tickets’ 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 542)
sweet mout 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 108)
149. *Takoma* ‘Anancy’s son’
Ato’ukouma 1925 (Parsons 1933: 78)
152. *tief* ‘steal’
and tief dem plantain ‘and stole those plantains’ 1893 (Bell 1893: 4)
he used to tieve ‘he used to steal’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 75)
I ent have nothing for him to thief ‘I don’t have anything for him to steal’ 1966 (Allsopp 1996: 594)
155. *tote* ‘carry’
toat dung foo mek manure ‘carry dung to make manure’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
156. *tother, tara* ‘other’
From dis to turra ‘From this [one] to the other [one]’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 460)
161. *vex* ‘be-angry’
Dey could vex-up ‘they might be angry’ 1966 (Allsopp 1996: 582)
164. *we* (1PL POSS)
Dat is nat wi moda voys. ‘That’s not our mother’s voice.’ -1983 (Kephart 1985: 274)
165. *we* (1PL OBL)
la we go bathe ‘let us go and bathe’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 80)
166. *WH make* ‘why’
What make some people have to powder dey face ‘Why do some people have to powder their face’ 1966 (Allsopp 1996: 598)
169. *woodslave* (lizard sp.)
wood-slave 1893 (Bell 1893: 76)
173. *yerri* ‘hear’
no yerry what him massa say ‘doesn’t hear what his master says’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 459)
174. *all about* ‘everywhere’
Dei gou op al abowt in di bush ‘they went up all through the forest’ -1984 (Kephart 2000: 139)
176. *be* (equative copula)
Me be nigger boy ‘I am a Negro’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
178. *been* (past/anterior)
a Bajan ooman way name Lizzie bin cum ah Trinidad ‘a Barbadian woman whose name is Lizzie had come to Trinidad’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
179. *before time* ‘formerly’
befo time ‘long ago, a very long time ago’ 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 2011)
180. *born* ‘give birth’
She borned five children ‘She gave birth to five children’ 1974 (Allsopp 1996: 111)

⁴ Where *eye* is presumably an error of transcription.

181. *bruck* ‘break’
ah bruk ‘tone ‘I break stones’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
182. *byandby* (adv.) ‘soon’
Bambye you goin[g] to see ‘You are soon going to see’ 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 77)
184. *catch* ‘get, obtain, reach’
By the time we catch Goyave the radiator blow ‘By the time we reached Goyave the radiator broke down’
 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 141)
185. *comeout* ‘go out, detach’ (reanalysis)
dē kom-owt an di bich ‘they went out to the beach’ -1984 (Kephart 1985: 271)
187. *dead* ‘die’
that they should dead ‘that they should die’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 79)
188. *dem* (3PL)
wen dem cum foh see ‘when they come to see’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
189. *fall down* ‘fall’
fall down 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 52)
190. *fashion* ‘manner, way’
Follow fashion bruck monkey tail. 1925 (Parsons 1933: 460)
 ‘Following the way [of people] broke the monkey’s tail.’
192. *for* (infinitive)
me no want for get lick ‘I don’t want to get flogged’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
193. *go* (future)
I go tell you true ‘I’ll tell you the truth’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 431)
194. *got* ‘have’
All whay you got give ah we ‘Give us all that you have’ 1973 (Allsopp 1996: 598)
197. *he* (3SG OBL)
e 1904 (Winer 1995: 134)
breeches fit e ‘the breeches fit him’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 464)
Ef we pick he up ‘If we pick him up’ 1973 (Allsopp 1996: 342)
198. *he* (3SG POSS)
he belly da empty ‘his belly is empty’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
scratch e back ‘scratch its back’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 461)
199. *him* (3SG POSS)
Before a dog go widout him supper ‘Before a dog goes without its supper’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 458)
200. *him* (3SG)
him git you basket for carry water. ‘he got you a basket to carry water’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 461)
201. *lick* ‘flog’
me no want for get lick ‘I don’t want to get flogged’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
203. *little bit* ‘slightly’
lil’ bit 2001 (Dictionary of Grenadianisms 2001)
205. *make* (causative/imperative)
meik a nou ‘let me know’ -1984 (Kephart 2000: 186)
206. *make haste* ‘hurry’
Make haste nuh ‘Hurry up, won’t you’ 1966 (Allsopp 1996: 561)
make haese 2011 (Chase & Chase 2011: 74)
208. *me* (1SG)
Me drink my rum ‘I drink my rum’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
209. *me* (1SG POSS)
Oh me God ‘Oh, my God’ 1893 (Bell 1893: 65)
211. *more better* ‘better’
Friends is much more better than money. ‘Friends are much better than money.’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 460)
213. NP1NP2 (possessive N1’s N2)
mista Temple yaad ‘Mr Temple’s yard’ 1904 (Winer 1904: 146)
 ‘mister Temple’s yard’
214. *never* (negative-completive)
ši neva sɲ ‘She hasn’t sung’ 1987 (Hancock 1987: 304)

