

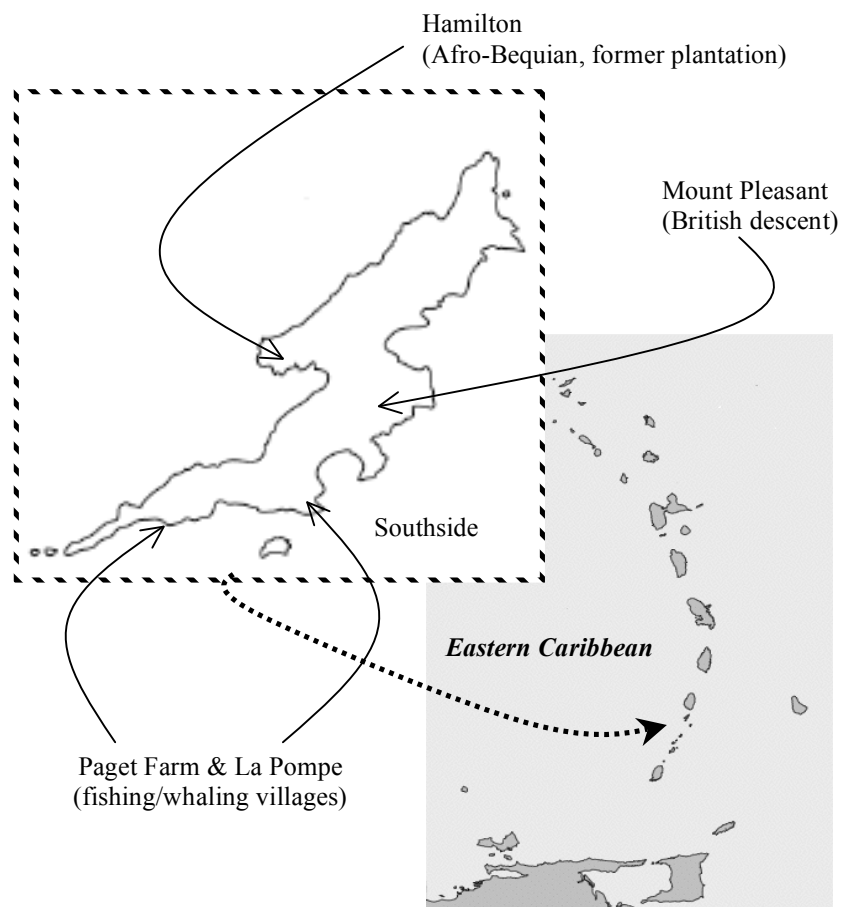
## Marking the Past and the Present in Bequia

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### BEQUIA (ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES)\*



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### I. CHARACTERIZING A CREOLE SPEECH COMMUNITY

- correlation between forms diagnostic of position on creole continuum
  - ‘creole’ (basi-/mesolectal) vs. ‘non-creole’ (acrolectal)
- variationist analysis avoids correlational statements
  - over-simplify speaker’s repertoire and speech community
- we argue that variable correlational statements can be useful
  - but we problematize the creole/non-creole dichotomy
  - a creole speech community is not a continuum, more complex

#### (1) Past Marking in Bequia

##### Bare Verb

a. I know my mother **bring** me up with manners. (H1:15)

##### Preterite (VERB + ed)

b. I could remember that good when it **erupted**. (M101:523)

##### Progressive ((BE) VERB + ing)

c. The people of yesterday **was living** together. (P20:46)

##### bin + VERB (+ ing)

d. Them not **bin knowing** nothing about mahogany bed. (H5:364)

##### used to + VERB

e. We **used to go** out in the boat with he. (P19:52)

#### (2) Present Marking in Bequia

##### Bare Verb

a. No neighbour hassle **Ø** you. (M2:269)

##### Inflected (VERB + s)

b. No neighbour quarrels. (M2:269)

##### Progressive ((BE) VERB + ing)

c. Some **are chopping**, some **are planting**, each to their command. (H5:596-7)

##### doz + VERB

d. Anglican don’t baptise, them **doz sprinkle**. (M302:953)

## (3) Exclusions

- ambiguous temporal reference
- modals
- irregular/invariant verbs: *be, have, do, got*
- imperatives

**Table 1: Overall distribution of past markers in Bequia.**

	Hamilton	Mt Pleasant	Paget Farm
Bare Verb	70%	56%	57%
Preterite	10%	28%	13%
Progressive	13%	8%	17%
<i>used to</i>	6%	8%	13%
<i>bin</i>	0.4%	0%	0%
Total N:	1,019	699	651

**Table 2: Overall distribution of present markers in Bequia.**

	Hamilton	Mt Pleasant	Paget Farm
Bare Verb	65%	64%	71%
Inflected (-s)	1%	3%	2%
Progressive	33%	34%	26%
<i>doz</i>	0.4%	0.3%	0.7%
Total N:	709	773	828