215. *no* (negator)
me no want ‘I don’t want’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
216. *nogood* ‘bad’
dat no good for me ‘that’s bad for me’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
219. *one time* ‘(at) once’
One time was ‘Once [upon a time] there was’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 76)
Safeguard your home one time ‘Safeguard your home at once’ 1973 (Allsopp 1996: 417)
220. paragogic vowels
No catchie no habie. ‘If you don’t catch [any], you don’t have [any].’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 462)
222. *plenty* NOUN ‘a lot of’
two negger capsized in canoe with plenty fish ‘two Negroes capsized in their canoe with a lot of fish’ 1831 (Alexander 1833: 241)
223. *plenty* (postverbal) ‘a lot’
he gib me plenty ‘he gives me a lot’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
225. *sabby* ‘know’
me no sabe what for do ‘I don’t know what to do’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 432)
226. *-side* (locative suffix)
him feed a’ fence side ‘it feeds near the fence’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 464)
227. *sitdown* ‘sit, reside’ (reanalysis)
an sidong rite rong me ‘and sat down right around me’ 1904 (Winer 1995: 146)
Too much sit down bruk breeches. ‘Sitting down too much broke [his] breeches.’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 463)
229. *standup* ‘stand’ (reanalysis)
Dé stanop. ‘They stood right there.’ 1979 (Kephart 1985: 326)
234. *throwaway* ‘throw’ (reanalysis)
Ee just trow way de skin. ‘He just threw [them] the skin.’ -1984 (Kephart 2000: 155)
236. ADJ/VERB *too much* ‘a lot’
De Jumbies does trouble me too much ‘The spirits trouble me a lot.’ 1893 (Bell 1893: 123)
237. NOUN *too much* ‘many, a lot’
Mr Bobo have strong eye too much ‘Mr Bobo is a very strong-willed [person].’ 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 535)
239. *walk about* ‘wander’
She like to walk about. ‘She likes wandering.’ 1996 (Allsopp 1996: 372)
241. WH *for* ‘why’
Wha for me run? ‘Why should I run?’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
What for massa leave missus so early in marning? ‘Why did you, master, leave your wife so early in the morning?’ 1831 (Alexander 1833: 242)
‘Why did you, master, leave your wife so early in the morning?’
247. ZERO (equative copula)
him de dandy man ‘he is the dandy’ 1925 (Parsons 1943: 461)
248. ZERO (predicative copula)
My massa good man ‘My master is a good man’ -1830 (Bayley 1830: 438)
254. *bel(ly)* ‘seat of emotions’
*me belly bile*⁵ ‘I’m very frightened’ 1952 (Allsopp 1952: 92)
288. *sing out* ‘shout’
the boy sing out. ‘*Is a grandmother you eatin’?*’ ‘The boy shouted, “Is it grandmother that you’re eating?”’ 1925 (Parsons 1933: 85)
295. VERB-VN (transitive suffix)
shark nebber eat him nagger here ‘sharks never eat Negroes here’ 1831 (Alexander 1833: 241)

The number of diagnostic features attested in GCE amounts to 124. Of these, only 27, i.e. a very low percentage of only 21.7%, are first attested before 1900. According to Baker & Huber

⁵ Literally ‘My belly boils’. The spelling <bile> represents the phonetic realization [baɪ]. In GCE the reflex of the English diphthong /ɔɪ/ is [aɪ].

(2001: 159), the identification of attestations which predate 1900 “minimizes the effect of later, non-diffusionist cross-influences” between the Atlantic English Creoles “e.g. through the media, modern communication or increased mobility in the 20th century”. Unfortunately, in the case of GCE, its earlier stages are extremely poorly documented. There are only three pre-1900 sources, and they only include isolated words and very few sentences.

However, at least some diagnostic features must have occurred considerably earlier than the date of their earliest attestation on currently available evidence. Consider the following examples.

Feature 81. k/g palatalized before /a/ is first recorded in 1925. However, palatalized [k^j] and [g^j] are attested in 17th and 18th century English (Baker 1999: 318). Commenting on “the rarity with which palatalized velars are represented in earlier records”, Rickford (1986: 162) argues that it “should not be taken as representative of the facts of spoken usage at the time”. Consequently, the occurrence of palatalization in the earlier stages of GCE can be posited by virtue of “feedback from current usage”, as suggested by Rickford (1986: 162).

As with other Atlantic English-lexified Pidgins and Creoles, feature 84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’ must have occurred in GCE earlier than the date of its first attestation. In this respect, Baker (1999: 330) is certainly right when commenting that “many authors and publishers would formerly have considered this word too vulgar to print”.

Feature 220. paragogic vowels is also attested rather late, although it must have also characterized GCE in its initial, earliest stages.

Finally, as is well known, 247. ZERO (equative copula) is widespread across English-lexifier pidgins and creoles, in which is typical of basilectal varieties. Therefore, it must have occurred in the formative stages of GKE as well.

4. GCE and other Atlantic English-lexifier Pidgins and Creoles

Consider first the absolute number of features attested in GCE and those reported by Baker & Huber (2001: 171, Figure 5) for the seven Atlantic English-lexifier varieties considered by them. With a total of 124 features, GCE would rank lower than JAM, KRI, WAF, SKI, SRN⁶ and GUL, but higher than BJJ.

According to Baker & Huber (2001: 171), “a fundamental difference between the Atlantic and Pacific varieties” resides in the fact that “the absolute number of features in the latter is generally lower, with the average in the Atlantic being more than twice as high as that in the Pacific”: the average in Atlantic varieties amounts to 145.4, while it is only 63.3 in the Pacific ones (Baker & Huber 2001: 171). The absolute number of 124 features attested in GCE is below the average for the Atlantic English-lexified pidgins and creoles considered by Baker & Huber (2001), but it is still almost double the average in the Pacific. Consider next the absolute number of world-wide features attested in GCE. Table 1 compares the distribution of world-wide features in the Atlantic varieties considered by Baker & Huber (2001: 171) and in GCE:

⁶ The creoles of Suriname are treated as a single entity by Baker & Huber (2001: 161).

Table 1. Number of world-wide features

SRN	BJN	SKI	JAM	GUL	KRI	WAF	Average	GCE
44.5	36.0	38.0	52.5	42.0	63.0	63.0	44.2	46

As can be seen, GCE would be situated within the range of Atlantic varieties (from 36.0 to 63.0), slightly above the average. The proportion of world-wide features in the Atlantic varieties considered by Baker & Huber (2001: 172) and in GCE is set out in the following table:

Table 2. Percentage of world-wide features

SRN	BJN	SKI	JAM	GUL	KRI	WAF	Average	GCE
33.2	30.9	28.4	28.8	34.6	35.4	41.6	33.3	37.3

GCE would again be situated within the range of Atlantic varieties (from 28.4 to 41.6) – above the average – and thus confirms Baker & Huber’s (2001: 174) generalization that “the New World Creoles have a considerably lower percentage of WW [= world-wide] features”. According to Baker and Huber (2001: 172), the relatively low percentage of world-wide features is indicative of varieties spoken in territories in which there were population movements⁷. With respect to these criteria, then, GCE exhibits characteristics comparable to the seven Atlantic English-lexified varieties considered by Baker & Huber (2001).