## (4) Lexical Stativity

*Stative*

- a. For those two weeks I **feel** happy. (H27:120)

*Nonstative*

- b. We used to **play** ‘Aunty Nanny Thread Your Needle’. (M2:178)

## (5) Sentential Aspect

*Continuous*

- a. The people of yesterday **was living** together. (P20:46)

*Habitual*

- b. But them guys that **went** out is h- had opportunities. (M301:57)  
 c. And they **tell** you, when they **Ø going** school, ... (H5:826)

*Punctual*

- d. They only **see** the boat go behind the point and that was it. (M302:242).  
 e. You **Ø blocking** the dog from coming in. (P23:317)

## (6) Sentence Type

*Declarative*

- a. You **fell** in line with the bigger fellas that was over you. (M303:115)

*Negative*

- b. I not **going** back in it. (H3:212)

*Question*

- c. What I **was saying**? (P24:238)

## (7) Clause Type

*Subordinate Clause*

- a. I see [they **be going** up the hill up there]. (H6:473)

*Relative Clause*

- b. They have income [that **Ø coming** in]. (M302:298)

*Temporal Clause*

- c. [When they **want** to come back], i- i- it's late. (P14:563)

*Protasis and Apodosis*

- b. And [if you **keep** telling them]<sub>Protasis</sub>, [they **laugh** at you]<sub>Apodosis</sub> (M303:44)

## (8) Temporal Adverbial

*Specific/Definite*

- a. ‘Cause she **Ø living** up there fifteen years now. (H5:212)

*Nonspecific/Indefinite*

- b. Sometimes you **look** at parents and children. (P34:15)

## II. PAST MARKING

**Table 3: Factors contributing to BARE VERBS with past temporal reference in three villages in Bequia (affirmatives only).**

	Hamilton	Mount Pleasant	Paget Farm
Total N:	740	689	643
Input:	.667	.570	.594
<b>Lexical Stativity</b>			
Stative	[ ]	<b>.64</b>	<b>.62</b>
Nonstative	[ ]	.46	.47
Range:		18	15
<b>Sentential Aspect</b>			
Continuous	.38	<b>.60</b>	.51
Habitual	.47	<b>.56</b>	.38
Punctual	<b>.63</b>	.40	<b>.70</b>
Range:	25	20	32
<b>Temporal Adverbial</b>			
Present	[ ]	.38	[ ]
Absent	[ ]	.53	[ ]
Range:		15	

[ ] = Not selected as significant.

**(9) Findings:***- Bare Verbs*

- different factor groups selected as significant in each village
- only sentential aspect significant in all villages
  - but direction of effect not consistent

**Table 4: Factors contributing to PRETERITE VERBS with past temporal reference in three villages in Bequia (affirmatives only).**

	Hamilton	Mount Pleasant	Paget Farm
Total N:	205	240	196
Input:	.429	.862	.440
<b>Sentential Aspect</b>			
Punctual	<b>.81</b>	<b>.62</b>	<b>.84</b>
Habitual	.20	.34	.27
Continuous	.48	.19	.54
Range:	61	43	57
<b>Temporal Adverbial</b>			
Present	.15	<b>.93</b>	<b>.82</b>
Absent	.52	.33	.43
Range:	37	60	39

Not selected as significant: Lexical stativity.

**(10) Findings:***- Preterite*

- more 'English-like' pattern
- overall rates differ
  - but same factor group significant across villages
  - consistent effect of sentential aspect

## III. PRESENT-MARKING

**Table 5: Factors contributing to VERB + ing with present temporal reference in three villages in Bequia.**

	Hamilton	Mount Pleasant	Paget Farm	
Total N:	405	717	810	
Input:	.473	.267	.226	
<b>Lexical Stativity</b>				
Stative	.30	.14	.34	
Nonstative	<b>.60</b>	<b>.74</b>	<b>.61</b>	
Range:	30	60	27	
<b>Sentential Aspect</b>				
Continuous	.39	[ ]	.42	
Habitual	<b>.59</b>	[ ]	<b>.57</b>	
Punctual	<b>.55</b>	[ ]	<b>.68</b>	
Range:				26
<b>Sentence Type</b>				
Declarative	[ ]	[ ]	.50	
Question	[ ]	[ ]	<b>.85</b>	
Range:				36
<b>Clause Type</b>				
Subordinate	<b>.79</b>	[ ]	[ ]	
Other	.46	[ ]	[ ]	
Range:	33			
<b>Temporal Adverbial</b>				
Present	<b>.79</b>	[ ]	[ ]	
Absent	.47	[ ]	[ ]	
Range:	32			

[ ] = Not selected as significant.

## (11) Findings

- only lexical stativity significant across all villages
- same direction of effect

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

- apparent continuum between communities on Bequia:
  - o Caribbean (creole) norms <> English (non-creole) norms
- a more complex model:
  - o differences in frequency mask underlying similarity between villages
  - o differences between villages only emerge in constraint hierarchies

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