Diagnostic features can also corroborate historical and demographic evidence. A French colony initially, Grenada was occupied by the British in 1779; the French recaptured the island and held it until 1783, when it was again, this time definitively, occupied by the British (Roberts 1997: 90). After the occupation of Grenada by the British there was an influx of English-speaking immigrants, “many of whom arrived in the nineteenth century from Barbados” (Holm 1989: 458), and from the Leeward Islands (Roberts 1997: 90). More generally, Parkvall (2000: 125) characterizes “the ECs [= English Creoles] of the Windwards proper – Dominica, St Lucia, Grenada, St Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago” as being “all late developments (late 18th century onwards), and all seem to represent koinés with varying proportions of Barbadian and Leewards influences”. In addition, Grenada appears to have had close ties with other territories in the Caribbean, such as Trinidad (see e.g. Winer 1995: 128, Hughes 1966: 51), and, with St Vincent (Parkvall 1997), both geographically situated in its immediate vicinity. Hughes (1966: 51) states that “in the Eastern Caribbean, Grenada has her closest links with Trinidad”. With reference to Carriacou, Parkvall (1997) writes that “much of today’s population is descended from slaves brought by British immigrants from Barbados, St Vincent and other islands after the British conquest” in 1763. Under the circumstances, the diagnostic features attested in GCE should reflect the historical relationships with relevant English-lexifier Eastern Caribbean creoles, for which comparable data exist. In what follows, I examine the affinities between GCE and five

⁷ The percentage of world-wide features is significantly higher in Pidgins and Creoles which have developed to a large extent independently. For instance, the average is 66.6% for the six Pacific varieties considered by Baker & Huber (2001: 173).

Eastern Caribbean creoles: ATG, BJN, SKI, TT and VIN. The data⁸ set out in Table 3 are a first indicator of the historical relationships between GCE and the Eastern Caribbean creoles at issue:

Table 3. Diagnostic features shared by GCE with ATG, BJN, SKI, TT and VIN

GCE with ATG	94
GCE with BJN	73
GCE with SKI	80
GCE with TT	103
GCE with VIN	92

As shown by Baker & Huber (2001: 181), however, quantifying the affinities between individual varieties cannot be limited to the comparison of shared features, given the differences in the quantity and quality of data available for each variety. To overcome this problem, Baker & Huber (2001: 181) propose that affinities should be determined with the following statistical method. First, the number of diagnostic features a pair of varieties would share if the distribution of these were random is calculated. The formula can be stated as follows: $N_i \times N_j / N_t$ (where N_i = number of features attested in variety_i; N_j = number of features attested in variety_j; N_t = total number of features considered). Second, the result obtained is deducted from the actual number of diagnostic features shared. This shows whether the number of the shared features is more or less than predicted by a random distribution. A high positive value for the difference between the actual and the predicted number of shared features is interpreted as indicative of relatedness. To ensure comparability of the results, this method⁹ has also been applied to the quantification of the affinities between GCE and the other five Eastern Caribbean creoles: the affinities should therefore be reflected in a positive value for the difference between the actual and predicted number of shared features. Since all the creoles at issue are Atlantic varieties, the base taken into account for comparison should consist of the 173 Atlantic and the 75 world-wide features of Baker and Huber (2001), i.e. a total of 248. To these, three other features¹⁰ have been added, for reasons explained in section 5. The base taken into account therefore consists of 251 features. Of these, 148 are found in ATG, 124 in BJN, 135 in SKI, 160 in TT, and 138 in VIN. Recall, from section 3, that the number of features attested in GCE is 124. The scores reflecting the affinities of GCE with ATG, BJN, SKI, VIN and TT respectively are set out in the table below:

⁸ The figures for ATG are from Avram (2014). For BJN the number includes eight diagnostic features from my own corpus, which do not figure among those attested in this variety in Baker & Huber (2001: 197–204). For TT and VIN see Avram (2014) and Avram (forthcoming) respectively. The figures for Kittitian are based on Baker and Huber (2001: 197–204) and on the wordlist in Baker & Pederson (2013: 108–181), with the addition of one diagnostic feature from my own data.

⁹ The method was first used by Baker (1999). Other works using this statistical method include e.g. Hackert & Huber (2007), Avram (2012, 2014 and forthcoming).

¹⁰ These are: 254. *bel(ly)* ‘seat of emotions’, 288. *sing out* ‘shout’, and VERB-VN (transitive suffix).

Table 4. Affinities of GCE with ATG, BJN, SKI, TT and VIN

	Actual number of shared features	Predicted number of shared features	Difference
GCE and ATG	94	73.1	20.9
GCE and BJN	73	61.2	11.8
GCE and SKI	80	66.6	13.4
GCE and TT	103	79.0	24.0
GCE and VIN	92	68.1	23.9

The positive values of the differences between the actual and the predicted number of shared features obtaining in all five pairs of creoles confirm the links between them. These results corroborate the historical and demographic evidence mentioned above regarding the population movements from Barbados, from the Leewards, and from St Vincent to Grenada as well as its relationship to Trinidad. Not surprisingly, the highest scores obtain for the affinity between GCE and two varieties, TT and VIN, spoken in the geographically closest territories. Finally, the highest score, for the affinity between GCE and TT, also accords with the opinion expressed by Hughes (1966: 51) that “the populations of the two countries [Grenada and Trinidad] share a large common non-standard English vocabulary”¹¹.

5. Discussion of selected diagnostic features

A number of items etymologically derived from African languages are found among the diagnostic features attested in GCS:

Table 5. Diagnostic features of African origin

Feature	Origin
3. <i>aki</i> (fruit/tree)	Akan
7. <i>Anancy</i> (folktale character)	Akan
33. <i>cutacoo</i> ‘basket’	Akan
51. <i>duppy</i> ‘zombie’	Akan
61. <i>fufu</i> ‘(starch food, boiled and ponded)’	Akan
66. <i>gongosha</i> ‘deceit, gossip’	Akan
87. <i>kata</i> ‘head-pad’	Akan
91. <i>kokobe</i> ‘leper, leprosy’	Akan
149. <i>Takoma</i> ‘Anansi’s son’	Akan
82. <i>kaanki</i> (corn dish)	Akan/Yoruba
9. <i>bakra</i> ‘European, white person’	Efik
120. <i>obeah</i> ‘kind of magic’	Efik
4. <i>akra</i> (a savoury cake)	Efik/Yoruba
116. <i>(n)yampi</i> ‘dirt in the eyes’	Igbo
143. <i>soso</i> ‘only’	Igbo

¹¹ Hughes (1966: 51) goes as far as to conclude that the two “may be regarded as a single linguistic entity”.

108.	<i>mumu</i> ‘dumb’	Akan/Mandinka
27.	<i>calaloo</i> ‘a rich soup or stew’	Mandinka
77.	<i>jook</i> ‘pierce, stab, etc.’	Fula
155.	<i>tote</i> ‘carry’	Bantu
79.	<i>jumbie</i> malevolent spirit, zombie’	Bantu

The occurrence of these features confirms the important lexical contribution of the Gold Coast, i.e. of Akan, to the Atlantic English-lexifier creoles¹². Other diagnostic features can be traced back to languages contiguous or geographically proximate to the Gold Coast, such as Efik and Igbo. Still others reflect the contribution of Mandinka, Fula and of Bantu languages. Note that the occurrence of these items generally matches the substratal composition of GCE¹³. Significantly, it also matches beliefs as to their origin held by the local population. Kephart (2000: 22–23), for instance, reports that Carriacou people recognize “as African “nations” which their ancestors belonged to and from which they are descended”, among others, Arada, Ibou, Kongou, Kromanti, Manding, and Temnei¹⁴.

In addition, several diagnostic features found in GCE appear to be calques after similar phrases in various African languages: 15. *big eye* ‘greed(y)”; 36. *day clean* ‘daybreak’; 48. *doormouth* ‘threshold’. Their various possible African sources are indicated and exemplified in Parkvall & Baker (2012: 233, 235 and 244 respectively). Feature 148. *sweetmouth* ‘flattery’ is also believed by many to be a calque. The sources mentioned by e.g. Alleyne (1980: 116), Holm (1992: 191), Allsopp (1996: 542), Parkvall & Baker (2012: 244) include Akan, Gã, Igbo, Vai and Yoruba. However, this diagnostic feature may well be an illustration of the fact that “some metaphors [...] are so obvious that they may be expected to turn up by coincidence or ‘reinvention’” (Cassidy 1971: 215).

The Portuguese-derived items in Baker & Huber’s (2001) list also found in GCE are 127. *pikni* ‘small; child, offspring’, and 225. *sabby* ‘know’.

Surprisingly, given the French Creole past of Grenada, only two of the three lexical items of French origin in Baker & Huber’s (2001) list are recorded in GCE: 31. *crapaud* ‘frog’, and 84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’¹⁵.

Both lexical items of Spanish origin among Baker & Huber’s (2001) diagnostic features are attested: 133. *rata* ‘rat’, and 138. *sapata* ‘rata’. Baker (1999: 334) indicates Portuguese *sapato* as the etymon of *sapata*. However, the most likely etymon of the GCE form *chapat* appears to be Spanish *zapato* (Hughes 1966: 49, Allsopp 1996: 486) or Caribbean Spanish *zapata* (Cassidy 1961: 114).

The use as a plural marker of a form etymologically derived from English *them* is discussed by Hancock (1987: 305), Parkvall (2000: 93–96), and Aceto (2008b: 651). Hancock (1987: 305) does not mention its occurrence in Carriacou and Grenada, while Parkvall (2000: 94)

¹² See e.g. Aceto (1999) and Parkvall (2000: 109–112).

¹³ For details on the substratal make-up of Eastern Caribbean English-lexifier creoles see Parkvall (2000: 109–112, and 150).

¹⁴ Arada is the name of a former kingdom in the Bight of Benin. Kromanti is the name of port in what is today Ghana. Ibou, Kongou, Manding and Temnei obviously correspond to Igbo, Kongo, Mandinka and Temne respectively.

¹⁵ The third one is 13. *bateau* ‘boat’ (Baker & Huber 2001: 197), attested in several English-lexifier creoles spoken in territories where French creoles have never been spoken: BJN, JAM, GUL, KRI (Baker & Huber 2001: 197), Bahamian (Avram 2013: 135), and Virgin Islands Creole (Avram 2014).

includes them¹⁶ among the territories in which the plural marker occurs in post-nominal position. However, as shown in section 3, features 40. *dem* (article, demonstrative) and 41. postposed *dem* (nominal plural) are both attested in earlier stages of GCE, in approximately the same period. Significantly, both features are also recorded in ATG (Avram 2014), SKI (Baker & Huber 2001: 198), TT (2012: 30), and in VIN (Avram forthcoming). This shows that the approach adopted here, which considers features which may no longer be in use today, can indeed shed light on the historical relationships between individual varieties of English-lexifier creoles. It may be concluded, following Aceto (2008b: 651), that “the co-occurrence of these forms in the Eastern Caribbean may be due to intra-Caribbean migration in the last 150 years” or that it “may indicate a long standing point of variation since English-derived restructured varieties began to emerge in the Caribbean”.

Evidence from GCE shows that the distribution of several diagnostic features cuts across the Western Caribbean – Eastern Caribbean divide. According to Holm (1989, 445), “the normal word for the spirit of a dead person is usually *jumby* in the Eastern group and *duppy* in the Western group”. However, as seen in section 3, both 51. *duppy* ‘zombie’ and 79. *jumbee* ‘malevolent spirit, zombie’ occur in GCE. Aceto (2008b, 653) writes that “*wi* is often the first person plural pronoun (as both subject and object pronouns) in Western varieties, and the corresponding form is *aawi* in the Eastern Caribbean”. Again, both 5. *all we* (1PL) and 165. *we* (1PL OBL) have been shown, in section 3, to occur in GCE. Furthermore, Aceto (2008b, 652, Table 1) includes *aawi* among the pronouns which “have multiple functions as subject, object and possessive pronouns”. However, this form and feature 164. *we* (1PL POSS) are both recorded in GCE. Finally, Aceto (2008b, 652-653) mentions “(*h*)*im* (as both subject and object pronoun) in Western varieties”, which is “nearly always (*h*)*i* (as a subject pronoun) [...] in Eastern Caribbean varieties”; again, both 199. *him* (3SG) and *he* are attested in GCE.

Finally, evidence from GCE is also relevant to the classification of diagnostic features. The classification of three such features, 254. *bel(ly)* ‘seat of emotions’, 288. *sing out* ‘shout’, and 295. VERB-VN (transitive suffix), has to be reassessed. These are included by Baker & Huber (2001: 203–204) among the Pacific features. However, as shown in section 3, they are also attested in GCE. Moreover, they are also found in other Atlantic English-lexifier creoles. Feature 288. *sing out* ‘shout’ is found in three of the relevant Eastern Caribbean creoles, ATG (Avram 2014), SKI (Parsons 1933: 353) and VIN (Avram forthcoming), and also in Bahamian (Avram 2013: 143). Feature 295. VERB-VN (transitive suffix) is recorded in two of the relevant Eastern Caribbean creoles BJA and TT, and also in several varieties of WAF: Assimilated Cameroon Pidgin English, Cameroon Pidgin English, Fernando Póo Pidgin English and Nigerian Pidgin English (Avram 2004:100). Therefore, evidence from GCE, corroborated by the attestations in other Atlantic varieties, shows that these diagnostic features should be reclassified as world-wide ones. As for 254. *bel(ly)* ‘seat of emotions’, its attestation in GCE provides the only evidence pointing to the necessity of including this diagnostic feature among those having a world-wide distribution.

6. Conclusions

The earliest attestations in GCE of diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles hopefully contribute to a better understanding of the history of this still under-researched

¹⁶ Both Hancock (1987) and Parkvall (2000) treat the varieties spoken in Grenada and respectively in Carriacou as separate entities.

variety. While a number of the diagnostic features found in earlier stages are certainly no longer part of its syntax or lexicon, taking into account the earliest attestations is instrumental in establishing historical links between GCE and other English-lexifier creoles. An analysis based on synchronic data exclusively (e.g. Hancock 1987) cannot provide such insights, given the impact of language change, e.g. the loss of previously existing variants or the process of decreolization. Such changes do away with previously occurring features and thus obscure genetic relationships and the extent of the influence of other varieties.

The feature-based approach adopted has confirmed its usefulness in the quantification of the affinities between GCE, on the one hand, and ATG, BJN, SKI, TT and VIN. The attestations in GCE are therefore relevant to issues such as the provenance of the features and their diffusion among the Atlantic English-lexified creoles. The findings accord with the historical and demographic evidence (see Holm 1989: 458, Parkvall 1997, Roberts 1997: 73) on population movements from Barbados, St Vincent and the Leeward Islands to Grenada after its occupation by the British, as well as its close links with Trinidad.

GCE has been shown to have features the distribution of which cuts across the divide between Western and Eastern Caribbean creoles. These features cannot, therefore, serve for establishing isoglosses between the Western Caribbean and the Eastern Caribbean groups of English-lexifier creoles.

Finally, GCE also has features, hitherto thought to be found only in Pacific varieties, which actually have a world-wide distribution. Therefore, data from GCE are also relevant to the adequate classification of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles.

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